AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Cooperative Extension Service

Bath County
Ag and Natural Re-

From the Ground

Bath County Agricultural Newsletter

April 2025

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Bath County Extension Agent for Agriculture and Natural Resources

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS:

BEEF QUALITY AND CARE TRAININGS (BQCA)
FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL
BQCA is offered free of charge in April

Bath County will host two trainings
Tuesday April 22nd—10:30 a.m. Bath County Ag Center
Tuesday April 22nd—5:30 p.m. Bath County Ag Center

You may also take the training free of charge on line from your home.
Visit www.kybeefnetwork.com to do the online program.

For more information, contact Bath County Extension Office at 674-6121

FREE SOIL TESTING

The Bath County Extension Office is offering free soil testing in 2025

Crop ground, gardens, lawns and fruit plantings

Bring your soil (at least a pint) to the office to have your soil tested and have a recommendation made for your particular crop.

Spring Harvest Salad

5 cups torn spring leaf lettuce

2½ cups spinach leaves

1½ cups sliced strawberries

1 cup fresh blueberries

½ cup thinly sliced green onions

Dressing:

4 teaspoons lemon juice

2½ tablespoons olive oil

1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar

1½ teaspoons Dijon mustard

2 teaspoons Kentucky honey

½ teaspoon salt

¼ cup feta cheese crumbles

½ cup unsalted sliced almonds

1. **Combine** leaf lettuce and spinach leaves with sliced strawberries, blueberries and green onion in a large salad bowl.
2. **Prepare** dressing by whisking together the lemon juice, olive oil, balsamic vinegar, Dijon mustard, honey and salt; **pour** over lettuce mixture and toss to coat.
3. **Sprinkle** salad with feta cheese and sliced almonds.
4. **Serve** immediately.

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.*

Buying Kentucky Proud is easy. Look for the label at your grocery store, farmers' market, or roadside stand.

Plate it up! Kentucky Proud

Kentucky Lettuce

SEASON: Early to late spring.

NUTRITION FACTS: Lettuces have 5-15 calories per cup depending on variety.

Lettuce provides vitamins A and C, calcium, and iron.

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.

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.

Source: www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov

LETTUCE

Kentucky Proud Project

County Extension Agents for Family and Consumer Sciences

University of Kentucky, Nutrition and Food Science students

March 2012

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

UK UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY College of Agriculture

CONSIDERATIONS FOR SPRING LAWNS

Although it is still winter, now is a good time to think about your lawn and to begin planning your weed control and seeding activities.

One of the first considerations is annual weed control (crabgrass). In central Kentucky we try to apply a pre-emergent to the lawn to prevent the emergence of these pesky weeds. There are a good many products on the market, and most do a satisfactory job when applied between April 1 and April 15.

Broadleaf control is the next item to consider. Dandelions are the most noticeable of our lawn broadleaves, but others include plantain, chickweed, thistle, purple deadnettle, henbit, and a wide range of others. Most products used for broadleaf control contain 2,4-D salts. When mixed properly, 2,4-D will not harm the established grass.

In some instances, you may find yourself faced with a more stubborn weed, wild violet for instance. In these instances, a more aggressive approach may be needed. Products containing MCCP, dicamba, triclopyr or clopyralid may be mixed with the 2,4-D to create a more effective broadleaf control chemical.

The product needed is based on the type of weed or weeds that you are trying to remove from your landscape.

The extension office can assist you through weed identification and chemical recommendations. This service is free.

At times, we deal with perennial weeds such as Bentgrass, Bermudagrass or Quackgrass. In these cases, a non-selective control program, such as glyphosate (roundup, Kleenup or Knock-out) or glufosinate products (Finale) can be used as a directed spray.

The one consideration that must be made early on is whether you are planning to reseed the area where you are considering treatment.

Most herbicides have some residual activity which can adversely affect grass seed germination (Roundup does not have this problem). In the case with 2,4-D, the label should be followed regarding time of application and seeding times. The time to wait could be as much as 3 to 4 weeks. The time period after using a pre-emergent for seeding may be much greater. One product, Siduron, which is a pre-emergent can be applied at the time of seeding new grass, but is better if applied a few days later.

The extension office has a publication, AGR-208 which has a good listing of weeds and products labeled for their control. This publication can also be downloaded from the University of Kentucky website.

Forcing branches of woody plants into flower.

Rick Durham –Extension Horticulture Specialist

Winter can be dreary at times. A few branches of flowers from the garden would give us hope that spring is just around the corner. Why not force some branches from spring-flowering trees and shrubs into flower early? Some plants well suited to forcing include forsythia, red maple, spirea, and dogwood. Others include apples, pears and peaches, as well as crabapples and ornamental pears.

Follow good pruning practices when you remove branches. Prune back to an outward facing bud or remove branches entirely by cutting back to a natural branch point. A first priority for pruning would be branches that appear diseased, crowded, or growing downward. Once you have brought the branches indoors, make a fresh slanted cut at the base of the branch just before you add it to a vase. Place the branches into slightly warm water containing a floral preservative. You can make your own preservative solution with 2 cups lemon-lime soda, 2 cups water, and ½ teaspoon chlorine bleach. Keep the branches in a cool (60-65F) area, away from direct light, and change the solution every 4 or 5 days. Once flower color is evident the branches can be moved to a well-lit room and arranged to suit the occasion.

Miniature Roses. Rick Durham – Extension Horticulture Specialist

Roses are a popular gift on Valentine's and Mother's Day. If you haven't noticed, there are now many varieties of miniature roses on the market that can serve a dual purpose. Use them as gifts on special occasions and then add them to the landscape. They make great additions to rock gardens or can be used as a short hedge. Better yet, grow them in containers in your landscape so that they can be moved indoors for decorating on special occasions.

Most miniature roses are hardy and will flourish for many years outdoors if cared for properly. Miniature roses given for Valentines Day should be kept indoors until the threat of frost is past. Even though these plants are quite hardy, they will not withstand frosts when actively growing. For most parts of Kentucky it would be safe to transplant these actively growing roses in early to mid May. The plants will need a sunny location outdoors but they should be introduced to full sun gradually. First place the pots outdoors in a shady location and each day move it to a slightly sunnier spot. After a week to 10 days, the plants should be exposed to fairly full sun and be ready to transplant.

Keep plants well watered, but water the base of the plant, not the foliage. This reduces problems with disease. Also fertilize regularly with a complete fertilizer according to label directions. Remove faded blooms and trim back longer shoots to encourage bushier growth. In late winter, prune back at least half of the stem length, or even prune back individual stems to the lowest, outward facing bud. If your plants are growing in containers, sink the entire container into the ground during winter, or cover the containers with mulch to insulate the root system from extreme cold.

Diseases such as black spot and powdery mildew may be a problem on miniature roses as they are on the full sized plants. Disease may be less severe if plants are placed in an area where they receive morning sun and good air circulation. Diseases can also be controlled with fungicide applications. Contact your county extension agent for a recommended list of fungicides to use on roses. The most serious insect pests of miniature roses are Japanese beetles, aphids, and spider mites. The beetles can be picked off by hand, and mites and aphids can be controlled with sprays of insecticidal soaps and summer oils that pose little threat to humans or the environment.

So as you are shopping for flowers this spring, why not try some miniature roses. The cost is similar to cut flowers, and the plants can add beauty to the landscape for years to come.

Time for Eastern Tent Caterpillar Egg Hatch

After spending about 9 months as eggs in masses on twigs of wild cherry and related trees, the first few tiny eastern tent caterpillars (ETC) of the season should soon be leaving their eggs. The onset of the single generation that occurs each year varies with the character of the season. Hatch was noted as early as March 14, 2012 during an unseasonably warm spring and as late as April 2, 2014 during one that was slow to develop.

Figure 1. Newly-hatched eastern tent caterpillars on an egg mass (Photo: Lee Townsend, UK)

The small but hardy worms are among the first insects to become active in spring. They are prepared to cope with erratic temperature swings. Egg hatch is relatively random and occurs over an extended period. This increases the chance for survival in case of late freezes. In addition, these resilient caterpillars will remain clustered on egg masses (Figure 1) to "wait-out" temperatures that are too low for feeding and development. ETC grow and develop when the temperature is above 37°F.

While it is possible to predict approximately when to expect tent caterpillar activity, there is no reliable information to track general population trends other than observing local activity and watching for tents to develop from mid-March through mid-April. You can find more information on this topic in the Extension publication, *Checking Eastern Tent Caterpillar Egg Masses* (EntFacts-449) available at the Bath County Extension Office.

By Lee Townsend, Extension Entomologist

Be Ready for the Alfalfa Weevil!

Alfalfa weevil is the key pest of the first cutting. Populations have been above normal over much of the state during the past 2 years, so it is important to be watchful this spring. High populations may last for 2 to 3 years before natural enemies, diseases, and climatic factors begin to take their toll.

Temperature drives insect development, so they may appear early or late, depending on how the spring unfolds. Fortunately, an alfalfa weevil degree-day model can indicate when to start checking fields for tip feeding (Figure 1), the signature damage of this key crop pest.

The table below shows the variation in degree-day accumulation that can occur in consecutive years, along with the predicted values for 2018.

Scouting for Alfalfa Weevil

The accumulation of 190 degree-days (base 48°F) signals the time when early tip damage can appear in fields. Check degree-day accumulations for your area at the UK Ag Weather http://weather.uky.edu/dd.php

The second critical time to check for damage should occur when 225 degree-days have accumulated. At this time, spring-laid eggs should have begun to hatch. Pay particular attention to fields that had significant weevil damage last spring.

Weevil scouting procedure is outlined in *Alfalfa Weevil Sampling Program* (EntFact 127).

Year	East Rowan Co	Central Fayette Co	South Warren Co	West Caldwell Co
2015	7-Apr	9-Apr	1-Apr	2-Apr
2016	15-Mar	14-Mar	12-Mar	3-Mar
2018*	19-Mar	24-Mar	***25-Feb***	12-Mar

Table 1. Historical degree-day accumulations for 2015 and 2016 indicate the potential variation in initial appearance of tip feeding by the alfalfa weevil and predicted dates for 2018.

Figure 1. Tip feeding by alfalfa weevil (Photo: Lee Townsend, UK)

TIPS FOR THE SPRING GARDEN

The Spring Garden The spring garden contains cool‐season crops that are planted and harvested from late winter to late spring. The seed of some of these crops can be planted directly in the garden soil, while others will need to be started in a greenhouse or other suitable growing area and then transplanted to the garden.

Spring garden plants grow best with relatively cool air temperatures (50° to 65°F) and are raised either for their leaves, stems or flower buds. Peas are grown for their immature fruits. These crops produce their vegetative growth during spring's short, cool days. If they are planted too late in the spring, summer heat reduces their quality by forcing some to flower and form seeds (bolt), and others to develop off flavors, bitterness, poor texture and low yields.

Avoid these problems by planting spring vegetables as soon as the soil can be worked in the spring since light frost will not injure them. Plant either seeds or transplants, allowing the vegetables to reach edible maturity before hot summer days arrive.

Plant as soon as the soil is workable and dry enough so it does not form wet clods. Do not work the soil when it is wet. Doing so can ruin the texture for several years. Wait for the best conditions no matter how much the planting bug is nibbling at your fingers.

Do not use organic mulches in early spring. Rather, let as much sunlight as possible reach the soil to warm it. After May 1, you can use mulches to conserve soil moisture and help prevent weeds

Plant spring garden crops together so that you can plant fall vegetables in the same area later. When "double cropping," do not plant closely related vegetables in the same rows because of possible disease and insect carryover from the spring crop.

Table 10. Crops for the spring garden.

Vegetable	Seeds	Transplants	Days to Maturity[1]
Beets	x		55-60
Bibb lettuce	x	x	60-80
Broccoli		x	40-90
Brussels sprouts		x	80-90
Cabbage		x	60-100
Carrots	x		60-80
Cauliflower		x	50-100
Celery		x	100-130
Chinese cabbage	x	x	43-75
Collards	x		75-90
Endive	x	x	60-90
Kale	x	x	50-60
Kohlrabi	x		50-70
Leaf lettuce	x	x	40-50
Mustard greens	x		35-60
Onions[2]	x	x	40-120
Peas	x		60-80
Potatoes[3]			90-140
Radishes	x		20-30
Spinach	x		40-70
Swiss chard	x	x	55-60
Turnips	x		40-60
Turnip greens	x		30-50

Table 14. Earliest and latest planting dates in the garden in Kentucky. (If producing your own transplants, begin two to 12 weeks earlier than these listed dates. See Table 5.)

