

Mercer County Extension Horticulture Newsletter

From The Ground Up

April/May, 2025

Spring is here! I have been fighting back the urge to plant some of the seeds that I ordered this winter, we still have a month to go. Remember, wait for Derby Day! In the meantime, double check those tillers, check for leaks in hoses, weed/mulch those flower beds; so when the time is right you will be ready to hit the ground running! Happy Gardening!

Jessica Bessin

Jessica Bessin,
Mercer County Extension Agent for Horticulture



Saucer Magnolias

Besides daffodils, nothing else screams spring to me than seeing a Saucer Magnolia in full bloom. These trees are stunning, with their bright pink to purple flowers that can be as big as 10 inches across. They are fragrant and not stinky like many of our other earlier flowering trees. Even the light gray smooth bark is fragrant when crushed.

They are considered small trees to large shrubs, but if allowed to get to their full tree form can grow up to 33ft tall and 25ft wide. Multi-stemmed ones are available for purchases and with proper pruning are kept more like a shrub. Pruning time is important with these trees. In order to preserve the flower buds for the following season, pruning should be done immediately after flowering. Wait too late in the summer, you will cut off buds for the following season.



As their name suggests, saucer magnolias are in the magnolia family. They prefer a planting site where it can receive consistent moisture and is well-drained, in full sun to part shade. The biggest consideration when it comes to planting is protection from strong winds and late frost. Late frost are one of the main reasons why we see failure to bloom. On the flip side, planting them too close to buildings for protection where they receive radiating heat can cause them to bud too early and lose flowers during late cold snaps.

Overall, they are relatively disease and pest free. Occasionally, we see magnolia scale that can lead to black sooty mold. Disease-wise, leaf spot and canker can be troublesome. If you are looking for a flowering tree to add to your landscape this might be one for you. This is a great choice for a low maintenance, flowering tree that also produces a decent amount of shade when it's full tree form.

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Public Notification of Procedure for Filing a Complaint:

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To initiate a complaint at the college level, contact Tim West in the Business Office at 859-257-3879. At the University level, Terry Allen and Patty Bender in the [UK Office of Institutional Equity and Equal Opportunity](#) (859-257-8927) may be contacted. Additionally, employee or clientele complaints involving any research or extension sponsored program or activity may be directed to the USDA, Director Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W Whitten Bldg., 14th & Independence Ave. SW, Washington DC 20250-9410 (202-720-5964).

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Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification

Scrumptious Strawberry Salad

5 cups spinach
½ large cabbage head, chopped
1 cup golden raisins
1 cup halved red grapes
1 pint sliced strawberries
½ small red onion, sliced
½ cup toasted and chopped pecans (optional)

Dressing
¾ cup plain non-fat Greek yogurt or plain regular yogurt
3 tablespoons honey
6 tablespoons apple cider vinegar

3 tablespoons olive oil
½ teaspoon Dijon mustard
1 teaspoon poppy seeds
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon pepper

Combine all salad ingredients together in a large bowl. Prepare salad dressing by **mixing** all ingredients together in a jar, **cover**, and **shake** well to combine. **Pour** dressing over salad mixture and **toss** to combine.

Yield: 8, 2-cup servings

Nutritional Analysis:
 240 calories, 10g fat, 1g saturated fat, 0mg cholesterol, 340mg sodium, 33g carbohydrate, 4g fiber, 27g sugar, 6g added sugars, 5g protein



Fort Harrod
BeeKeeping Club

Monday, April 28 at 6:30pm

Join us for our regular monthly meeting.



**Tuesday, May 27
at 6:30pm**

Author and
beekeeper Shannon
Trimboli joins us in
May to talk about
nectar flow.



*Note that the May meeting
is on a Tuesday due to
memorial day.

Mercer County Extension Office
1007 Lexington Road—Harrodsburg, KY 40330



**Free
Tomato
Plants
May 6**

Beginning at 9:00am
until supplies last

Free tomato plants with information included.

One bag per person.

New for the tomato extravaganza!
For those who can't make it during the day, we will
be here on May 5th from 5-6 PM for pick up.

*Courtesy of the
Mercer County Cooperative Extension Horticulture Program*

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**FORT HARROD
GARDEN CLUB**

**Floral Hall
Flower Show**

June 9 at 10:00 am

Are you interested in competing in
our local county fair flower show?
Join us as one of our own garden
club members, Elspeth Cobb, gives
tips and tricks on getting flowers
ready for competition.

