



## **SOUTH CAROLINA FAMILY AND COMMUNITY LEADERS**

Affiliated with  
National Volunteer Outreach Network, Country Women's Council, U.S.A., Associated Country Women of the World  
and in partnership with Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service



### **2008-2009 State Project** **FCL Yards and Neighborhoods (FCLYN)** (This Program taken in part from "Carolina Yards and Neighborhoods")

#### **Objectives:**

1. SCFCL members will understand and promote sound environmental practices by encouraging homeowners and communities to participate in the FCL Yards and Neighborhoods program.
2. SCFCL members will encourage the creation and maintaining of attractive landscapes to enhance our community and to protect South Carolina's natural environment by participation in the FCL Yards and Neighborhoods program.
3. SCFCL members will become familiar with the nine major principles that can create and maintain beautiful lawns and gardens.

#### **Introduction:**

The natural beauty of South Carolina is an important aspect of our daily lives. Having attractive yards and communities is beneficial for the residents and for our visitors. However, with our rapid growth, maintaining environmentally responsible landscapes is challenging and much of the environment that attracted us in the first place is damaged and dwindling at an unprecedented rate. A demand on our water infrastructure for irrigation continues to increase thereby creating increased capacity cost. Runoff from our yards may carry fertilizer and pesticides into our ponds, rivers, lakes and bays harming wildlife and fisheries. By not recycling our yard waste, landfills are quickly reaching capacity and add additional costs to local government thus increasing your tax bill.

The good news is that we are learning from our past mistakes. Today we realize that we can take important steps to prevent further destruction of South Carolina's natural resources and to rebuild the state's valuable ecosystems. We can do this by learning and implementing the nine major principles that support environmentally-friendly landscaping and maintain beautiful lawns and gardens.





## Resources for program implementation:

1. Each County will receive a South Carolina Friendly Landscaping brochure and a FCL Yards and Neighborhoods Interactive CD Tutorial. Additional CD's may be purchased from the Beaufort Clemson Extension office for \$5.00 (Phone 843-470-3655).
2. Program overview and handouts are housed on the Clemson University web site. This information is free for you to print from your computer as handouts. The web site is:  
<http://www.clemson.edu/cyn/>
3. Many of the Clemson Horticultural Agents and Master Gardeners are familiar with this material and may agree to assist you. For more information, call your local Extension office.

## Suggested Neighborhood and Community Projects:

Each county should appoint a FCLYN project chairman. The enclosed report form is due December 8, 2008 (Handout #3) to SCFCL State Project Chairperson.

1. Within each SCFCL club, invite a horticulture agent or master gardener to teach the nine principles of FCLYN. (Handout #1)
2. Initiate a FCLYN Yard of the Month for your SCFCL club. (Handout #2)
3. Create alliances and partners with your neighborhood, town, city, water authority, and state agencies to promote FCL Yards and Neighborhoods. Such actions may include newspaper editorials, flyers, contests, public speaking opportunities. An online press kit will be available at the SCFCL website: [www.scfcl.com](http://www.scfcl.com).
4. Download "What Does a Carolina Yard Look Like" from the CD tutorial. Print copies and distribute to home and garden centers, water authority, and landscape professionals.
5. If you have a community fair or social event, provide information, brochures, and educational opportunities for participants.

*This lesson compiled from Carolina Yards and Neighborhoods, a lesson adopted by Bob Guinn, Beaufort County, Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service especially for South Carolina Family and Community Leaders.*





## FCL Yards and Neighborhoods Nine Principals

(Page 1 of 2)

Environmentally-friendly landscaping emphasizes nine major principles that can create and maintain beautiful lawns and gardens:

### Principal 1:

#### [Right Plant, Right Place](#)

Plants selected for your site will require minimal amounts of water, fertilizer and pesticides, resulting in a sustainable landscape which will save you time, energy and money.

### Principal 2:

#### [Water Efficiently](#)

Irrigate only when your lawn and landscape need water. Proper watering is the key to a healthy Carolina Yard and reducing runoff.

### Principal 3:

#### [Mulch](#)

Maintaining a 2-3" layer of mulch will help retain soil moisture, prevent erosion, and suppress weeds....remember to keep mulch 1-2 in. away from stems and trunks of plants to prevent stem rot.

### Principal 4:

#### [Recycle](#)

In a Carolina Yard, grass clippings, leaves, and yard trimmings are recycled on site to provide added nutrients to the soil and to reduce waste disposal.



### Principal 5:

#### [Fertilize Appropriately](#)

Less is often best. Over-utilization of fertilizers can be hazardous to your yard and the environment while contributing to a poor quality lawn.

