


Montgomery County

 Cooperative  
Extension Service

# HORTICULTURE HAPPENINGS

June & July 2025

*Cheyenne Lamb*

Cheyenne Lamb

CEA for Horticulture

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## FEATURED THIS MONTH:

- A Gardener's Toolkit  
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- Saucers and Succulents-  
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## GREETINGS FROM YOUR LOCAL HORTICULTURE AGENT



Happy Summer! Gardens are growing and bees are buzzing. We are also buzzing at the extension office with exciting programs to offer you. Flip through these pages to see some of the summer fun you, your family, and your friends can have!

The QR Code is still here and ready for your ideas so give it a scan. See you all soon!

**SCAN ME!**



**Cooperative  
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Agriculture and Natural Resources  
Family and Consumer Sciences  
4-H Youth Development  
Community and Economic Development

**MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT**

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Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities  
accommodated  
with prior notification.



Montgomery County Cooperative Extension presents

# A Gardener's Toolkit

a Bi-weekly Series from May to August  
hosted by Cheyenne Lamb, Horticulture Agent

If you have signed up for the toolkit series this is a reminder for the  
June and July classes

June 2<sup>nd</sup> at 5:00 p.m.

June 16<sup>th</sup> Session is cancelled but the content will still be covered

June 30<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m.

July 7<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m.

July 21<sup>st</sup> at 5:00 p.m.

*Cheyenne Lamb*

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Montgomery Horticulture

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University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating.

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# Red, White, and Berries



Join Horticulture agent, Cheyenne Lamb, and  
Family Consumer Science agent, Sarah Congleton  
on **Monday, June 30<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m.**

to learn about berries from planting to harvest.  
There will be a short presentation about planting,  
growing, and harvesting berries then a berry bite  
demonstration and sample.

Spots are limited so be sure to call and sign up!

Montgomery County Extension Office

Education Center

(859) 498-8741

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[cheyenne.lamb@uky.edu](mailto:cheyenne.lamb@uky.edu)





# Saucers & Succulents



Join our horticulture agent, Cheyenne Lamb on  
**Thursday, July 17 at 11:00 a.m.**

to make a tea cup succulent planter.

There will be a short presentation about  
succulent care then you can make your own  
planter with a succulent to take home!

Spots are limited so be sure to call and sign up!



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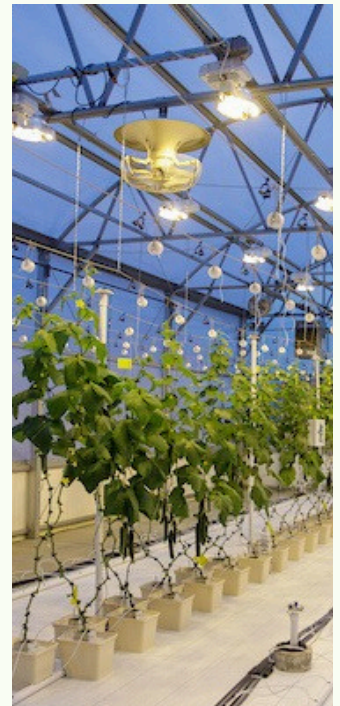
Martin-Gatton  
College of Agriculture,  
Food and Environment  
*Department of Horticulture*



# Save the Date

# Twilight Tour

## Horticulture Research Farm



July 22, 2025  
6-8pm

4321 Emmert Farm Ln,  
Lexington, KY 40514

To register scan the QR Code in the corner.

To ride with Montgomery County call the office at (859) 498-8741.

We will be taking people until all the seats are filled.

You do have the option to drive yourself.

EVERYONE MUST REGISTER ON QUALTRICS IF YOU PLAN TO GO.

# INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT CORNER

This edition of “Horticulture Happenings” covers two months so I have added one pest profile that covers several species that are common in the summer months. While these may not be 100% garden pests they have an impact on our summer hobbies.

Our pests are Hive Wasps. This pest profile comes from The University of Kentucky Entomology Critter Files. It was curated by Ric Bessin and Blake Newton, University of Kentucky. The Kentucky Critter Files are maintained by Blake Newton, Department of Entomology, University of Kentucky.

