Montgomery County HORTICULTURE HAPPENINGS May 2025

Cooperative Extension Service

Cheyenne Lamb Cheyenne Lamb CEA for Horticulture 106 E. Locust Street Mt. Sterling, KY 40353 Phone: (859) 498-8741 cheyenne.lamb@uky.edu

FEATURED THIS MONTH:

- A Gardener's Toolkit Reminder- Page 2
- Alpha Gal Webinar Watch Party- Page 3
- Preventing Plant Diseases-Page 4
- Container Gardening- Page 5
- Integrated Pest Management Corner- Pages 6-8
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The weather is getting warmer and the gardens are kicking off! I cannot wait to see many of you at the Toolkit series that starts on the 5th! I am also planning some workshops based on suggestions from YOU!!! Thank you to all who took the time to make some suggestions. If you have not yet or have thought of more the QR code is here again. Let's have the best May ever!





Cooperative Extension Service

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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Disabilities accommodated with prior notification.

Lexington, KY 40506

Extension Service

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 May classes

Companion Planting May 5th at 5:00 p.m. Container Gardening May 19th at 5:00 p.m.

All classes are held on the first, third, and fifth Monday of each month at 5:00 p.m. They will be hosted in the Montgomery County Cooperative Extension Annex garage 102 E. Locust Street Mt. Sterling, KY 40353.

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Cheyenne Lamb Montgomery Horticulture Cooperative Extension Service

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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Thursday, May 29, 2025 @ 7:00pm EST

ALPHA-GAL SYNDROME

WEBINAR

FREE tick bite removal kit for each attendee!

th prior notification.

Learn more about AGS (red meat allergy) and how to reduce your risk with the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension!

TOPICS COVERED:

- V AGS basics
- Tick bite prevention
- 🔨 Diet & lifestyle management



REGISTER NOW



How to Attend:

 Virtually (Zoom, Teams, etc.)
In-Person watch party at the Montgomery County Extension
Office, 104 E Locust Street, Mt. Sterling, KY 40353

> OR call to register: 859-498-8741

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EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES TO PREVENT PLANT DISEASES IN YOUR GARDEN







In the unseen sphere of our vegetable gardens, plant pathogens including fungi, bacteria, nematodes and viruses are ever-present threats. However, with proactive measures, gardeners can successfully manage these threats and maintain healthy vegetable gardens.

Selecting the right location for your garden is the first step in prevention. Opt for a sunny area with well-drained soil to discourage the growth of pathogens. Raised beds can be an effective solution for improving drainage and air circulation around plants. It's also crucial to clear out old plant debris, which can harbor diseases from the previous season.

When choosing plants, prioritize disease-resistant varieties and inspect any transplants for signs of disease before introducing them to your garden. For seeds, consider those that have been treated with fungicide to give them a better chance of thriving. Planting in warm soil and ensuring proper spacing between plants are additional measures that can minimize stress and disease susceptibility.

Crop rotation is an invaluable strategy, especially in smaller gardens. Changing what's planted in a specific area every few years can prevent the buildup of soil-borne diseases. For crops that are particularly disease-prone, consider skipping their cultivation for a few years or growing them in containers separate from the garden.

Maintaining a weed-free garden throughout the growing season is essential. Weeds can serve as hosts for pests and diseases, transferring them to your vegetable plants. Proper watering techniques can also make a significant difference, water at the base of plants to avoid wetting foliage, and if overhead watering is necessary, do so early in the day to allow leaves to dry.

Avoiding mechanical injury to plants, such as from gardening tools or rough handling, can prevent openings for pathogens. Furthermore, refraining from working in the garden when plants are wet can reduce the spread of diseases.

By taking these steps gardeners can effectively manage plant diseases. This approach not only protects the garden from the myriad of pathogens waiting to attack but also leads to a bountiful and healthy harvest.

Information provided to you by Cheyenne Lamb, Montgomery County Horticulture Agent. Source: Rick Durham, UK horticulture extension specialist.

For more information on gardening tips, contact your Montgomery County Extension office.

