Remove from jig and cut off the bent portion of the wire that was in the metal-lined recess. Bend the loop to touch the stake.

The stake is now ready for priming. To build a priming bucket (see Figure 2), use a 15" piece of 1" PVC pipe. Cap one end and put a 1" to 2" reducer bushing on the other end.

Use a primer (I use Rust-Oleum #7767 Rusty Metal Primer). One quart will do several hundred stakes. Pour the primer into the PVC and place in a concrete block to hold upright. Use a small wire to dip the stakes and hang on the line to dry. A strip of 1" welding wire is very satisfactory. Use Dixie Steel wire because it will bend easily. The Simson brand is difficult to bend. These insulation wires come 100 to a box (around $6.00).

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Rooting Azalea Cuttings

The Oconee Chapter has put together a set of tables to serve as a reference for those of you who would like to try your hand at rooting azaleas. For those who are already rooting, maybe you can pick up a tip or two to help remedy those pesky problems you encounter from time-to-time.

Name	Medium	Container	Hormone	Fungicide	Fertilizer	Watering Procedure	Sweatbox-Coldframe	Transplant
Larry Meeks	Fine pine bark mulch and Perlite	96 cell flat	Dip and Grow	None	None	Kept moist under mist	Plants kept under sweatbox	Spring (1 gal)
Jim Thornto	100% ground pine bark	Various - usually 6-cell plastic pack	Hormodin #2	Captan	None	Mist four times daily for two minutes per interval taper off to one cycle/day	Over-winter in sweatbox	Spring (3" or 4" pot)
Earl Hester	100% ground pine bark	jumbo size 6-cell plastic pack	None	None	After rooting Peters 21-7-7 alternate with calmag (Excel) 15-5-15	Misting throughout rooting	Kept in cold frame over winter	Spring (1 gal)
Frank Bryan	1/3 ground pine bark, 1/3 sand, 1/3 potting soil mixture	1 gal. milk carton cut in half with top taped back on during rooting	Rootone	None	None	No regular schedule	Plants left in open in varying degrees of shade - some put in sweatboxes	Spring

Name	Medium	Container	Hormone	Fungicide	Fertilizer	Watering Procedure	Sweatbox-Coldframe	Transplant
James Harris	Ground pine bark with perlite	3-inch square pot	None	Banrot or Captan	Pinch of Osmocote (16-6-12/9 months) is placed in bottom of container	No regular schedule - best left outdoors	Kept under sweatbox during winters	Spring (1 gal pot)
Dave Butler	1/3 peat, 1/3 pine bark, 1/3 perlite	6-cell plastic pack	Rootone	Captan	1/2 solution Miracid after rooting starts	Plants are kept moist during rooting	Cold frame	Spring (3" or 4" pot)
Ray Goza	ground pine bark - 80%, sphagnum peat - 10% perlite - 10%	2-1/4-inch by 3-inch tall plastic pot	Hormodin #2	Captan	1/2 cup Osmocote to a wheel-barrow of medium mix	Keep moist	Overwinter in sweatbox	Spring (1 gal container)
Mark Hill	Screened Pine bark (1/4-inch or less)	4- x 4-inch plastic pot	Rootone	None	None	Bark was soaked before striking - therafter kept moist	Hoop frame (4 x 10 x 2 feet with white plastic cover)	Spring

There are several notes of interest which we could not fit into the tables:

(1) Earl Hester advises to begin a fungicide spray program after rooting, using Benlate®.
(2) Frank Bryan is new to rooting and did a lot of experimenting. He was well pleased with the milk carton plants which were very successful.
(3) James Harris starts pinching his plants early to encourage branching.
(4) Ray Goza advises to spray periodically with Captan®. Mark Hill is also a first-timer who attained good results.
(5) In most cases, references to ground pine bark refers to the use of a product "Nature's Helper". This is found in two to three cubic foot bags at most garden centers.
(6) Plastic containers can normally be found through nursery supply catalogs, or at a local nursery. Some garden centers may save you a small supply. The containers come in flats which contain packs of varying numbers of cells. For example, a 1203 flat contains twelve packs with three cells per pack (thirty-six plants to a flat). A 1206 mini-flat equals twelve six-plant cells, or seventy-two plants to a flat. Other propagating flats can hold even more plants.

Avoiding Lyme Disease

The U. S. National Arboretum Agricultural Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture has published a "Tick Fact Sheet". They advise the following steps to avoid Lyme Disease:

Tuck your pants into your socks to prevent ticks from climbing upward under your clothing.

Place bird feeders away from your deck and house. Birds may carry ticks and mice may be attracted by dropped seed.

Decrease the available nesting sites for mice. Keep grass mowed and woodpiles stacked away from your house.

Wear light colored clothing when you enjoy the outdoors. Ticks are much easier to see against a light background.