Information provided to you by Cheyenne Lamb,  
Montgomery County Horticulture Agent.

Feel free to get in touch with me at [cheyenne.lamb@uky.edu](mailto:cheyenne.lamb@uky.edu) or call me at (859) 417-7080 or stop by my office located at the Montgomery County Extension Office Annex building, 102 E. Locust Street, Mt. Sterling, KY 40353.





# HIVE WASPS



## WHAT ARE HIVE WASPS?

Paper Wasps, Hornets, and Yellowjackets are a group of closely related wasps in the family Vespidae. Like all wasps, these have four transparent or translucent wings and chewing mouthparts. All of the wasps mentioned on this page live in social colonies in above- or below-ground hives. It can be difficult to distinguish hive wasps from some of the larger solitary wasps. The best way is to observe behavior: hive wasps will remain close to their hive and return to it often during their daily routine. Also, many hive wasps have distinct patterns of red-and-black, white-and-black, or yellow-and-black (although some solitary wasps have similar color patterns). Adult body length can be up to 1 1/8".

## LIFE CYCLE

Like all wasps, paper wasps, hornets, and yellowjackets have complete metamorphosis with egg, larva, pupa, and adult stages. Because these wasps live in social colonies, all of the immature life stages are kept inside the hive and are rarely seen. Hive wasp larvae are soft and maggot-like and live inside small cells within the hive, where they also pupate. Eggs are laid by the dominant queens. The majority of the members of a hive are female. Only a few males appear each year, and their role is to fertilize queens. Queens lay eggs during warm months. When the eggs hatch, the helpless larvae are fed by workers. During winter months, all of the colony dies except for a few egg-baring females who hide in protected areas until the following spring. Each hive or nest consists of very closely related siblings. Wasps from different hives do not work together.

## ECOLOGY

Paper wasps, hornets, and yellowjackets are social insects that live and work together in hives. Workers patrol the local environment for food and bring it back to the hive to feed larvae and other hive members. Hive wasps are omnivores, and gather a wide variety of food, but insects and other arthropods are a primary food. Hornet, yellowjacket, and wasp hives often have dozens or hundreds of members. Members of a single hive can catch and eat thousands of insects, including pest species. In addition to gathering food, workers also labor to build hives. Hives are complex structures made of a paper-like substance that the wasps make from partially chewed wood. Worker wasps are equipped with stingers, and they use these weapons to defend their hives from predators (wasp larvae are a very good food source for many predators, including mammals, birds, and insects). Hive wasps are very tough, but they are sometimes killed and eaten by birds, spiders, and other insects.

## PEST STATUS

Although paper wasps, hornets, and yellowjackets eat lots of pest insects and are often beneficial to humans, hives that exist close to human environments can cause problems. In fact, wasps, hornets, and yellowjackets can be a serious medical concern, especially for people who are allergic to their stings.

## HIVE WASP FACTS

The stings of worker wasps, hornets, and yellowjackets are modified egg-laying structures called "ovipositors." Because workers do not lay eggs, their ovipositors are used only for stinging. Although all of the wasps mentioned on this page are in the family Vespidae, not all wasps in this family live in hives. Some are solitary and live alone in small burrows.

# COMMON HIVE WASPS IN KENTUCKY

## PAPER WASPS

SUBFAMILY: Polistinae | GENUS: *Polistes*, others

**Paper Wasps** are among the most common insects encountered around homes. Paper wasp nests are usually built on tree limbs and under the eaves of homes. Unlike the nests of hornets and yellowjackets, paper wasp nests are not completely enclosed.

Paper wasp nests are also usually smaller than the nests of hornets and yellowjackets. There are several paper wasp species in Kentucky, and most are about 1" long with vivid red, black, orange, and yellow patterns.



Paper Wasp (R. Bessin, 2000)



Paper Wasp Nest (R. Bessin, 2000)



## YELLOWJACKETS

SUBFAMILY: Vespinae | GENUS: *Vespula* & *Dolichovespula*

**Yellowjackets** are close relatives of hornets and are in the same subfamily, Vespinae. These wasps have a bold black-and-yellow pattern and are usually 1/2-3/4" long. They build their nests underground in animal burrows or in hollow logs or wall voids.