Crops	Earliest Safe Planting Date			Latest Safe Planting Date[1]		
	Western	Central	Eastern	Eastern	Central	Western
Asparagus (crowns)	Mar 10	Mar 15	Mar 20	(Spring only)		
Beans (snap)	Apr 10	Apr 25	May 1	July 15	July 25	Aug 1
Beans (lima)	Apr 15	May 1	May 10	June 15	June 20	July 1
Beets	Mar 10	Mar 15	Mar 20	Aug 1	Aug 10	Aug 15
Broccoli (plants)	Mar 30	Apr 5	Apr 10	July 15	Aug 1	Aug 15
B. Sprouts (plants)	Mar 30	Apr 5	Apr 10	July 1	July 15	Aug 1
Cabbage	Mar 15	Mar 25	Apr 1	July 1	July 15	Aug 1
Carrots	Mar 10	Mar 20	Apr 1	July 1	July 15	Aug 1
Cauliflower (plants)	Mar 30	Apr 5	Apr 10	July 15	July 20	Aug 5
Celery	Apr 1	Apr 5	Apr 10	June 15	July 1	July 15
Chard	Mar 15	Mar 20	Apr 1	June 15	July 15	Aug 1
Collards	Mar 1	Mar 10	Mar 15	Aug 15	Aug 20	Aug 30
Sweet Corn	Apr 10	Apr 20	May 1	June 15	July 10	July 20
Cucumbers	Apr 20	May 1	May 10	June 15	July 1	July 15
Eggplant (plants)	May 1	May 10	May 15	June 1	June 15	July 1
Kale	Mar 10	Mar 20	Apr 1	July 15	Aug 1	Aug 15
Kohlrabi	Mar 15	Mar 20	Mar 25	July 15	Aug 1	Aug 15
Lettuce (leaf)	Mar 15	Mar 25	Apr 1	Aug 1	Aug 15	Sept 1
Lettuce (bibb plants)	Mar 15	Mar 25	Apr 1	July 15	Aug 1	Aug 15
Lettuce (head plants)	Mar 15	Mar 25	Apr 1	July 1	July 15	Aug 1
Muskmelons	Apr 20	May 10	May 15	June 15	July 1	July 15
Okra	Apr 20	May 10	May 15	July 1	July 15	Aug 1
Onions (sets)	Mar 1	Mar 10	Mar 15	(Spring only)		
Onions (plants)	Mar 15	Mar 25	Apr 1	June 15	July 1	July 15
Onions (seed)	Mar 10	Mar 20	Apr 1	June 1	June 15	July 1
Parsley	Mar 10	Mar 20	Apr 1	July 15	Aug 1	Aug 15
Parsnips	Mar 10	Mar 20	Apr 1	June 1	June 15	July 1
Peas	Feb 20	Mar 1	Mar 15	(Spring only)		
Peppers (plants)	May 1	May 10	May 20	June 15	July 1	July 15
Irish Potatoes	Mar 15	Mar 15	Mar 20	June 15	July 1	July 15
Sweet Potatoes	May 1	May 10	May 20	June 1	June 10	June 15
Pumpkins	Apr 20	May 5	May 10	June 1	June 15	July 1
Radishes	Mar 1	Mar 10	Mar 15	Sept 1	Sept 15	Oct 1
Rhubarb (crowns)	Mar 1	Mar 10	Mar 15	(Spring only)		
Rutabaga	Mar 1	Mar 10	Mar 15	July 1	July 10	July 15
Southern Peas	Apr 20	May 5	May 10	June 15	July 1	July 15
Snow Peas	Feb 20	Mar 1	Mar 15	July 20	Aug 1	Aug 8
Spinach	Feb 15	Mar 1	Mar 10	Aug 15	Sept 1	Sept 15
Summer Squash	Apr 20	May 10	May 15	July 15	Aug 1	Aug 15
Tomatoes (plants)	Apr 20	May 5	May 15	June 1	June 15	July 1
Turnips	Mar 1	Mar 10	Mar 15	Aug 1	Aug 10	Aug 20
Watermelons	Apr 20	May 5	May 15	June 15	July 1	July 15
Winter Squash	Apr 20	May 10	May 15	June 15	July 1	July 15

1 Based on average of early maturing varieties. Mid-season and late-maturing varieties need to be planted 15 to 30 days earlier than latest date.

