



BARREN COUNTY'S AVID HORTICULTURE NEWSLETTER

Cooperative Extension
Service

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HORTICULTURE

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Kristin's Comments:



This month, many people across the United States are making New Year's resolutions either to better their health by losing a few pounds or getting more organized, but for the home gardener a great new year's resolution is to keep a garden journal.

Whether you are creating your first garden or refining your established garden, planning is an essential step in success. Many of us think of spring as the beginning of the gardening year, but the truth is, the first seeds of a garden—the very idea of the garden and all of the planning that goes with it—are planted in winter. In January, when outdoor temperatures are too cold for plant growth, the wonderful images of green plants,

warm air, and fragrant blooms is more than comforting: It's irresistible!

What gardener doesn't enjoy pouring over garden catalogs and books, plotting new garden beds, and reviewing notes on last season's successes and failures? It's your chance to make a fresh start and create your dream garden.

In this jam-packed issue, I have provided a wealth of information on planning tips for your spring garden, home-based processing and microprocessing, and soil testing. Not to mention, the details about the new and upcoming programs that will be going on this year right here at the extension office! Plus, don't forget to check out the recipe in the recipe corner! It is one of my favorites!

Questions or comments?

Kristin Goodin

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Note: If you or a friend would like to receive our horticulture newsletter, please contact our office at (270) 651-3818 so that we can add your name to our mailing list.

Planning Tips for a Great Garden

- **Site Selection**

Deciding where to plant your edible crops is the first step in producing healthy, tasty vegetables, herbs, and fruits. When looking around your garden for suitable places, keep the following factors in mind.

Sunlight- Most vegetables, fruits, and herbs generally require 6 to 8 hours of full sun daily for top production and flavor. Select a site that is not shaded by buildings, trees, or shrubs.

Soil- Most crops prefer well-drained soil enriched with plenty of compost or other organic matter. In very poor soil, consider planting in raised beds.

Convenience- If possible, locate your garden where you can easily reach it with a garden hose for watering. And also, locate the garden where it's close to the kitchen door to take full advantage of picking vegetables at their maximum freshness.

- **Decide what to Plant**

Keep the following points in mind as you make your selections and decide about how much of each crop to plant.

Family Preferences- What crops do you and your family really enjoy eating? Will you use the harvest right away, or do you plan to store some food for winter?

Available Space- How much space can you devote to edibles? In general, it is a good idea to start with a small plot, especially if you are new to growing edibles. That way you won't be overwhelmed with too much work and perhaps far too much produce. Smaller gardens are easier to keep tidy and thus are more enjoyable, as well.

- **Make a Garden Plan**

Deciding what to plant where is something of a juggling act, so it helps to begin planning the layout of your garden by drawing a map on paper. Many gardeners draw a scale model of their garden space on graph paper, with one square representing 1 square foot. On the graph paper, indicate rows or blocks of plants. Keep in mind to allow for the correct spacing between plantings as well. Tall plants such as sweet corn, tomatoes, and pole beans should be planted on the north or west side of the garden where they will not shade smaller vegetable crops. Plant perennials like asparagus, rhubarb, chives and horseradish along one side of the garden since they may produce for 6 to 12 years.

- **Prepare your Soil**

As soon as the soil is workable in the spring, turn over the sod of a new garden site by plowing, rototilling or hand spading. Prepare the soil at least 8 inches deep. Increase this depth each year until you reach 10 to 12 inches. Do not work the soil when it is very wet because you can damage its structure by compacting it. If the soil crumbles readily rather than sticking together, you can proceed safely.

Continue to work the plot until the coarse, lumpy texture is replaced with a fine, granular one suitable for a seedbed. Do not overlook the soil to a powdery fine condition which will cause surface crusting. After appropriately tilling the soil, add organic material and fertilizer as recommended.

Source: Home Vegetable Gardening in Kentucky Publication, ID-128



When Eating Out!

The average American spends half of the food dollar on meals purchased away from home. Although it's no longer realistic that families will not dine out at all, doing so less frequently and making good choices can help add up the savings.

Planning can help us stretch our food dollar tremendously. We tend to dine out because of lack of time to shop or cook however with just a little advance planning we can make

good choices for our family that is healthier and more cost effective.

Not only can dining out be expensive, it can also lead to increased caloric intake. On days where we dine out, making good nutritious food choices can help improve our health. However nutritious choices are sometimes hard to determine. Available at your local Cooperative Extension Service, you can come by in the month of January and pick up "Nutrition in the Fast Lane" which is a handbook for nutrition in fast food and casual dining restaurants. It contains 64 restaurants and nearly 3200 menu items with calories, protein, sodium, carbohydrates and cholesterol.