Yellowjackets are common around humans, and sometimes cause problems at picnics and other outdoor activities.



Yellowjacket (R. Bessin, 2000)



## HORNETS

SUBFAMILY: Vespinae

The most common **Hornet** in Kentucky is probably the **Bald-Faced Hornet** (3/8" long), *Dolichovespula maculata* (recently changed from *Vespula maculata*), pictured below. These distinctive black-and-white wasps build large nests in the limbs of trees and other such locations. Kentucky is also home to the **Giant Hornet**, also called the **European Hornet**, *Vespa crabro*. The giant hornet is our largest hornet, reaching lengths of 1 1/8." It is very similar in appearance to the smaller [yellowjacket](#). The European Hornet is not a native insect, but was introduced to the United States in the 1800s. Giant hornets often build their nests in enclosed spaces, such as hollow trees, animal burrows, and wall voids in buildings. Hornets are typically not as common around homes as paper wasps and yellowjackets, preferring to make their nests in forests, meadows, and rural areas.



Bald-faced Hornet (R. Bessin, 2000)





# PRODUCE PROFILE

This edition of “Horticulture Happenings” produce profile is tomato. This article comes from Kentucky State University Extension. It was written by Dr. Leigh Whittinghill, Assistant Professor of Urban Agriculture.

Information provided to you by Cheyenne Lamb,  
Montgomery County Horticulture Agent.

Feel free to get in touch with me at [cheyenne.lamb@uky.edu](mailto:cheyenne.lamb@uky.edu) or call me at (859) 417-7080 or stop by my office located at the Montgomery County Extension Office Annex building, 102 E. Locust Street, Mt. Sterling, KY 40353.

## Tomatoes

**Dr. Leigh Whittinghill**, Assistant Professor of Urban Agriculture

There are many varieties of tomatoes that come in many sizes. If you like to eat tomatoes in salad, consider a cherry variety. Larger varieties may be better for making sauces and salsa.

### Planting

- Tomatoes are best planted from transplants. To start transplants, plant seeds at a depth of  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch 4 to 7 weeks before planned planting date.
- If purchasing transplants, look for plants 6 to 10 inches tall.
- Tomato transplants should be planted between April 20 and July 1, May 5 and June 15, and May 15 and June 1 in western, central, and eastern Kentucky.
- Transplants should be spaced 24 inches apart.



### Care and Harvest

- Indeterminate varieties, require staking, but can provide a continuous supply of fruit (up to 15 lbs) and are recommended for home gardens.
- Tomato cages, twine attached to a frame, or 6 foot stakes placed 1 foot into the ground can be used to support growing tomato plants.
- Indeterminate tomato plants should be pruned to 1 or 2 main stems. Determinate varieties will not require pruning.
- Water about 1 inch per week (including rain). Take special care to provide water after flowering starts.
- If using compost, add 0.17 cubic feet of compost per square foot of bed space.
- 2.5 lb/100 sq ft of a 5-10-10-10 fertilizer should be enough for a small garden.
- 5 Tbs of a high nitrogen fertilizer (eg. 33-0-0) is recommended 1 to 2 weeks before first picking and



- again 2 weeks after first picking. Too much nitrogen can cause plants to get very leafy and produce bland fruit.
- Tomatoes are ready for harvest 60-90 days after the seeds were planted, with cherry and smaller varieties producing sooner.
- Pick ripe tomatoes at maximum color, but before they get soft.



## Storage and Use

- Green tomatoes can also be picked and ripened in a dark place covered with paper. The process may take up to 2 weeks, and tomatoes should be checked regularly for damage.
- A wide variety of recipes are also available for green tomatoes.
- Washed, ripe tomatoes will keep for a week at room temperature and up to two weeks in the refrigerator.
- Tomatoes produce ethylene, which may cause other vegetables or fruit to ripen faster if they are stored together.
- Tomatoes can be caned using either hot packed or fresh pack methods leaving  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch of head space. Process in boiling water for 35-40 min for pints and 45-50 min for quarts depending on packing method and recipe.



## References

Home Vegetable Gardening in Kentucky. ID-128. University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service

Markham, B.L. 2014. The MiniFarming™ Bible: The Complete Guide to Self-Sufficiency on  $\frac{1}{4}$  Acre. SkyHorse Publishing. New York, New York.