### Principal 6:

#### [Control Yard Pests Responsibly](#)

Unwise use of pesticides can harm people, pets, beneficial organisms and the environment. Always identify the pest and use the most environmentally-friendly method of control.

### Principal 7:

#### [Reduce Storm water Runoff](#)

Water running off from your yard can carry soil, debris, fertilizer and pesticides that can harm water quality. Reduction of this runoff will help prevent non-point source pollution.

### Principal 8:

#### [Attract Wildlife](#)

Plants in your yard that provide food, water and shelter can conserve South Carolina's diverse wildlife.

### Principal 9:

#### [Protect the Waterfront](#)

Waterfront property, whether on a bay, river, stream, pond or beach, is very fragile and should be protected as a natural treasure. Natural buffer strips should be planted along the edge of property bordering any waterway to absorb runoff containing excess fertilizers and pesticides.





## Steps for organizing a FCLYN Yard of the Month program.

### 1. **How to apply:**

Members of the SCFCL should contact their FCLYN project chairman with a request to have their yard judged. The yards must meet the criteria of at least 12 inches on the “yard stick” to be designated as a Carolina Yard and Neighborhood.

### 2. **Judging:**

The FCLYN project chairman will ask two additional SCFCL volunteers to travel to the yard to see if it “measures up” to the minimum 12 inch standard from the measurement criteria on the following 4 pages. If more than one household applies, the yard acquiring the most inches will receive the award. Councils have the option of giving several awards per month.

### 3. **Awarding:**

The yard or yards judged to meet the 12 inch criteria will receive for a month the FCLYN Yard of the Month sign to be placed in their front yard for a duration of 4 weeks. Sign information will be located on the SCFCL website: [www.scfcl.com](http://www.scfcl.com)



## Right Plant, Right Place

- Determine your soil pH.  
Credit: 3 inches.
- Reduce the need for water, fertilizer, pesticides and pruning by using plants suited to the site conditions in your yard.  
Credit: 2 inches.
- Group plants according to their maintenance needs. For example, group drought-tolerant plants with low-water needs separately from lawn areas.  
Credit: 2 inches.
- Determine how much grass you need for children, pets and recreation. Use low-maintenance ground covers, shrubs, mulch or other porous surfaces where possible.  
Credit: 3 inches.
- Save energy by using trees and shrubs to shade the air conditioner compressor and eastern and western walls of your home.  
Credit: 1 inch.
- Use deciduous trees or shrubs on southern exposures to allow sun to passively heat your home in the winter.  
Credit: 1 inch.
- Help stop the spread of invasive exotic plants, like kudzu, by removing them from your yard. Contact the Dept. of Plant Industry office for more information on invasive plants.  
Credit: 2 inches.
- Reduce yard waste by choosing plants that will not require frequent pruning when they reach maturity.  
Credit: 1 inch.
- Preserve native plants, especially trees, when building on a new site. Maintain a protective "do not disturb" barrier under the drip line of trees.  
Credit: 3 inches.

### Water Efficiently

- Design and maintain a yard that thrives predominantly on rainfall once plants are established.  
Credit: 6 inches.
- Water your lawn and other plants only when they show signs of stress. (Comply with any existing watering restrictions in your community.)  
Credit: 3 inches.
- Calibrate your sprinkler(s) to apply 1/2 to 3/4 inch of water per application.  
Credit: 3 inches.
- Mow lawns high to encourage a deeper, more drought and pest tolerant root system. The higher cut also shades out weeds. Cut no more than 1/3 the height of grass blades with each mowing.  
Credit: 2 inches.
- Put a rain gauge in your yard to track rainfall to avoid unnecessary watering.  
Credit: 2 inches.
- Connect an automatic rain shut-off device to your sprinkler system's timer. Set the device to 1/2 inch so it will override your system's timer when enough rain has fallen. Replace back-up batteries in your system's timer each year before the rainy season. Check to see if the shut-off device is working properly.  
Credit: 2 inches.
- Design or modify your sprinkler system to water lawn areas separately from plant beds requiring less water.  
Credit: 2 inches.
- Use a drip or micro-spray irrigation system to more efficiently water plant and flower beds.  
Credit: 2 inches.

### Mulch

- Keep a 2-3 inch layer of organic mulch over the roots of trees, shrubs, and in plant beds. Remember to leave at least 2 inches of space between the mulch and the plant's trunk or stem.  
Credit: 2 inches.
- Replenish mulch once or twice a year, as needed to maintain a 2-3 inch depth.  
Credit: 1 inch.
- Create self-mulching areas under trees where leaves can stay where they fall.  
Credit: 2 inches.
- Use organic mulches such as bark and pine straw.  
Credit: 1 inch.

