



Farmer Eddie Grant strips green onion at his Garden Fresh Produce stand off of Squire Pope Road on Hilton Head Island.

Photos by SARAH WELLIVER • The Island Packet



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## Warm up by baking fresh banana bread

It is spring, but there have been mornings when you would believe winter was here and trying to adjust to the area. It has been a time when the flowers let you know spring is here even among the cool mornings and still somewhat wintry nights.

I chose to wrap up and read cookbooks. This meant putting the book selection of my book club on the back burner. I wanted to bake, and bread came to mind. I began to read and found the variety of banana bread recipes interesting. The aroma of fresh-baked bread does so much for the mind. It allows



## Local garden guru Eddie Grant works hard to preserve farming legacy



Hilton Head Plantation resident Eva Sicvol looks over the selection of jams at the Garden Fresh Produce stand as Lillian Grant-King, right, bags her vegetables. The stand off Squire Pope Road is run by Lillian's brother, Eddie Grant. "It's the only place I can really find good and fresh veggies on the Island," Sicvol said.



### WANT FRESH PRODUCE?

Eddie Grant's Garden Fresh Produce stand is located off Squire Pope Road, just past Benny Hudson Seafood. The market is open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

# It's not easy growing GREENS

By MAUREEN SIMPSON

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**E**ddie Grant is a man who likes to set his own hours, even if that means starting most days at 3:30 a.m. The 57-year-old decided long ago he'd rather be plowing a field on Hilton Head Island than punching a clock for somebody else's business.

"I find I have more of a feeling for working for myself," said Grant, a longtime Lowcountry farmer who operates the Garden Fresh Produce stand off Squire Pope Road.

The market has been in business since 1993, but Grant started learning the lay of the land well before then. His father and grandfather were farmers from the Chaplin and Squire Pope areas of the island.

"My father could grow just about anything. He was one of the best farmers on (Hilton Head)," said Grant, who picked up the trade by working the fields with his dad in the '60s.

**FEEL LIKE BAKING?** Get the recipes for three types of banana bread. 2C



you to just unfold and let the smells of the blending of the ingredients set you on a plane of peace. It allows you to think back to your childhood when you had hot bread and milk. • My mother was not a banana bread kind of cook, but baking biscuits, cornbread and cinnam-

on rolls she did. So there is a love of bread in me. When I became the caregiver for my parents, my route of travel to Columbia was the back way on U.S. 21. I would shop for sandwiches along the way. I can remember when I finally found the fast-food restaurant that prepared the best sandwich with the best baked bread. This place in Orangeburg became my rest stop for many years.

My bread baking could have been made into a taste-testing contest, but I did not have time to gather people and to work out a tasting sheet. Instead, my grandchildren were the tasters, and what better people to be truthful?

Try these recipes; let your kitchen be filled with the aroma of fresh-baked fruit breads. Warm yourself with a throw and enjoy the bread with a warm beverage. Share the moment with a friend. This kind of setting causes one to forget the chilly mornings and evenings.

Please see GREENS on 8C

Please see BREAD on 2C



# Send us information about summer camps

The Beaufort Gazette and The Island Packet are seeking submissions for a **roundup on local summer camps** for children and young adults. If you would like to have your summer camp included, please submit information by April 29. Follow this format: name of organization; name of camp(s); when; where; times; ages; cost; short description of the camp; contact information.

Please fax information to 83-706-3070 or e-mail [features@islandpacket.com](mailto:features@islandpacket.com).



# GREENS

Continued from 1C

"The only advice he gave me was, 'Be prepared to work from sunup to sundown,' and that I am."

By 9 a.m., when Grant's earliest customers are sorting through a fresh assortment of collard greens, bell peppers, tomatoes, beets and green onions — among other seasonal selections — he's already been awake for more than five hours. With the exception of Sunday mornings, which are devoted to church, that quiet daylight is spent tending to his garden and setting up the stand.

Grant also helps his 92-year-old mother maintain a market off U.S. 278 near Singleton Beach. Both businesses typically stay open until 4 p.m.

"It's hard work, but it's like she told me the other day, it's the only thing she knows how to do," Grant said. "It was taught

to her and embedded in her by her father, who was also a pastor. Because her mom died at a very young age, her father raised her and her brother as a mother and a father. He taught them a lot of lifelong skills."

But as deep as the family's roots are planted in the soil of the island, Grant said it will be a challenge to continue the legacy of working the land.

"When the price of land went up because of all the development, it kind of took people's minds off of farming. They went out and got jobs and lost contact with it," Grant said. "A lot of people didn't teach their kids farming anymore, so we're kind of losing that as a way of life. I've tried to pass it on to my kids. If they don't farm for a living, they can at least maintain a garden to feed themselves and have a healthy style of living."

In addition to teaching his own children what he's learned as a lifelong student of the coastal landscape and climate, Grant

has served as a wellspring of knowledge for others looking to preserve the fading tradition.

When Carlos Chacon, manager of natural history at Coastal Discovery Museum, decided to start a "Heritage Garden" at Honey Horn last year to showcase crops of historical relevance to this area, people in the community suggested Grant would be a valuable resource.

"I could have gone on the Internet and found some general description of what to plant, but not what's best for this specific area. Eddie has all the inside knowledge of what has been grown by the Gullah people," Chacon said. "He helped us with the preparation of the site and gave us a lot of the stuff that we needed to grow. He gave me details only a longtime resident who is familiar with the landscape could tell me."

The garden has more than 40 plants that are labeled and used for educational programs at the museum. Indigo, cotton,

rice, butter beans, okra, fig trees and honeysuckle are among the crops being grown under Chacon's watchful eye and Grant's guidance.

When Chacon noticed the broccoli heads his garden produced were much smaller than the ones Grant grew, he was let in on a secret ingredient Grant's father had used to earn him a reputation for having the largest and sweetest watermelons in town, among other impressive fruits and vegetables.

"Back in those days, he only used horse manure and wood ashes for fertilizer," Grant said. "I usually use the same recipe he did, but I've also got compost bins that I utilize quite a bit. One thing he didn't use that I like to use is dried marsh off of the seashore. I think it supplies a lot of iron to the soil."

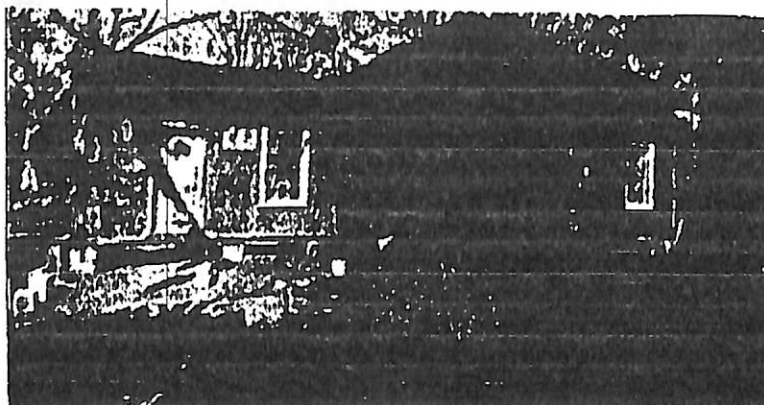
Chacon made a note of that. And so it goes — Grant planting seeds in a garden of a different kind for the tradition to continue.



DRAFT

## Hudson - Brown Homestead, Farm and Community Store

Squire Pope Road, Hilton Head Island Eddie Grant, Owner



Photo/The Island Packet

### Coastal Discovery Museum Collaboration with the Owner

During the past several years, the Museum has been working with Mr. Eddie Grant as he re-establishes his family's farming activity on his family's property on Squire Pope Road. Grant's mother's family (Brown) owned, farmed and operated a community store there for many years.

