

Eastern Region Nursery and Greenhouse Program  
Danny Lauderdale, Area Specialized Agent



## Eastern NC Nursery News

October 2017

Find the latest information about nursery production in Eastern NC below!

[Visit Danny's Website](#)

**Bulk Density Analysis  
is Available Through  
NC Department of  
Agriculture and  
Consumer Services  
(NCDA&CS)  
Agronomic Division  
for Nursery Media**

We often think of media analysis as something to do when a suspected nutrition related problem arises. Standard analysis includes nitrate-nitrogen, ammonium-nitrogen, urea, phosphorus, potassium, calcium, magnesium, sulfur, iron, zinc, manganese, copper, boron, sodium, chloride, pH, electrical conductivity/soluble salts. Monitoring this information when pour through analysis shows changes in nutrition



or when working with new fertilizer sources or crops is a good time to use this analysis.

One of the pieces of information that can be difficult to get is bulk density. This piece of information is important to know for calculating the correct rate of bifenthrin to incorporate per cubic yard for fire ant management. If you purchase your substrate blend from a supplier then they should be able to provide it to you. If it is not available for your current supply then you can get the analysis done in 3-4 days through NCDA&CS for a cost of \$10. Standard media analysis is \$5. All you need to do is print and fill out the form and include a 1 to 2 quart sealed plastic bag of media. When submitting a sample form found at the website below just write in "add bulk density" on the form and include \$15 payment for nutrient analysis and bulk density.

You can find out all about soilless media analysis offered by the NCDA&CS Agronomic Division by visiting this site:

<http://www.ncagr.gov/agronomi/uyrmedia.htm>

Media analysis is important to determine adequate nutrition, diagnose micronutrient deficiencies along with foliar samples, and now offers an option of bulk density.

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## Don't Forget About Red Headed Flea Beetles

It is not yet time to forget about red headed flea beetles (*Styphlonychus frontalis*) for the season. From what I have seen lately we are nearing the end of the last generation of the year (the fourth one). Although the last adults will finish feeding soon, before they disappear for the winter they will make sure to leave this year behind with a start on next year.

As you can see in the image on the right that I took on September 29, red headed flea beetles (RHFB) are preparing for the first generation of next year now. This mating pair was found on *Itea virginica*, Virginia sweetspire. Females will lay their eggs in pinebark substrate of nursery containers where they will sit until next year's growing degree days (GDD) accumulate to around 300 to 400 based on what I have seen this year, which is when first generation larvae will emerge. Before the foliage of many of the preferred deciduous plants drops, now is a good time to make a map of RHFB damaged species with their location. This will help you begin to plan next year's management efforts.



A mating pair of red headed flea beetles in the red circle on damaged *Itea virginica* foliage

Part of this preparation should be preparing to monitor GDD. Bookmark one or more of these sites to use next year so you know when to scout for larvae:

<http://climate.ncsu.edu/products/ag/gdd>

<http://www.greencastonline.com/growing-degree-days/home>

[US Pest Online Phenology and GDD Model](#)

If you need any assistance making the proper selections let me know. I will give a full update of what I have learned about red headed flea beetles this year at the 2018 Eastern

## February 13, 2018 Eastern NC Nursery Conference Speakers Confirmed!

If you have not already done so put this date on your calendar for an information packed day at the Wilson County Agricultural Center. I have booked Dr. Ed Gilman, retired Professor from University of Florida. Dr.

Gilman's research has focused on tree and shrub production practices and their impact on the rate of establishment in the landscape. Production practices include pruning, irrigation, fertilizer, root pruning to improve root systems, and non-traditional containers. One major focus was root morphology in response to nursery production. He will be presenting on the topic of "Growing High Quality Root Systems, Trunks, and Crowns in Container and Field Grown Nurseries". The topic will apply to both tree and shrub production and will begin at liner development.

Other topics scheduled will include a Red Headed Flea Beetle Update from me and How to Introduce Biological Control into Traditional Nursery Pest Management Programs by Russ Schmeiss, General Manager of Gardens Alive Farms - North Carolina. I have confirmed the final speaker who is Dr. Mark Weathington, Director of the JC Raulston Arboretum. His topic will be: "Production Crystal Ball: What are the Trends for Flowering Shrubs, Screening Plants, and Trees?"



I'm looking forward to the 2nd Annual Eastern NC Nursery Conference. We had great topics at the 2017 conference and have a completely different slate of presenters for 2018.

The Eastern Region Nursery and Greenhouse Program at NC Cooperative Extension is your source for research-based production information for greenhouse and nursery crops in Eastern North Carolina.

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