Anyone who comes by and picks up a handbook will be entered into a drawing for a \$25 gift certificate

from the Glasgow-Barren County Chamber of Commerce.

On January 28, from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm "Add-Up the Savings: When Dining Out" will be offered at the Barren County Extension Office. Also available through this program, you will have the opportunity to sample healthy food choices available from local restaurants.

Each month through May your Cooperative Extension Service will be offering an "Add up the Savings" lesson on energy, growing your own food, shopping for food, and food preparation. Contact your local Extension Office for more details.

For more information on add up the savings tips, contact your local Extension Office or visit <http://ces.ca.uky.edu/moneywise>.



“SAVE THE DATE”

Agritourism Update

Hosted by Cave Region Agritourism Association
& Agritourism Advisory Council

Please join us:

Date: Monday, March 1, 2010

Lunch & Registration Cost: \$20.00 (Please make checks payable to Kentucky State Treasurer)

Time: Registration begins at 8:30 am CST

Location: Barren County Extension Office
1463 West Main Street
Glasgow, KY 42141

Program Begins at 9:30 am CST, Concluding at 3:00 pm CST

Feel free to RSVP now to whitney.meadows@ky.gov or call Whitney at 502-564-4983 ext. 223

For more information, please contact Whitney Meadows, Director of Agritourism, at 502-229-5276 or whitney.meadows@ky.gov

Home-based Processing and Microprocessing

The University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service, KY Department of Agriculture and KY Cabinet for Health Services are partnering to support farm friendly legislation. House Bill 391 and Farmers Market Legislation allows KY farmers who grow and harvest produce to process value-added products and sell them from designated farmers markets, certified roadside stands and the processor's farm. There are two processing categories in HB 391, Home-Based Processors and Home-Based Micro-processors.

Home-Based Processors may sell jams, jellies, breads, fruit pies, cakes and cookies after they register with the Cabinet for Health Services. There is no fee, and application forms are available from your county health department.

Home-based Microprocessors may sell acid, acidified and low acid foods. Prior to sending the home-based microprocessor application form and \$50 application fee to the Cabinet for Health Service, farmers must attend a Home-based Microprocessor Workshop and have their recipes approved. Workshops cost \$50, which includes lunch. Farmers must attend the entire workshop and pass both exams to complete the home-based microprocessor workshop as

established by HB 391 regulations. Recipes must also be approved by a designated representative of the University of Kentucky at a fee of \$5 for each recipe. Then it is up to the processor to follow recommended, safe canning procedures before the sale of their value-added products.



Questions should be directed to Dr. Sandra Bastin at the University of Kentucky by calling 859-257-1812 or send an email to her at sbastin@uky.edu.

Dr. Bastin has one workshop scheduled for our area:

February 8, 2010

9:30 to 3:30 EST

Warren County Extension Office

Bowling Green, KY

\$50—Lunch included

Registration forms for the workshop are available online at www.ca.uky.edu/agc/micro.

Soil Testing—A Vital Tool

Soil testing is a special chemical analysis that provides a guideline for lime and fertilizer needs of soils.

Different soil types, different fields, and often areas within the same field vary in the availability of plant nutrients. Also, a field may contain a low level of one nutrient and a high level of another nutrient. Such variations are usually due to differences in previous fertilizer and lime applications, cropping history, nutrient contents of the parent materials, and losses of surface soil through erosion. Soil testing is the best way to identify these differences and to adjust liming and fertilization practices.



Soil samples can be collected through much of the year, although fall (September to December) or spring (February to April) are the best times. Submitting samples allow the grower time to have the fertilizer applied well before the planting of the next crop.

If you would like to have your soil tested, bring your sample to the Barren County Extension Office. For a small fee of \$7.00, we will forward the sample to the soil laboratory at the University of Kentucky for analysis and provide you with recommendations for soil amendments based on their results.

Come check us out Online!

Did you know that current information about programs and upcoming events at the Barren County Cooperative Extension Service is available online? View our website at: www.ca.uky.edu/barren.

Once you have accessed our website, you will be delighted to find our basic contact information along with our entire staff directory, 100 Mile Potluck pictures and recipes, farmer's market information, current programs, and new upcoming programs!

Under the Horticulture tab, you can read the latest Avid Horticulture Newsletter as well as weekly newspaper articles. Also, you can view publications that are available from the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture that may be downloaded free of charge. Come check us out! :)

Just Announced!

