



Want to stay connected with all the latest classes being offered? Make sure to follow our Mercer County Extension Office– Horticulture Facebook page, for all the information in between the monthly newsletters. Don't let these warmer days trick you into planting outside too soon, we still have a few cold days ahead of us. Happy Gardening!

Jessica Bessin,
Mercer County Extension Agent for Horticulture

Do you Have Freeze Damage?

By: Amanda Sears, Madison County Horticulture Agent

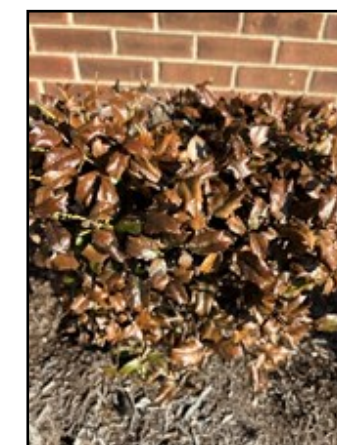
The recent frigid cold wind and temperatures were hard on all of us. I hope you fared well through that time and were warm without frozen pipes! But what about your plants, trees, and shrubs? How did they do through the bad weather?

Not every plant will react the same. For example, our dormant trees and shrubs (including our fruit plantings) should be OK. The exceptions would be things that were newly planted or already stressed. Also, plants that are only marginally hardy for our area may be impacted. Native plants are rarely damaged by Kentucky's unpredictable weather.

Evergreens, both needled and broadleaf, will be more likely to show damage. The amount of damage will vary from minor leaf burn (brown discoloration) to the loss of some plants. The reason evergreens are more likely to be damaged is because wind can cause desiccation from their leaves or needles. That means water leaves the plant. And because the ground was frozen, the plant could not take up more.

So, what can you do to help your damaged plants? The best thing to do is wait until spring. Many plants will recover given time. Some may need pruning and others may have been killed. But the important thing is to wait and see.

Hopefully we have seen the last of the extreme cold and winds. But there is a lot of winter left. Something that concerns me is the very mild, warm weather we have had the last week. What I don't want to have happen is for plants to come out of dormancy because of the warm weather. Once that happens, they are more likely to sustain damage if we have another cold snap. Unfortunately, there isn't anything we can do about that either. Patience may be a virtue, but it can still be very annoying.



Freeze damage on holly.


NOTICE

Public Notification of Procedure for Filing a Complaint:

The Cooperative Extension Service prohibits discrimination in its programs and employment on the basis of race, color, age, religion, gender, disability, or national origin.

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).





Country Ham and Broccoli Grits

1 tablespoon olive oil	2 cloves minced garlic	6 ounces country ham, cut into ½ inch pieces
1 pound fresh broccoli florets	4 cups 1% milk	1 large egg, beaten
½ cup minced onion	1 cup uncooked quick grits	Salt and pepper to taste
¾ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes	1 cup 2%, shredded cheddar cheese	

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. **Coat** 13x9x2 inch baking dish with cooking spray. **Heat** olive oil in a frying pan. **Sauté** broccoli, onion, garlic and red pepper flakes until vegetables are tender. About 5 minutes. **Set aside.**

2. Heat milk to a boil in a large saucepan. Slowly, **whisk** in grits. **Reduce heat** and stir continuously until thickened. **Reserve** 2 tablespoons of the cheese.

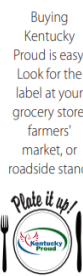

3. Remove from heat, stir in ham, broccoli mixture, cheese, egg, salt and pepper. **Mix** until well blended. **Pour** into prepared baking dish.

4. Sprinkle with reserved cheese. **Bake**, uncovered for 30 minutes, or until top is set and lightly puffed.

Yield: 16, ½ cup servings.

Nutritional Analysis: 120 calories, 3.5 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 25 mg cholesterol, 370 mg sodium, 13 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 4 g sugar, 9 g protein.

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


Chicken and Brussels Sprouts One Pan Meal

2 skinless, boneless chicken breasts (about 1 pound)	12-14 Brussels sprouts, trimmed and quartered	1 medium yellow onion, diced, about 1 cup
1 tablespoon olive oil	1 cup sliced fresh mushrooms	2 cloves garlic, minced
Salt and pepper to taste	1 red bell pepper, diced, about 1 cup	¼ teaspoon nutmeg
		¾ cup Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. **Cut** chicken into bite-sized pieces. **Heat** oil in a heavy, oven-safe skillet or pan over medium heat. **Add** chicken and sauté 3-4 minutes. Lightly **season** with salt and pepper. **Add** vegetables and **stir** gently to combine. **Cook** 3-5 minutes until vegetables are tender. **Remove** from heat. If skillet or pan is not oven-safe, transfer mixture to a baking dish. In a small bowl, **combine** half-and-half, nutmeg and salt and pepper to taste. **Pour** mixture over chicken and vegetables. **Sprinkle** with Parmesan cheese. **Bake** 25-30 minutes until lightly golden on top. **Serve** hot.

Yield: 6, 1 cup servings

Nutritional Analysis: 220 calories, 9 g fat, 3.5 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 70 mg cholesterol, 340 mg sodium, 11 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber, 4 g sugars, 23 g protein.



Eight Reasons for Soil Testing

Soil testing can tell you many things about your soil that can help you make informed decisions about fertilizer application, site selection for crops, and so much more. It is an essential part of a successful agriculture or horticulture enterprise. Home gardens and lawns can also greatly benefit from soil testing. Why should you test your soil?

