



It feels like spring has arrived, but I'm still suspicious that we are experiencing fake spring! If you want to start planting, just be sure you have a back-up plan in case we do get a cold snap. We have a lot of classes and events coming up, make sure to RSVP to reserve your spot since classes are filling up quickly! Happy Gardening!

Jessica Bessin

Jessica Bessin,
Mercer County Extension Agent for Horticulture



Why Grow Your Own Transplants?

One of the first benefits of growing your own transplants is having the varieties you want when you want to plant them. The flip side of that coin is quality. If you can't provide good growing conditions, particularly plenty of bright light for growing seedlings, the quality of your homegrown plants may not be all you desire. The big advantage of growing transplants yourself is the wide choice of varieties available in seed. If you plant the seeds at the appropriate time and the seedlings grow well for you, you can have transplants that are just the right size for planting in the garden at just the right time. You can have cool weather crops like broccoli and kohlrabi to plant early in the spring and again in midsummer for a fall crop. You can have warm weather crops like tomatoes for planting after the danger of frost is past.

For indoor growing, sow seeds in a plant tray containing an artificial growing medium of peat moss and perlite available at garden centers. Enclose the seeded trays in a plastic bag or container and keep them at room temperature until seedlings begin to emerge. Remove the plastic and transfer the trays to suitable growing areas. The average windowsill is one location for growing plants, but it usually does not get enough light. So, you have to use artificial light to supplement. Use cool white fluorescent lamps alone, a mixture of cool white and warm white fluorescent lamps, or a mixture of cool white and plant growth fluorescent lamps. Locate the lamps 5 to 10 inches from the foliage and operate them 12 to 18 hours/day. Be sure to keep seedlings cool enough (60° to 65°F) for strong, sturdy growth after they germinate.

Plants should be "hardened off" about two weeks before planting them in the garden. This toughens the plants so that they can withstand the outside environment. To start this process, begin exposing them to lower temperatures. One way is to take your transplants outside in the day time and bring them in at night. However, don't let them get caught in a frost. Reduce your watering and fertilizing of transplants to help "hardening off" about one week before transplanting. Source: ID-128 Home Vegetable Gardening Guide In Kentucky.



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).

Lean Green Lettuce Tacos

8 large lettuce leaves
 1½ cup cooked brown rice
 ¾ cup fresh corn kernels
 1 cup canned black beans, drained and rinsed
 1 tablespoon olive oil

¾ pound extra lean ground beef
 1 small zucchini, chopped
 1 ounce packet low-sodium taco seasoning
 4 ounces low sodium tomato sauce

1 tablespoon finely chopped cilantro
 1 teaspoon lime juice
 1 tomato, chopped
 1 small red onion, chopped

Wash and dry lettuce leaves. Prepare rice according package directions. Cut corn off cob. Drain and rinse black beans. In a skillet, heat the oil to medium; add ground beef and begin to cook. When beef begins to brown, add zucchini, corn and black beans to skillet. Continue to cook until vegetables are tender and beef is done. Do not overcook. Add in taco seasoning and tomato sauce and heat through. Add cilantro and lime juice to the cooked rice. Place equal amounts of rice mixture and taco mixture into lettuce leaves. Top each taco with chopped tomato and onion.

Yield: 8 servings

Nutritional Analysis: 180 calories, 4.5 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 20 mg cholesterol, 350 mg sodium, 23 g carbohydrate, 4 g fiber, 5 g sugars, 12 g protein.



Broccoli Grape Pasta Salad

¾ cup diced pecans
 8 ounces whole grain pasta (bow tie or other type)
 5 slices turkey bacon

2 cups seedless red grapes
 1 pound fresh broccoli

¾ cup low-fat mayonnaise
 ¼ cup honey
 ½ cup diced red onion
 ½ cup red wine vinegar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Bake pecans in a single layer in a shallow pan for 5 to 7 minutes or until lightly toasted and fragrant, stirring halfway through. Prepare 8 ounces of pasta according to package directions. Cook bacon according to package directions. Cool and crumble into small pieces. Cut the broccoli florets from stems and separate florets into small pieces using the tip of a paring knife. Slice 2 cups of grapes into halves. Whisk together mayonnaise, honey, diced red onion and vinegar in a large mixing bowl. Add broccoli, cooked pasta and grapes; stir to coat. Cover and chill for 30 minutes. Stir in bacon crumbles and diced pecans just before serving.

Yield: 16, ½ cup servings

Nutritional Analysis: 160 calories, 7 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 5 mg cholesterol, 125 mg sodium, 24 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber, 9 g sugars 4 g protein.



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

Daffodils

I love daffodils! Every spring I wish I had been more on top of it in the fall and planted more. Daffodils are easy to grow, long lasting, need little care and are rabbit free since the bulbs are poisonous.

Daffodils like sunny well drained areas. They do well under deciduous trees but not under pine trees. Make a note now of perfect spots for daffodils. They are good companions to ornamental grasses, groundcovers, wildflowers and hostas. Plant them around shrubs in landscape beds. Once the flowers fade, remove the spent flowers, but leave the leaves until they yellow naturally. The leaves produce food for next year's flowering. It is fine, but not ideal, to braid, rubber band or otherwise try to hide the leaves. If needed, fertilize daffodils after flowering with 10-10-10.