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CONTAINER GARDENING

Not everyone has acreage or land where they can just dig in the soil. As long as you have a sunny spot, whether it be a balcony or parking lot, if you can get sunlight, you can grow flowers or vegetables in containers. It isn't difficult.

Just about any container will do, but the smaller the container, you will be more of a slave to it. Unless you work from home, are a stay at home parent, or retired, small containers do not make any sense. Don't use anything smaller than half of a bourbon barrel, 24 inches in diameter, if you are going to grow tomato plants. The more soil you can give that plant, relative to its size, the less water and maintenance you will have to do.

You can grow anything in a container, but remember, the larger the plant the more challenging it is. Lettuce, radishes and plants that don't grow tall, and don't require a lot of water, are very easy to grow in containers. There is no denying, plants in containers depend on you for everything. Generally, watering is a daily chore and if you let plants dry out and become stressed, you will limit how much they can produce.

Being in containers, plants don't have access to the nutrients in natural soil, which is usually a potting soil or soil mix. You have the commitment of feeding or fertilizing on a regular basis. Young people are very interested in horticulture right now. They usually live in apartments before owning a home, and that makes container gardening a perfect fit.

Containers can be of any size or shape. Container gardens are elevated and do not contain native soil. Raised beds require much less watering than container gardening.

One of the most popular questions at extension offices concerning container gardening is about blossom end rot, which is associated with tomatoes, and is technically a calcium deficiency. Blossom end rot is actually the lack of consistent watering, making it hard to grow a full-sized tomato in a container without running into issues. Plant breeders have gotten around that by developing containerbred varieties which are much shorter plants. Dwarf tomato plants get about two feet tall and need only about a third of the water that a full-size tomato plant requires. There are a multitude of varieties of other vegetables that are bred for container gardening.

Information provided to you by Cheyenne Lamb, Montgomery County Horticulture Agent. Source: Jamie Dockery, UK extension horticulture agent

For more information on gardening tips, contact your Montgomery County Extension office.

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INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT CORNER

A NEW feature to "Horticulture Happenings" is the IPM (Integrated Pest Management) corner! Here you will find an article about a popular pest and the controls for it for the season we are in.

Our very first pest is the periodical cicada. This article comes from Penn State University Extension. It was written by Grzegorz (Greg) Krawczyk, Ph.D., Research Professor, Extension Tree Fruit Entomologist.

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

Feel free to get in touch with me at 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.



PERIODICAL CICADA



Description and Life Cycle

Beginning about the third week in May, in areas where cicada are due to emerge and continuing into June, mature nymphs (young) dig themselves out of the ground in great numbers, crawl to the nearest tree trunk, shrub, or other vertical surface, and climb several inches up. The nymph's skin then splits down the back, and the winged, sexually mature adult emerges. The adult is about 1.5 inches long, mostly black, with red eyes and other reddish markings. The wings are large and clear except for orange-red veins. Males are capable of producing an ear-splitting, high-pitched whine. Females, which produce no sound, are attracted to the males to mate.

A week to 10 days after the males begin "singing," the females begin to lay eggs. Each female lays up to 400 eggs in 40 to 50 pockets in the wood of several small branches of many types of trees. More than 75 species of trees are known to be attacked. The type of branch preferred by the females is about the width of a pencil up to ½ inch in diameter or a little larger. To lay eggs, a female slices into the wood of the branch with her egg-laying apparatus and places the egg into the wood. She usually lays one to several dozen eggs in a single branch before moving to another branch or tree. This egg-laying activity lasts approximately 30 days, and about 6 to 7 weeks later the eggs hatch into tiny white nymphs. The nymphs fall to the ground and burrow into the soil to feed on grass roots and, eventually, tree roots for the next 17 years. A numbering system established in 1893 to keep track of these broods is still used today.

Damage

Cicadas damage fruit trees in two ways. The most obvious damage is done during the egg-laying process. The slits made by the female in small branches severely weaken them, often the weakened branches snap off in the wind. Under a heavy attack, a majority of the branch tips may be killed. In larger trees, where most of the branches are larger than the preferred thickness for egg laying, the loss of even most of the branch tips may not severely damage the tree. However, in small trees 4 years old or less, most of the branches are of the preferred size. Under a heavy attack, such a tree can be severely damaged and sometimes killed. Therefore, control measures should be concentrated on these small trees. Moreover, with the emphasis placed on early training and pruning of fruit trees, the loss of incipient scaffold limbs can affect the productivity of a tree for the rest of its life.