### Recycle

- Recycle grass clippings by leaving them on the lawn. Mulching lawn mowers or mulching blades are not necessary.  
Credit: 2 inches.
- Use fallen leaves and pine needles as mulch under trees and shrubs. They make an attractive, natural mulch and are free. (If you have more leaves than you can use, share them with a friend or neighbor.)  
Credit: 2 inches.
- Create and maintain a compost pile with kitchen scraps and yard waste (no animal products, please).  
Credit: 3 inches.

### Fertilize Appropriately

- Fertilize only as needed to maintain the health of lawns and landscape plants. If plants show signs of stress, such as yellow leaves or stunted growth, identify the problem before applying fertilizer. Do not exceed the rate of 1 pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet per application.  
Credit: 2 inches.
- Use slow-release fertilizers. Buy fertilizers that contain 30% or more of the nitrogen in slow-release forms.  
Credit: 2 inches.
- Use iron (ferrous sulfate or chelated iron) instead of nitrogen to make your lawn green during the summer.  
Credit: 1 inch.
- Check plants regularly. Walk around your yard every week and observe your plants and lawn for signs of problems.  
Credit: 2 inches.
- Avoid routine applications of pesticides. Treat only affected areas rather than spraying your entire lawn or yard. (Require that your maintenance company follow these strategies.)  
Credit: 3 inches.

### Control Yard Pests Responsibly

- Know five beneficial insects that provide natural control of harmful pests.  
Credit: 2 inches.
- Use environmentally-friendly pesticides such as horticultural oils, *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) and insecticidal soaps. These effective, safe materials can control most plant pests.  
Credit: 2 inches.
- Wherever possible use cultural/non-chemical approaches to pest control, such as pruning off affected areas, hand-removing insects, etc.  
Credit: 3 inches.

### Reduce Storm water Runoff

- Where possible, direct downspouts and gutters to drain onto the lawn, plant beds or containment areas where rain will soak into the soil rather than run off the yard.  
Credit: 1 inch.
- Decrease soil erosion by planting groundcovers where lawn grass doesn't thrive, such as under trees or on steep slopes.  
Credit: 2 inches.
- Use mulch, bricks, flagstone, gravel, or other porous surfaces for walkways, patios and drives.  
Credit: 1 inch.
- Collect and store rain runoff from your roof in a rain barrel or cistern.  
Credit: 2 inches.
- Create swales (low areas) or terracing to catch, hold and filter storm water.  
Credit: 3 inches.
- Pick up after pets. This will help reduce bacterial and nutrient pollution entering storm drain systems.  
Credit: 1 inch.
- Clean up oil spills and leaks on the driveway. Instead of using soap and water, spread cat litter over oil, sweep it up and then throw away in the trash.  
Credit: 2 inches.
- Sweep grass clippings, fertilizer and soil from driveways and streets back onto the lawn. Remove trash from street gutters before it gets washed into storm drains.  
Credit: 2 inches.



## Yard Stick Measurements

Page 5 of 5

### Attract Wildlife

- Plant vines, shrubs and trees that provide cover, nesting areas, or food for birds, butterflies and other wildlife.  
Credit: 3 inches.
- Provide a water source, such as a bird bath or a small pond, for wildlife.  
Credit: 1 inch.
- Provide wildlife shelters such as a bat house, bird house, brush pile or a dead tree.  
Credit: 1 inch.
- Identify five kinds of wildlife critters (insects, reptiles, animals, birds, etc.) that live in your yard.  
Credit: 2 inches.
- Remove invasive exotic aquatic plants by cutting, pulling or raking. After using herbicides, remove dead plant material from the water to reduce pollution.  
Credit: 2 inches.
- Protect your native shoreline plants. Never prune or remove other vegetation without first seeking proper guidelines and permits.  
Credit: 2 inches.
- Establish a 10-30 foot "no fertilizer, no pesticide" zone along your shoreline.  
Credit: 2 inches.
- If possible, install a border of low-maintenance plants between your lawn and shoreline to absorb nutrients and provide wildlife habitat.  
Credit: 2 inches.
- Where feasible, plant native aquatic vegetation in front of your seawall or along your shoreline.  
Credit: 4 inches.

Total Inches: \_\_\_\_\_





**SOUTH CAROLINA FAMILY AND COMMUNITY LEADERS**

Affiliated with  
National Volunteer Outreach Network, Country Women's Council, U.S.A., Associated Country Women of the World  
and in partnership with Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service



FCL Yards and Neighborhoods 2008 Report

Club/County \_\_\_\_\_ Project Chair \_\_\_\_\_

Activity List	Number of Yards Designated as a FCLYN Yard	Number of People Trained in FCLYN Principals	Estimated Time Spent on State Project and Value at \$18 per hour
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			

Mail this completed report to 2008-2009 FCLYN State Project Chair:



