

Madison County Horticulture Newsletter

Pay Dirt

HORTICULTURE

April 3, 2011



Cooperative
Extension Service
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Hello Horticulturalists!

Although winter seems to try to keep a firm hold on the weather, we must remember that spring is right around the corner. Just remember, as true Kentuckians, we will be wishing for colder weather in July.

As always, there are lots of events going on in the next couple of months. Hope to see you at some of them!

Sincerely,



Amanda Sears

County Extension Agent for Horticulture

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<http://ces.ca.uky.edu/madison/horticulture>

"But for one's health as you say, it is very necessary to work in the garden and see the flowers growing."

- Vincent van Gogh

Madison County Herb Club

Monday, April 11 - 6:30 p.m.

Madison County Extension Office

Madison County Herb Club Tea Party

Bring your favorite herbal tea or an edible herbal treat to share. The club will be planning field trips for the upcoming year so be prepared to brainstorm. Remember, everyone is welcome to attend!

Arbor Day Celebration

Saturday, April 16 - 10 a.m. to 12 noon

Richmond Cemetery - Main Street, Richmond

Come learn how to plant a tree with the Richmond Tree Board! Tree information, displays, and free white dogwoods to the first 100 households who attend. Several memorial trees will be planted on this day, along the drive on the inside of the gates of the cemetery.

Gardeners of Madison County

Monday, April 18 - 7:00 p.m.

Madison County Extension Office

"Kentucky Natives"

Join the club for an informal discussion of the many varieties of Kentucky native plants. Members and guests are encouraged to bring photos and to share their knowledge of Kentucky natives. Also, we'll discuss this year's plans for gardens at Fort Boonesborough.

Looking ahead – May 16th: the club has scheduled a field trip to Bluegrass Hosta Farm in Georgetown. Mark your calendars and watch for details in next month's newsletter.

Gardening: Just for the Health of It!

While we often focus on the practical side of gardening, such as fresh food, there is also a restorative side.

After a stressful day at work, step into the garden. In the lush green of the garden, cooled by a delicate breeze and lightened by birdsong, there is a peace. Research has shown that people who have contact with nature bounce back more quickly from day to day stress. Simple repetitive acts such as pulling weeds or pruning shrubs can have a meditative quality. Many people find a connection to the spiritual world in a garden, where the cycle of life is played out before their eyes.

A connection to the natural world can be vital in a child's development, as well. Studies have shown that children who have access to green spaces learn self-discipline, impulse control and delay gratification. A study at the University of Illinois suggests that a child's connection to nature can lessen the symptoms of ADHD.

Bored with a winter on the treadmill? Gardening is great exercise and works the entire body. You bend, stretch, walk and lift. It is good for your heart, joints, and bones. A hour of moderate work in the garden can burn 300 to 400 calories. And when you are done you can step back and revel in the sight of a freshly mown lawn or weed-free beds. Although gardening teaches patience above all (think about waiting for your flowers to come up), there is also a lot of instant gratification in seeing a job well done.



So whether you only have room for a couple of pots of flowers or a large yard with room to grow, the simple act of gardening can refresh and renew you. So why not give it a try this Spring! (Source: Dr. Rick Durham, University of Kentucky)

see blue.
in the College of Ag

Plant A Row for Hunger

If you are like most people, you may get overzealous when planting your garden. By harvest time, you can not get rid of the produce fast enough! Why not use that extra food to help those who are hungry. Why not go one step further and plant a few extra plants to donate to those in needs?

For many of us, hunger is a difficult concept to really understand. In the US, thirty-three million people, including 13 million children, live in households that experience hunger or are at the risk of hunger. This represents one in ten households in the United States.

Below are the numbers for the local food banks that will accept fresh produce. These are the contacts we have in the office. If you know others, please let us know.



God's Outreach Food Bank: 623-2220

Home Meal Delivery: 623-3294

Berea Food Bank: 985-1903

Berea Baptist Church

(Please call before bringing food): 986-9391

Salvation Army: 624-5826

Spice Up Your Life!

Since history began, it seems as though man has sought to make things better for himself. That is why I have little doubt that those first humans used herbs to season their meals. In fact, early cave drawings found in France show people using herbs.

Herbs are generally easy to grow and overall have few diseases or pest problems. Many can be harvested and stored for use in the winter. Some can grow in reduced light conditions, which make them ideal for growing them in pots inside the home. Most herbs are relatively drought tolerant as well.

Most herbs prefer a sunny location. In fact, for those sun loving plants, the essential oils are greatest when they are grown in six to eight hours of sunlight. Some exceptions to this rule include mint, chives, oregano, catnip, or parsley.



Sage grows very well in our area.

Choose a site that drains well, meaning that it does not stay wet too long after a rain. If you have especially poor soil, try making a raised bed or growing herbs in pots.

