

New public television show aimed at Southern gardeners hits the air May 9

May 4, 2009

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GAINESVILLE, Fla. --- Southern gardeners will soon have a tool to help them in the garden. "Your Southern Garden" with Walter Reeves is a new educational television show created to help gardeners of all levels learn new tricks, get fresh ideas and visit interesting sites.

"This show provides the opportunity to really educate Floridians and others in the region about landscaping and outdoor water conservation," said Millie Ferrer, interim extension dean for the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. "Watering in the landscape is such an important issue right now and the faculty at UF and UGA can provide great tips and information to help conserve water."

The show, produced by University of Florida IFAS Extension and the University of Georgia's College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, is a one-of-a-kind program specifically for the Southeast.

The 2009 season of "Your Southern Garden" premieres May 9 on public broadcast stations in the Tampa Bay and north central Florida areas. Beginning in April 2010, it will air throughout most of north and central Florida area and the Georgia Public Broadcasting viewing area.

"We anticipate that in this economic climate, more and more homeowners will begin doing their own landscaping and lawn maintenance," said J. Scott Angle, dean of the University of Georgia's College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. "Many will take on this work for the first time and need to know where to start. Others will be looking for the latest drought-tolerant plants or water-conservation ideas. We hope this program will offer something for all gardeners in our region."

“Your Southern Garden” is a spin-off of UGA’s “Gardening in Georgia,” which has aired on Georgia Public Broadcasting for a decade. Host Walter Reeves, a retired UGA cooperative extension agent and gardening expert, brings the same down-home flavor to this new project.

Reeves shows viewers how to put the universities’ expertise to work in their yards.

“Land-grant universities are loaded with cutting-edge, yet practical, information that gardeners need,” Reeves said. “Whether you are a beginner, a piddler or a Master Gardener, there’s something here for you.”

Each week’s show will include a blend of how-to projects, visits to local sites and tips.

“Our faculty have the expertise to really know what works in our growing zones. ‘Your Southern Garden’ will showcase plants, maintenance tips and conservation techniques that really work in this region. Our goal is to practically show people how to be more sustainable in their yards,” Ferrer said.

The show will be aired in areas with similar growing zones, Reeves said.

“We don’t want to be like the national gardening shows that tell you how to make fabulous landscape designs out of plants that just won’t grow in the South,” he said. “Our aim is to show you only what will work here, now.”

Check your local public broadcasting station’s programming listings for days and times “Your Southern Garden” airs in your area. Visit <http://yoursoutherngarden.com> for more information about the show.