The dazzling diversity of daffodils includes 25 species of Narcissus with about 13,000 listed cultivars. You should be able to find one you like. There are 13 divisions of daffodils according to the American Daffodil Society. I suggest visiting their website if you are a true daffodil lover. Source: Illinois Horticulture Extension



One of my favorite varieties of daffodils Tahiti



Beginning in March, we will have complimentary seeds courtesy of the Mercer County Cooperative Extension Horticulture Program.

Please, no more than 3 seed packets per person.

Mercer County Conservation Office Tree Giveaway!

Mercer County Conservation District will be conducting its annual spring tree seedling giveaway for all Mercer County landowners. This year, the seedlings will include Bald Cypress, White Oak, Flowering Dogwood, Northern Red Oak, Yellow Poplar, White Pine & Persimmon. The 3,400 seedlings on hand are one to two years old and will be bagged in small groups. Planting instructions will be provided to each individual. The seedling giveaway will begin during the week of March 27th at the Mercer County Conservation Office. For more information call Linda

Lake at 859-734-4326 extension 3 or visit the

Mercer County Conservation Office located at:

227 Morris Dr. Harrodsburg, KY 40330

Office hours are 8:00 a.m.– 4:30 p.m.



Mark Those Calendars!!!

Fort Harrod Garden Club (Starting Seeds and Seed Swap)- March 7th, Mercer County Extension Office 10:00 AM

If you would like to receive a text reminder about our garden club please call 859-734-4378.

Private Pesticide Applicator Training - Mercer County Extension Office , March 9th at 10:00 AM or 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.

Gardening 101-March 9th, Mercer County Library 12:00 PM

Bring your lunch and join us at the library as we discuss the basics of gardening!

County Extension Council Meeting-March 9th, Mercer County Extension Office 5:00 PM

Insect Club - March 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.

Farm City Dinner– March 20th, The Stable at the Mercer County Fairgrounds 6:00 PM

See insert for more details.

Farmers Market Scale Inspections- March 20th, Mercer County Extension Office

All scales should be dropped by Friday, March 17th at 4:30 PM.

Scales will be ready for pick-up on Tuesday, March 21st.

Fort Harrod Beekeeping Club – March 27th, Mercer County Extension Office 6:30 PM

Make sure to check out the Fort Harrod Beekeeping Facebook page for all the latest updates and announcements!

WIC/Senior Voucher Training for Farmers Market– April 6th, Mercer County Extension Office 6:00 PM

If you are interested in accepting WIC/Senior vouchers at the market this year you need to attend this training. Please RSVP by April 3rd by calling 859-734-4378.



Fort Harrod Beekeeping Club



All About Brambles

Learn How To Grow Blackberries and Raspberries

April 11
10:00am

RSVP by April 7

Receive free blackberry plants for attending.

YOU MUST RSVP

Call 859-734-4378 to sign up.

Mercer County Extension Office
1007 Lexington Road
Harrodsburg, KY 40330



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LEXINGTON, KY 40546



YOUR DONATION
GIVE \$10 WITH EACH AG TAG

YOUR COMMUNITY
HALF OF THE FUNDS FOR 4-H AND FFA COME BACK TO YOUR LOCAL CLUBS AND CHAPTERS IN YOUR COUNTY.

OUR LEADERS
SUPPORT STATEWIDE PROGRAMS IMPACTING 274,000 STUDENTS ENROLLED IN 4-H, FFA AND KY PROUD MEMBERS.

KENTUCKY 0000A FARM

BY MAKING A \$10 DONATION WITH YOUR AG TAG, YOU ARE CHOOSING TO INVEST DIRECTLY INTO THE FUTURE OF KENTUCKY AGRICULTURE. DONATIONS ARE DIVIDED EQUALLY BETWEEN FFA, 4-H AND KENTUCKY PROUD WITH HALF GOING DIRECTLY BACK TO YOUR COUNTY. THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.

Spring Lawn Care Reminders

- New yards need to be seeded by late March.
- By Mid-March you can start applying herbicides to help control broadleaf weeds like chickweed, plantain, and dandelions.
- Avoid spring and summer fertilization. This can cause excessive top growth which can reduce resistance to drought and heat during the summer.
- Crabgrass pre-emergence herbicides can be applied in March. A good indicator plant for when crabgrass is germinating is when the forsythias are blooming.
- Wait until mid-May to apply white grub control.
- Don't apply lime unless your lawn needs it.

BREAKFAST WITH THE

Easter Bunny

Saturday, March 25
8:00 -11:30 a.m.

Mercer County Fairgrounds,
"The Stable"
560 Linden Avenue
Harrodsburg, KY 40330

Enjoy a pancake/sausage breakfast
Photo with Easter Bunny
Petting Zoo, Easter Crafts &
Facepainting

Tickets \$7.00

Kids under 2 are free
with paying adult



Event sponsored by Mercer County 4-H

20th Annual Mercer County Farm/City Dinner



Everyone is invited to come out and enjoy a steak dinner!
Tickets are \$12 and can be purchased from any primary sponsor.

Monday, March 20th 6:00pm
The Stable, Mercer County Fairgrounds
"Why Can't You Motivate People?"
Dr. Steve Isaacs

UK Agriculture Economics Management and Motivation Extension Specialist

Primary Sponsors
Mercer County Farm Bureau
Mercer County Conservation District

Mercer County Chamber of Commerce
Mercer County Extension Service