For more home vegetable gardening information, contact the Bath County Extension Office at 674-6121.

Timely Tips

Dr. Les Anderson, Beef Extension Professor, University of Kentucky

Spring Calving Cow Herd

Watch cows and calves closely. Work hard to save every calf (you can cull/sell them later). Calves can be identified while they are young and easy to handle. Commercial male calves should be castrated and implanted. Registered calves should be weighed at birth.

Cows that have calved need to be on an adequate nutritional level to rebreed. Increase their feed after calving. Don't let them lose body condition. Keep feeding them until pastures are adequate.

Don't "rush to grass" although it can be really tempting. Be sure that grass has accumulated enough growth to support the cow's nutritional needs before depending solely upon it. Cows may walk the pastures looking for green grass instead of eating dry feed. This lush, watery grass is not adequate to support them. Keep them consuming dry feed until sufficient grass is available to sustain body condition. We've spent too much money keeping them in good condition to lose it now!

Prevent grass tetany! Provide magnesium in the mineral mix until daytime temperatures are consistently above 60°F. Mineral supplement should be available at all times and contain a minimum of about 14 percent magnesium. Make sure that your mineral mix also contains adequate selenium, copper, and zinc. You can ask your feed dealer about the UK Beef IRM High Magnesium Mineral.

Make final selection of heifer replacements. Strongly consider vaccinating with a modified-live BVD vaccine. Vaccinate at least 60 days before the start of the breeding season.

Purchase replacement bulls at least 30 days prior to the start of the breeding season. Have herd bulls evaluated for breeding soundness (10-20% of bulls are questionable or unsatisfactory breeders). Get all bulls in proper condition (BCS 6) for breeding.

If you are going to use artificial insemination and/or estrous synchronization, make plans now and order needed supplies, semen, and schedule a technician.

Prebreeding or "turn□out" working is usually scheduled for late April or May □ between the end of calving season and before the start of the breeding season (while cows are open). Consult your veterinarian about vaccines and health products your herd needs. Plan now for products needed and have handling facilities in good working order. Dehorn commercial calves before going to pasture.

Fall Calving Cow Herd

Pregnancy check cows now and cull open ones at weaning especially if the open cows are older than 5 years of age.

Re-implant feeders.

Consult with your veterinarian about preweaning working the herd.

You may let calves creep-graze wheat or rye if it is available. Calves will benefit from extra feed until spring grass appears.

Plan marketing strategy for feeder calves.

Stockers

Don't go to pastures too soon, give plants some growing time. Then stock at two to three times the July rate and rotate rapidly.

"Condition" purchased calves prior to grazing. They should be processed and fed a conditioning diet prior to being placed on pasture. You can also use this time to introduce them to electric fences which are used in rotational grazing.

Provide a good mineral supplement which contains a rumen modifier (Rumensin, Bovatec, etc.) along with adequate levels of copper and selenium.

General

We've made a muddy mess this winter, so be prepared to reseed bare spots. Our forage group has some excellent information on restoring heavily traffic areas.

Make plans to improve hay feeding areas to avoid muddy conditions like we have faced this winter. Consider geotextile fabric with gravel or concrete feeding pads.

Prepare for the grazing season. Check fences and make necessary repairs. Check your corral, too.

Get everything ready to make high quality hay in May! Have equipment serviced and spare parts on hand. Order baler twine now. Be prepared to harvest an adequate supply of hay when you have the opportunity. Re-supply the extra hay that you fed out of the barn. This past winter caused most producers to exhaust their hay supply, so it's time to re-stock.

Plan now for fly control ... decide what fly control program that you will use but don't put insecticide eartags on cattle until fly population appears.