Herbs need very little extra fertilizer, if any. Extra fertilization can lead to greater leaf growth, but less flavor.

As with other plants, some herbs are annuals (produce foliage, flowers, and seed in one growing season in one growing season and then die), biennials (leaves form the first growing season, but produces flowers and seeds the second year, then die), or perennials (lives for more than two growing seasons).

Some herbs, such as borage, anise, caraway, chervil, cilantro, dill and fennel should be direct seeded because they grow well from seed and do not transplant well. Other herbs, such as mints, oregano, rosemary, thyme, and tarragon should be purchased as plants and transplanted. So before planting your herb garden, do your research to find out more about the herbs you plan to grow.

Herbs should be harvested when their essential oils are at their peak. Harvest early in the morning, after the dew dries but before the heat of the day. Herbs grown for their leaves should be harvested before they flower. Harvest seeds when they change from green to brown. Do not let the flower ripen completely. Cut the blooms just as the flowers ripen and store them in a paper bag. This is will be a good way to catch the seeds as they drop. To collect flowers, cut them just before they reach full flower. Harvest roots in the fall after the foliage dies.

To learn more about growing herbs in Kentucky, check out www.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/ho/ho74/ho74.pdf . If you would like for us to send you a copy of this publication, please contact us at 859-623-4072.

Your Donation to 4-H Camp Scholarships will be greatly appreciated!

Madison County 4-H Summer Camp is Set for June 27 - June 30

- ◆ Pay a portion of the summer camp fee for a child!
- ◆ Be tax deductible!
- ◆ Help a child make fun summer memories, new friends, and cool camp crafts!



Each year Madison County 4-H takes 225 campers to 4-H Camp where they learn about nature, take traditional camp classes, swim, canoe, and much more! We feel that the experiences, life skills gained and friendships created make 4-H Summer Camp wonderful!

The economy has hit families hard and summer activities are the first places family budgets are tightened. With the increase in requests for assistance in the past few years, our scholarship fund is depleted. Please help Madison County 4-H make summer camp possible for a deserving camper this year by donating to our camp scholarship fund! If you would like to donate or need more information about camp, please call **859-623-4072**.

Squash Vine Borer

Did you find your vining crops suddenly wilting and dying last summer? If so, you may be suffering from a squash vine borer. This clearwing moth is a serious pest of vine crops such as summer squash, winter squash, and pumpkins.

In mid June, the squash vine borer emerges from cocoons in the ground where they have overwintered. These moths lay eggs singly at the base of susceptible plants. About a week later, the eggs hatch and the larvae bores into the stem to feed, blocking the flow of water to the rest of the plant. The larvae, which grow up to an inch in length, have a brown head and a cream colored body, feed for four to six weeks. Then exit the stems and burrow into the ground to start the whole life cycle again next summer.



Squash vine borer larvae

The first symptom of infestation is wilting of the effected plant. If you notice sudden wilting, check for holes near the base of the plant. There will also be moist greenish or orange sawdust-like material around the hole. The base of the plant may also become mushy. More than one borer can attack each plant.

Unfortunately, it can be difficult to control the borers once they are in the stem. So you can try to exclude the adults from laying their eggs on your vine crops by placing a floating row cover over your vine crops when they start to vine or in mid June. Keep the barriers in place for about two weeks. Make sure the cover is securely placed so that the insects cannot crawl under the material. Just remember, do not use covers when plants are flowering, since bees will not be able to visit these plants.



Squash vine borer adult

Another option is to plant vine crops that are less likely to be attacked by this insect such as butternut squash, cucumbers, melons, and watermelons. Also, consider a second planting of summer squash made in early July which will mature after adult borers have finished laying eggs. Once you do see damage, pull and destroy those plants. Remember, the insects may overwinter near debris.

If you feel you need to use chemicals to control this insect, you will have to begin spraying in mid June or when the vine begins to run. Repeat the spray every seven to ten days until the end of July. Chemicals effective against this insect are carbaryl, permethrin, or esfenvalerate.

If you notice a borer in your vine, use a sharp knife to cut a slit in the affected stem until you locate the insect. Remove the borer, then mound moist soil over the cut area and keep the spot well watered. While this is a last ditch effort, roots may grow along the cut stem which will allow the plant to survive.

Horticulture Websites of Interest...

Home Vegetable Gardening in Kentucky - <http://www.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/id/id128/id128.pdf>

Disease & Insect Control for Home Grown Fruit - <http://www.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/id/id21/id21.pdf>

University of Kentucky Entomology - <http://www.ca.uky.edu/entomology/entomology.php>

Got Questions? We've Got Answers

- Soil Testing
- Insect Identification
- Plant Disease Diagnosis
- Plant Identification

For Horticulture questions, please contact me at 859-623-4072, or e-mail, amanda.sears@uky.edu.
You may also stop by and visit me at the Madison County Extension Center.