The second type of damage is less obvious. After entering the ground, the nymphs eventually attach themselves to the roots of the fruit tree, insert their needlelike mouthparts into the roots, and feed on nutrients that would otherwise help the tree grow and produce fruit. Feeding by hundreds or even thousands of these insects on a tree root system for 17 years probably affects the tree productivity, although this has never been fully documented.

Monitoring

It is difficult to predict whether or not a particular orchard will be severely affected. The best strategy is to be alert for the first signs of male "singing" and to scout the orchards intensively a week later to look for egg-laying females. Considering the potential damage this insect can cause, a fruit grower can take several actions to minimize any detrimental effects.

PERIODICAL CICADA CONTINUED

Cultural Management

Such actions include delaying planting to avoid cicada emergence and postponing until summer the winter pruning of trees less than 4 years old. Delayed pruning would decrease the probability of damage to incipient scaffold limbs and give the grower a chance to remove damaged wood after cicadas have finished laying eggs. Summer pruning and the removal of trimmings from the orchard, if done within the 4- to 6-week period after eggs are laid but before nymphs fall to the ground, would allow the grower to prevent many cicadas from feeding on tree roots for the next 17 years. During the emergence period the most immediate problem is to protect trees (especially young trees) from damage caused by egg laying. There are two strategies to accomplish this objective, depending primarily on the size of the orchard. Trees in small orchards or backyards can be protected mechanically by enclosing them in netting or some other kind of cloth for the duration of the egg-laying period. This cloth should have a mesh size no larger than about 14 inch. The netting should be placed on trees when the first male singing is heard and removed after adult activity has stopped. All branches less than 1⁄2 inch in diameter should be protected.

Chemical Management

If netting is too expensive or too time-consuming, pesticide sprays may need to be used. There are several pesticide options. Pyrethroid insecticides, with quick knockdown, a fairly long residual action, and repellant properties, are recommended for young fruit trees. The frequency of applications will depend on egg-laying pressure. We recommend scouting the orchard every 2 or 3 days during the egg-laying period to check on the effectiveness of any insecticide applications that have been applied. If much egg-laying activity is apparent, another repeat application should be considered. Neonicotinoid insecticides should also provide adequate control of adult cicadas.

Remember that a constant vigil must be kept during an outbreak because cicadas can reinvade an orchard from adjacent woodlots. Be aware that pyrethroids can be disruptive to the Stethorus-mite balance in the orchard and will probably cause mite outbreaks later in the season. With small trees, however, this is usually manageable. In orchards with older trees pyrethroid use is not recommended because subsequent mite problems may be more costly than the cicada injury. We do not recommend using carbaryl because of its possible impact on thinning and mites.

Contact your Montgomery County Extension Office for chemical recommendations for homeowners and commercial growers.





PRODUCE PROFILE

A NEW feature to "Horticulture Happenings" is the Produce Profile! Here you will find an article about in season produce and how to grow it, harvest it, and store it.

Our very first produce profile is lettuce. 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 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.

♥1,890 Growing for the future. #kysuag

LEARN INFORMATION FROM KENTUCKY STATE UNIVERSITY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Lettuce

Dr. Leigh Whittinghill, Assistant Professor of Urban Agriculture

Planting

- Lettuces should be grown in the spring starting April 1, March 25, or March 15 or in the fall until July 1, July 15, and Aug 1 in Eastern, Central, and Western Kentucky for head lettuce. Leaf lettuce can be grown a little later in the fall.
- Lettuce can be planted in a shadier part of the garden or in the shadow of taller plants. This can actually help prevent bolting, which affects flavor, during the warmest parts of the growing season.
- Plant seeds at a depth of ¼ inch. The use of a seed spoon or dial seed sewer will help ensure one seed per hole.
- If planting seeds to start transplants, plant seeds 5 to 7 weeks before planting date.
- Final plant spacing should be 12-18 inches for head lettuce and ½ inch apart for leaf lettuce.
- Hotbeds, cold frames, or hoop houses can be used to grow during the winter.
- If planting in a container it should be 8 inches deep. With adequate light, container lettuce can be grown indoors year round.
- Stagger planting, or use succession planting, to ensure a harvest throughout the year.