1. Know the pH level of your soil. Different recommendations are made depending on the acidity or alkalinity of your soil and your intended use.
2. Save time and money. Having the proper levels of soil nutrients will help maximize economic yields. Soil testing also reduces the chance of overapplying and over purchasing fertilizers.
3. It's good for the environment. Soil testing results in a more accurate application of fertilizers and that ultimately reduces runoff into waterways.
4. They are not expensive. In Mercer County it's FREE!
5. It is easy. Taking samples doesn't take a lot of time or skill, and we can help you along the way.
6. Find out the fertility level of the soil. You gain knowledge about the soil condition and can make informed decisions about how to improve it.
7. Follow soil changes over time. Follow how conditions like drought, prolonged wet periods and other weather scenarios affect the soil.
8. Identify problem areas in your field or garden.

Why You Should Prune Fruit Trees


Right now is the perfect time to prune fruit trees, such as apples. Trees are still dormant and the danger of winter injury is over or low. Below, you will find reasons why it's beneficial to prune. If you have other questions about pruning, call the Extension Office at 859-734-4378 .

- **Reduces tree size** - More manageable for harvesting
- **Controls shape**
- **Makes the tree structurally stronger**
- **Provides a balance between vegetative and reproductive growth** - New shoot growth increases high quality flower buds
- **Removal of diseased wood**
- **Improves light penetration** - Promotes flower bud initiation, fruit set, fruit color, size and sugar content
- **Opens Canopy**- Improves pest control, better spray penetration, better air movement to reduce disease pressure
- **Provides greater yield of fruit at desirable size and quality while maintaining the tree in a compact structure**



Fort Harrod Beekeeping Club

Tuesday, February 28th
6:30pm



Guest Speaker
Bonnie Joseph

Bonnie Joseph of London, Kentucky has been a beekeeper for 14 years and one of KSBA 2022 Beekeepers of the Year. Bonnie is the President of Southern Kentucky Beekeepers out of London and is also the Secretary of the Kentucky Queen Bee Breeders Association, Inc. She will share information about opening hives in the spring and what to be on the lookout for.

Mercer County Extension Office
1007 Lexington Road
Harrodsburg, KY 40330
859-734-4378



TOMATO GRAFTING WORKSHOP

for growers

Led by Rachel Rudolph
Extension Vegetable Specialist
University of Kentucky

MARCH 9TH
10am EST

Hosted at the
UK Horticulture Research Farm
4321 Emmert Farm Lane
Lexington, KY

REGISTER BY MARCH 1
[limited to 40 participants]



scan qr code
visit bit.ly/3_9_23TOMGRAFTUKY
email kathryn.pettigrew@uky.edu



Mark Those Calendars!!!

Insect Club - February 15th, Mercer County Extension Office 3:30-5:00 PM

This club is for youth (9-12 year olds) interested in learning all about insects and the environment.



Fort Harrod Beekeeping Club – February 28th, Mercer County Extension Office 6:30 PM

The club will meet on the last Tuesday of this month, starting in March we will continue to meet the last Monday of each month. Make sure to check out the Fort Harrod Beekeeping Facebook page for all the latest updates and announcements!

Mercer County Farmers Market Meeting - February 28th, Mercer County Extension Office 6:00 PM

This is the meeting where the market will decide their operating hours for the season. Anyone interested in joining the market for 2023 is welcomed to attend.



Fort Harrod Garden Club - First Tuesday of each month.

See insert for more details.

Private Pesticide Applicator Training - Mercer County Extension Office , March 9th at 10:00 AM & 6:00 PM & March 14th at 10:00 AM

If you are planning to purchase any restricted –use pesticides you need to attend this training. Certification is free and lasts for three years. The training program will take around 2 hours. To sign up, or for questions, please call the Extension Office at 859-734-4378.

Growing Shiitake Mushrooms - March 21st, Mercer County Extension Office 10:00 AM

See insert for more details.



Growing Shiitake Mushrooms

March 21
10:00am

Have you ever wanted to grow your own mushrooms?

Join us as Joe Lacefield, Regional Wildlife Biologist from KY Fish and Wildlife, demonstrates how to start your own shiitake mushrooms. Each participant will get all the supplies they need to start their own production.

This class is limited to 15 people.

Must RSVP by March 10 to 859-734-4378

Mercer County Extension Office
1007 Lexington Rd
Harrodsburg, KY 40330



University of Kentucky
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment
Cooperative Extension Service

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

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LEXINGTON, KY 40546



Fort Harrod Garden Club

The Fort Harrod Garden Club meets the first Tuesday of each month at 10:00 AM. Meetings will alternate between Boyle and Mercer County Extension Offices. If you are interested in receiving a monthly reminder about the meeting via-text, call 859-734-4378.

March: Seed Swap at Mercer County Extension Office

At this meeting we will discuss the basics of starting seeds and have an informal seed swap.

April: Yew Dell Gardens

This month we will visit Yew Dell Gardens, which is located right outside of Louisville. Limited transportation will be provided, makes sure to RSVP by March 31st if you plan to attend.

Call- 859-734-4378

May: Perennials for Shade at Mercer County Extension Office

Join us this month as Fayette County Horticulture Agent Jamie Dockery shares the best perennials for shady locations.

June: Living Wall at Boyle County Extension Office

Ever thought about gardening vertically? At this meeting we will demonstrate how you can start a vertical garden at home.

If you would like to attend one of the upcoming field trips, there is a requirement that you must have attended two previous club meetings prior to the trip. Limited transportation will be available and you must RSVP in advance.



College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment

Mercer County Extension Office
1007 Lexington Rd
Harrodsburg, KY 40330

Boyle County Extension Office
99 Corporate Dr.
Danville, KY 40422

Other Upcoming Classes 2023

July - No Meeting
August - Bernheim Forest
September - Boyle: Dye Garden
October - Mercer: Bulbs
November - Boyle: Hypertufa
December - Mercer: Holiday Greenery