2010 GARDENER'S TOOLBOX CLASSES

The Gardener's Toolbox Classes is a series of classes that offer something for everyone! Beginning and experienced gardeners alike are sure to enjoy these hands-on learning sessions:



- **February 11— (6:30-8:30pm) “The Basics of Vegetable Gardening”** A general overview of growing a vegetable garden on a beginner's level. We will cover the three different growing seasons with a strong emphasis on planning, site selection, and soil building. Each participants will receive our UK Cooperative Extension Home Vegetable Gardening in KY publication AND seeds for recommended disease resistant varieties as a take home gift. **Register by February 5th**
- **March 11— “Growing Backyard Blueberries”** Different aspects of successful blueberry production will be addressed such as the proper site evaluation and preparation, cultivar selection, proper planting depths, spray guide information, and general care and maintenance tips. The first 10 participants to sign-up will receive a blueberry plant for their garden or landscape. **Register by March 1st**
- **April 6— “Home Composting Anyone”** In celebration of Earth Day, here is a great class to discover the multiple benefits involved with composting and see why the subject is often referred to as “black gold.” Participants will learn several composting secrets such as what materials can and can't be composted, how compost is utilized, and how to construct composting bins while aiding to “green-up” your environment at the same time.

Call our office or visit our website at www.ca.uky.edu/barren for a complete list of classes. Remember, class size is limited, so call to register today! A minimum of 3 participants is required in each class or it will be rescheduled for a later date.



HORT SHORTS:

January 28, 2010— Add-Up the Savings Program
“When Eating Out” Barren County Extension Office
Auditorium (11:30am-1:00pm)

February 2, 2010— Grafting Discussion Class Barren
County Public Library (6:30pm)

February 4, 2010— Cave Region Agritourism Meeting,
Warren County Extension Office (4:00 pm)

February 8, 2010— Homebased Microprocessor Work-
shop, Warren County Extension Office (8:30am-
2:30pm)

February 11, 2010— Gardener's Toolbox Class:
“The Basics of Vegetable Gardening” Barren County

Extension Office Backroom (6:30-8:30pm)

February 13, 2010— 2010 Sustainable Glasgow Ven-
dor Meeting, Sustainable Glasgow Office—108 East
Public Square (10:00am)

February 25, 2010— Add-Up the Savings Program
“Energy” Barren County Extension Office

March 1, 2010— “Agritourism Update” Barren County
Extension Office (9:30am-3:00pm)

March 11, 2010— Gardener's Toolbox Class: “Growing
Backyard Blueberries” Barren County Extension Office
(6:30-8:30pm)

Gardening Calendar

January

- Study the “skeleton” of your landscape and decide where to put new structures, such as pathways and arbors.
- Keep bird feeders well stocked with favorites, such as black oil sunflower seeds.
- Discard old seeds for the garden; mail orders for new seeds.
- Create a computer database of your garden plants with notes on performance.
- Rake heavy snow off shrubs.
- Begin seeds of pansies, dusty miller, begonias, snapdragons, and delphiniums indoors under lights.

February

- Under fluorescent lights, start seeds of onions and leeks at the beginning of the month.
- Near the end of the month, start seeds of broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, and Brussels sprouts indoors under light.
- Start slow-growing flowers, such as garden verbena (*Verbena X hybrid*), stocks (*Matthiola incana*), wallflowers (*Cheiranthus cheiri*), and ageratum indoors.
- If winter has been mild, transplant trees, shrubs, and roses.
- For the earliest tomatoes, start seeds of ‘Early Girl’ under lights now. In April, set out the transplants and guard them against frost with a protective covering.
- Sharpen pruning shears and use them to prune fruit trees, brambles, grapevines, and late summer-blooming shrubs.

Recipe Corner: Potato Soup

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1/2 cup chopped celery
- 6 diced potatoes cut into small cubes
- 2 Tablespoons of margarine
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon of pepper
- 1 cup nonfat dry milk
- 3 cups water (divided)
- 2 Tablespoons of flour

Melt margarine in a large saucepan over low heat. Next, add the chopped onion and celery. Cook for a few minutes. Add the potatoes, salt, pepper and 1 1/2 cups water. Cook for 15 minutes until the potatoes are tender. In a small bowl, stir together the dry milk and flour. Add 1 1/2 cups water slowly, stirring as you add it. Add the milk mix to the potatoes. Cook until the soup is heated and slightly thickened. Adjust the seasonings. Yield: 6 servings.



*Source: USDA , Food Stamp
Nutrition Connection,
Recipe Finder*

Nutritional Analysis: 130 calories, 4 g fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 310 mg sodium, 17 g carbohydrates, 4 g fiber, 7 g protein.