Care and Harvest

- Head lettuce is ready for harvest about 45-60 days after planting. Leaf lettuce mixes may be ready for harvest about 30 days after planting.
- Harvesting the largest plants first, or every other plant in a row, can increase the harvest from remaining plants





- Many leaf lettuce varieties can be cut and allowed to regrow for up to 4 harvests. Plants will regenerate in about two weeks.
- Lettuce can be harvested using a sharp, serrated knife, like a steak knife.

Storage and Use

- Lettuce should not be washed before storage. Harvest when dry, store, and wash before use.
- Store in a refrigerator crisper drawer, for about 2 weeks if it is a crisphead variety or for up to 4 weeks for bib and leaf lettuces.
- Head lettuce varieties are great for sandwiches, burgers, wraps and more.
- Leaf lettuce varieties are great for salads.
- Lettuce varieties come in many colors and different flavors. Experiment with varieties and mixes to add new flavors to your salads, sandwiches and more.



- Home Vegetable Gardening in Kentucky. ID-128. University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service
- Johnnyseeds.com. 2018. Lettuce. http://www.johnnyseeds.com/vegetables/onions/white-spear-onion-seed-503.html?cgid=onions#start=1 (accessed 15 June, 2018)
- Markham, B.L. 2014. The MiniFarmingTM Bible: The Complete Guide to Self-Sufficiency on ¼ Acre. SkyHorse Publishing. New York, New York.
- Stone, C. 2016. The Urban Farmer: Growing Food for Profit on Leased and Borrowed Land. New Society Publishers. Gabriola Island, BC, Canada.





COOPERCEVE INSIGN PROGRAM

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Spring Harvest Salad

		-	
	5 cups torn spring leaf lettuce	Dressing: 4 teaspoons lemon juice	2 teaspoons Kentucky honey
	2½ cups spinach leaves 1½ cups sliced strawberries	2½ tablespoons olive oil 1 tablespoon balsamic	1/2 teaspoon salt 1/4 cup feta cheese crumbles
	1 cup fresh blueberries 1/2 cup thinly sliced green onions	vinegar 1½ teaspoons Dijon mustard	⅓ cup unsalted sliced almonds
	1. Combine leaf lettuce and spinach leaves with sliced strawberries, blueberries and green onion in a large salad bowl. 3	balsamic vinegar, Dijon mustard, honey and salt; pour over lettuce mixture and toss to coat. Sprinkle salad with	Yield: 8, 1 cup servings. Nutrition Analysis: 130 calories, 9 g fat, 1.5 g sat fat, 240 mg sodium, 12 g carbohydrates, 3 g fiber, 7 g sugar, 3 g protein.
	2. Prepare dressing by whisking together the lemon juice, olive oil, Buying Kentucky Proud	feta cheese and sliced almonds. Serve immediately. Is easy. Look for the label at years' market, or roadside stand.	wate it up

Kentucky Lettuce

SEASON: Early to late spring.

NUTRITION FACTS: Lettuces have 5 to15 calories per cup depending on variety. Lettuce provides vitamins A and C, calcium and iron.

SELECTION: Choose crisp, brightly colored lettuce with no blemishes, slime, browning or wilted leaves. **STORAGE:** Store washed and dried lettuce in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for three to five days, depending on the variety.

PREPARATION: Wash well and dry before using. Add dressing just before serving to prevent wilting. Lettuce is almost always eaten raw in salads or on sandwiches. Lettuce can also be steamed or added to soups at the end of cooking.

KENTUCKY LETTUCE Kentucky Proud Project

County Extension Agents for Family and Consumer Sciences University of Kentucky, Dietetics and Human Nutrition students

April 2017

Source: 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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