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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Pike Nurseries Shares Pro Tips for Pruning to Keep Gardens Thriving**

Gardeners can get spring-ready with help from local garden center experts

**CHARLOTTE (Feb. 20, 2024)** – As seasons change and gardeners prepare for the vibrant growth of spring, one important step is at the top of the to-do list: pruning. Both an art and a science, proper pruning enhances a garden’s aesthetics, while promoting healthy growth and production. With decades of horticultural experience, the experts at Pike Nurseries offer invaluable tips to ensure every snip leads to a flourishing garden.

**When to Prune**The golden rule of pruning is that if a plant blooms in spring (between March and mid-May for the Southeast) gardeners should prune after it finishes its final phase of flowering. However, if the plant blooms in summer or fall, it’s best to wait until late winter to start the pruning process.

**What to Prune**Keeping the golden rule in mind, the plants most suited to pruning now include summer bloomers such as abelia, gardenia, roses, crape myrtle, boxwood and holly. Their blooms thrive on fresh growth, so a little trim will go a long way in keeping them vibrant. As for spring bloomers like Japanese camellia, azalea and rhododendron, it's best to hold off on the clippers for now—these blooms are just gearing up for their big show!

**How to Prune**The proper tools are fundamental for successful pruning. The team at Pike Nurseries recommends manual tools instead of hedge trimmers to ensure a precise trim and a more natural shape. Sharp, clean pruning shears help make detailed cuts without causing unnecessary damage to the plant. Hand-held pruners are great for small stems and branches, while long-handled loppers are better suited for large branches and hard-to-reach spots. Gardeners should sanitize their pruners and loppers with alcohol or a 1-to-1 solution of bleach and water between plants to prevent the spread of any disease.

Correct pruning techniques are equally crucial for the overall well-being of plants. Cutting on an angle prevents water from settling on the cut and causing fungus growth. Pike Nurseries recommends starting the pruning process by removing dead, diseased or damaged branches to promote air circulation and prevent the spread of pathogens. After those are removed, healthy branches can be trimmed between leaf nodes. Finally, small, “wimpy” stems should be removed to encourage better growth.

For more complex pruning or questions about proper techniques, Pike Nurseries' team of experienced horticulturists and certified arborists are available to provide personalized guidance and assistance tailored to individual gardening needs.

**ABOUT PIKE NURSERIES**Ever committed to its customers’ gardening success, Pike Nurseries takes pride in taking the guesswork out of gardening and helping its customers play in the dirt. Offering superior knowledge, quality and selection in a friendly, caring environment, Pike Nurseries has been a Southern icon for over 60 years. Founded in 1958 by Pete Pike, its ability to adapt to market conditions and community needs has made it a respected Southern institution. As Atlanta’s oldest garden chain, Pike Nurseries has nineteen retail locations, fifteen in the Atlanta, Ga. area and four in the Charlotte, N.C. area. Led by President Monte Enright, Pike Nurseries looks forward to continued growth as it keeps Atlanta and Charlotte beautiful, one landscape at a time.

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