In continuing his family's commitment to the land and the community, Mr. Grant is continuing the rich heritage of the Gullah native islanders on Hilton Head island. Although his agricultural activities are flourishing, unfortunately the historic structure on the property is not. The Museum has been talking with Mr. Grant on various alternatives and steps that he can take simply to stabilize, preserve and re-use the historic structure. We have received many offers to help him take on the care of the house, and recently have been notified of a challenge grant to provide financial backing to this project. We are all in agreement that the house and Mr. Grant's operation will be open to the visiting public as well as to Museum tour and classes.

*implies you can go into house*

### Historical Overview and Significance

The property and building structure have been part of the island's history for more than 100 years. Ransom Hudson and his family originally built the home in the 1880s. They moved to Hilton Head Island from Georgia and began operating oyster factories. At least one of Ransom's several children was born in the house (Mose Hudson, 1905). Early in the 1900s, J. B. Hudson (one of Ransom's sons) lived in the house. He operated a store and a post office attached to the home.

During the 1920s, William "Boney" Brown purchased the property from J. B. Hudson. Brown had worked for many years for the Hudson's oyster factories. He was in charge of paying the workers and keeping the books for the business. Brown had a close relationship with the Hudson family. Brown, his wife, and several of their children lived in the home. Mrs. Brown died while delivering their youngest child, Gertrude.

"Boney" Brown operated a community store on the property for a number of years. After his death, the property was left to his children. Gertrude's son, Eddie, currently operates a vegetable farm and market on the property and is re-kindling his family's historic use of the property.

### Preservation and Re-Use Plans for the Property

The first step in the preservation of the historic structure is its stabilization. Afterwards, several structural steps need to be completed to protect the house from further damage. Building codes and ADA guidelines will be followed for all public access areas. The following are planned for the home and property.

- Weatherproofing the roof
- Removing the asphalt shingles
- Removing the rotten porch and replacing it
- Stabilizing the foundation and treating the surrounding area for termites
- Pruning surrounding trees to remove dead limbs and cut back ones too close to the home
- Replacing rotten floor boards
- Replacing rotten siding and window sills (using comparable materials to the historic fabric)
- Fencing of the property with a wooden fence
- Installation of new signage (with historical information and market hours)
- Location of historic agricultural tools and equipment and appropriate replicas

The Museum has identified a team of carpenters who will donate their time to the work listed above. They are currently pricing each of the items listed above. The SC Department of Archives and History/ Historic Preservation Division will visit in April to review the plan of work. So that Mr. Grant may remain in control of the house for its ongoing use in support of his farming activities, we will follow his wishes on the extent to which the preservation will allow his re-use of the structure and property. It is not intended that the house be a residence, and in fact, for structural and handicapped access reasons, viewing the interior of the house may be done from the front door only.

Once the building is preserved, the property will continue to be used by Eddie Grant for his vegetable garden. The newly reconstructed porch will be used for the vegetable market. Additional parking will be located where the current vegetable market is located. The interior of the home will be a showcase for Brown family heirlooms and appropriate historical materials, photographs, and artifacts.

The Coastal Discovery Museum will accept donations for the preservation of this property into a restricted fund. As a private-not-for-profit organization, contributions will be tax deductible. Funds will be available to Mr. Grant through the Museum. Through this agreement, the Coastal Discovery Museum will be able to visit the property for tours. In the event that this property is sold and is no longer available for tours for the Coastal Discovery Museum, funds will be returned to the Coastal Discovery Museum for possible return to donors and any other museum improvements (such as artifacts and replicas) will be moved other Museum site(s).

The Coastal Discovery Museum is located at 100 William Hilton Parkway, Hilton Head Island and is less than 1 mile from the Hudson-Brown Homestead and Community Store. The Coastal Discovery Museum is a private not-for-profit educational organization and has been in operation since 1985. Its mission includes preserving, protecting and interpreting the area's history, ecology and heritage. The Coastal Discovery Museum is open year-round, seven days a week from 9 AM until 5 PM

Hudson.doc  
disk + harddrive

## Hudson - Brown Homestead and Community Store

+ Gullah Native Islander Farm and Produce Store  
Eddie Grant, Owner Squire Pope Road  
Historical Overview and Significance  
Coastal Discovery Museum Grant Administrator

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