Free Soil Testing!

Beginning April 1st, the Madison County Cooperative Extension Service will begin offering free soil testing year round (on a trial basis). Soil testing is a very important whether you have a garden, work in your landscape, or if you own a farm. It allows the homeowner or producer to know exactly what amendments such as fertilizer and lime are needed.

The normal \$6 per sample charge will be waived. Agricultural and horticultural samples **from Madison County residents** will both be accepted.

There is a 10 sample limit per farm or home per calendar year!

(Please note: Commercial lawn care companies submitting samples does not qualify for free soil testing; call 859-623-4075 for pricing.)

Remember, we need at least two cups of dry soil to run a test!

For more information on this service that is available to Madison County residents, please call us at (859) 623-4072.



Below are links to soil testing publications or call 859-623-4072 to receive a copy in the mail:

- "Soil Testing: What It Is and What It Does"
<http://www.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/agr/agr57/agr57.htm>
- "Taking Soil Test Samples"
<http://www.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/agr/agr16/agr16.pdf>

Special thanks to the following sponsors for making this possible: Madison County Extension Service District Board, Madison County Conservation District, Tri-County Fertilizer, and Southern States of Richmond.

Spring Beekeeping Workshop



Tammy Horn will host a workshop on Saturday, April 16 from 10 a.m. to 12 noon at the ECU outside classroom. This workshop will focus on doing basic spring maintenance, such as making sure the hives have queens, feeding as necessary, making splits if needed, and discussing mite and other pathogen controls.

This class is limited to 20 participants; please call by April 7 to reserve your spot. Those attending this class will need to meet at the Perkin's Building at ECU to carpool to bee hives.

To register, call the Madison County Extension Office at 859-623-4072. For more information on the workshop, contact Tammy Horn at tammy.horn@eku.edu.

Berea Garden Tour

Be sure to mark your calendars: the Third Annual Berea Arts Council Berea Garden Tour is set for Saturday, May 14 from 9 am to 4 pm. This year's theme is "Palettes of Passion and Creative Expression". The tour will have a few of the perennial favorites, but also plenty of new gardens for viewing. Check back for more details next month.



Mary Startzman's Garden in Berea

SPRING INTO GARDENING

Thursday, April 14, 2011

Please Note - You will be attending one class from each Session

Lawn and Garden Trade Show.....5:30 to 6:00 pm



Session I.....6:00-6:45 pm

- ☉ **Square Foot Gardening** — Ray Tackett, Cooperative Extension Agent for Horticulture in Bourbon County. Short on space, learn to make the most of your garden by employing the methods of square foot gardening.
- ☉ **What Homeowners Need to Know About Pruning** — Kim Cowherd, Cooperative Extension Agent for Horticulture in Franklin County. Learn what every homeowner should know about pruning trees before they get the loppers out or hire tree trimmers to do the job.
- ☉ **What Makes Suds in the Spring** — Marla Campbell and Kim Turner, Madison County Herb Club. Come learn how to make herbal soaps and bath salts with the Madison County Herb Club.

Snack Break & Trade Show....6:45-7:15 pm

Session II.....7:15-8:00 pm

- ☉ **History of Bonsai** — Tim Weckman, owner of Berea Bonsai Studio. An outline of bonsai, the art and practice of capturing the essence of trees in miniature, will be presented. Highlights include the Asian origins, post WW II embrace of bonsai, and current worldwide spread of this fascinating practice
- ☉ **Backyard Poultry**— Sandy Kavanaugh, 4-H leader of the Poultry Pals. Come learn more about what poultry breeds do well in small areas. Remaining time will be devoted to questions from the audience.
- ☉ **Growing Apples in Small Areas** — Eric Graffice, Madison County Master Gardener. Come learn how to get an “orchard” in your backyard. Topics will include varieties, preparations and maintenance.



Spring into Gardening

WORKSHOP REGISTRATION FORM (return by Thursday, April 7, 2011)

Name _____

Daytime Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

e-mail _____

**Return one form
for each person attending.**

If classes fill, we will call you for your second choice. Please provide a phone number where you can be reached easily!!!

Session I: (check only one)

- ___ Square Foot Gardening
- ___ What Homeowners Need to Know About Pruning
- ___ What Makes Suds in the Spring?

Session II: (check only one)

- ___ History of Bonsai
- ___ Backyard Poultry
- ___ Growing Apples in Small Areas

Conference Registration non-refundable:

- ___ \$4.00 Madison County Extension Homemaker Member
- ___ \$5.00 Non-Member

Make Check payable to:
“Madison County Extension Homemakers”

And mail to: **Spring Into Gardening**
P.O. Box 270
Richmond, KY 40476-0270