Mercer County Extension Office

**MERCER COUNTY
FAIR & HORSE SHOW**

Open Floral Hall



Floral Hall catalogs will
be available May 1.
Fair Entry online opens
July 1. DEADLINE TO
ENTER is Wednesday,
July 16 at noon.

**Monday, July 21 -
Saturday, July 26**

Catalogs will be available May 1st at the
Mercer Extension Office and online. Stay up to
date with everything Floral Hall on our
Facebook page!
facebook.com/MercerCountyExtension



FREE SEEDS

Beginning in April, we will have
complimentary seeds courtesy of the
Mercer County Cooperative Extension
Horticulture Program.
**Please, no more than 3 seed packets
per person.**

**FORT HARROD
GARDEN CLUB**

Plant and Seed Swap



**May 12
10:00 am**

Have too many
transplants or
ordered too many seeds this year? Meet
up with the Fort Harrod Garden Club as we
swap plants and seeds to get ready for the
growing season.

Fort Harrod Garden Club meets the second
Monday of the month at 10:00am.

Mercer County Extension Office



The Shred Truck

**Monday, April 21
1:00-4:00pm**

In observance of Earth Day, Mercer County
Extension Office will have "The Shred Truck"
available for free to you!

Bring your old documents & sensitive papers
to be recycled! Paper only. No electronics,
paint, etc. Staples do not have to be removed
but please take off any paper clips.

**1007 Lexington Road
Harrodsburg, KY 40330**

Mark Those Calendars!!

Fort Harrod Garden Club-April 14th, Mercer County Extension Office 10:00 AM

Join us as we share information about growing herbs at home!

Harrodsburg Tree Board Meeting— April 21st, Mercer County Extension Office 5:00 PM

The Shred Truck— April 21st, Mercer County Extension Office 1:00-4:00 PM

Fort Harrod Beekeeping Club-April 28th, Mercer County Extension Office 6:30 PM

See insert for more details. Make sure to check out the Fort Harrod Beekeeping Facebook page for all the latest
updates and announcements!

Floral Hall Catalog Available!-May 1st, Catalogs can be picked up at Mercer County Extension Office

Tomato Day!- May 5th and 6th, Mercer County Extension Office

See flyer above for more information on tomato day and new night time giveaway!

Giant Pumpkin Contest Seeds-May 6th, Mercer County Extension Office.

See insert for more details about our first ever, giant pumpkin contest.

Fort Harrod Garden Club (Plant Swap)-May 12th, Mercer County Extension Office 10:00 AM

See flyer for more information on our plant and seed swap!

Memorial Day-May 26th, Extension Office is Closed

Fort Harrod Beekeeping Club-May 27th, Mercer County Extension Office 6:30 PM

This meeting will take place on the last TUESDAY of the month instead of the last Monday due to Memorial Day.

Living With Alpha-Gal Syndrome-May 29th, Mercer County Extension Office 7:00-8:30 PM

See insert for more details.



Fort Harrod
BeeKeeping Club



Horticulture Class Reminders



Starting this spring, you have the option to receive a text message reminder
about upcoming horticulture classes. Use the QR or the link
below to sign up for our remind system. After calling the
Extension Office to RSVP for one of our horticulture classes,
you will receive a text message reminding you the class is
happening, if you need to bring any additional supplies, or if
we must cancel due to inclement weather. Stay in the loop with everything that is
happening with the horticulture program! www.remind.com/join/mcehp





Harvest, Home, and Table Fair

GIANT PUMPKIN CONTEST

Mercer County Extension Office presents our first Giant Pumpkin Contest as apart of the Harvest, Home, and Table Fair.

Starting May 6, the Mercer County Extension Office will have free giant pumpkin seeds available with growing information. On Friday October 3, pumpkins can be dropped off at the Extension Office to be weighed. On Saturday October 4, the winner will be announced and presented a trophy for the largest pumpkin in the Fort Harrod Area.

Be on the look out for more details about the weigh in and other pumpkin categories you can enter in as we get closer to the festival date!

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Disabilities accommodated with prior notification.

- Webinar Event -

LIVING WITH ALPHA-GAL SYNDROME

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

Thursday, May 29

7:00-8:30pm EDT

At Mercer County Extension Office

RSVP to 859-734-4378

**Tick kits will be available.
Sample AGS friendly recipes!**

Topics Covered:

- AGS basics
- Tick bite prevention
- Diet & lifestyle management
- Q/A session