Rombauer, I.S. M.R. Becker, and E. Becker. 2006. "Salsa Fresco". Joy of Cooking. Scribner. New York, New York. Pg 571.

## RECIPE



### Salsa Fresco, or Pico de Gallo

*From The Joy of Cooking*

**Combine in a medium bowl:**

- $\frac{1}{2}$  small onion, finely chopped, rinsed and drained
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 2 large ripe tomatoes, seeded if desired and finely diced
- $\frac{1}{4}$  -  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped cilantro
- 3-5 serrano or jalapeno peppers or  $\frac{1}{4}$  to 1 habanero pepper seeded and minced
- 6 radishes finely minced- optional
- 1 medium garlic clove, minced- optional

**Stir together well. Season with salt to taste.**

*Makes 2 cups, serve immediately.*

# LET'S GET COOKING

## Farmer's Market Skillet Bake

<b>½</b> small onion, finely chopped	<b>2 cups</b> shredded mozzarella cheese, divided	<b>4</b> medium sized tomatoes, sliced
<b>2</b> cloves garlic, minced	<b>1</b> medium summer squash, sliced	<b>1 teaspoon</b> salt
<b>4-5</b> small red potatoes, sliced	<b>1</b> medium zucchini, sliced	<b>1 teaspoon</b> pepper
<b>1 tablespoon</b> olive oil		<b>5</b> fresh basil leaves, finely chopped, divided

**Preheat** oven to 375 degrees F. **Prepare** onion, garlic and sliced potatoes (about ¼ inch thick). **Heat** olive oil over medium heat in a 10 or 12-inch oven safe skillet. **Add** onion, garlic, and potatoes to pan and **stir** to coat with oil. **Cook** over medium heat, **stirring** occasionally until golden brown and tender. **Add** 1 cup mozzarella cheese. In a bowl, **toss** together the squash, zucchini and tomatoes with salt, pepper, and half of the finely chopped basil. **Layer** squash

and tomato slices over the potato and cheese layer. **Top** with remaining mozzarella cheese. **Bake** 35 minutes or until vegetables are tender and cheese is melted. **Remove** skillet from oven and **top** with remaining basil.

**Yield:** 8, 1 cup servings

**Nutritional Analysis:** 200 calories, 8 g fat, 4 g saturated fat, 20 mg cholesterol, 490 mg sodium, 24 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber, 5 g sugars, 10 g protein.



## Summer Squash

**SEASON:** June through October.

**NUTRITION FACTS:** Squash is low in calories. One cup raw squash contains only 20 calories. It contains vitamins A and C, and is naturally free of fat, cholesterol and sodium.

**SELECTION:** Popular summer squashes include yellow crookneck, yellow straightneck, zucchini, cocozelle and patty pan. Summer squash should be picked or purchased when small and tender; both skin and seeds are eaten. The peel holds many of the nutrients so do not peel. It should be harvested when 6 to 8 inches in length. Patty pan squashes are ready when they are 3 to 4 inches in diameter or less.

**STORAGE:** Store unwashed squash in plastic bags in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator. Wash the squash

just before preparing. The storage life of summer squash is brief. Plan to use within two to three days.

**PREPARATION:** Summer squash is a mild flavored vegetable that combines well with herbs and seasonings. Try it with basil, allspice, rosemary and marjoram. Cook summer squash as a vegetable or use in stews, casseroles and main dishes. Summer squash can be grilled, steamed, boiled, sautéed, fried or used in stir-fry recipes.

**PRESERVING:** Select small squash with small seeds and a tender rind. Wash and cut into ½ inch slices and heat in boiling water for 3 minutes. Cool promptly in cold water and drain. Pack in containers leaving ½ inch headspace. Seal and freeze.

### SUMMER SQUASH

#### Kentucky Proud Project

County Extension Agents for Family and Consumer Sciences

University of Kentucky, Dietetics and Human Nutrition students

June 2017

**Source:** [www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov)

Buying Kentucky Proud is easy. Look for the label at your grocery store, farmers market, or roadside stand. <http://plateitup.ca.uky.edu>



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