APRIL 2025

Cooperative Extension Service

HORTICULTURE NEWSLETTER

FROM THE GROUND UP

Clark County Extension Service • 1400 Fortune Drive • Winchester, KY 40391 • 859-744-4682 • clark.ext@uky.edu • http://clark.ca.uky.edu/

A Word from the Agent . . .

Happy April to ya!! My friends, **IT IS TIME!!** What is it time for? it's time for a lot of things.

It's time to start planting veggies! Most cool season crops can start going into the ground now. Check out the planting calendars in the ID-128.

It's time to start mowing lawns! Lawns have been greening up and if yours isn't ready to mow yet, it wont be long. Make sure your mower blades are sharp to start off the season.

It's time to stomp down the mole hills. Many of us have been blessed to have moles set up homes in our lawns over the winter, so find some time after a rain to stomp the hills back down to prevent damage to your mower....and your ankles.

It's time to start cleaning out and freshening up your landscape beds. Removing any dead plant material is beneficial for the health of the plant as the new growing season begins.

Lastly, **it's time** to be watching the newsletter for upcoming classes and tips for the season!
Call me if I can be of any help!

Carrie Spry
Clark County Extension Agent for Horticulture
carrie.spry@uky.edu

Clark / Powell
Beekeepers Association

Monday, April 14
6:30 pm
Powell County Extension Service
169 Maple Street; Stanton, Kentucky

~ POT-LUCK MEAL ~

Zoom option available for those who cannot attend in person. Call 859-744-4682 to be added to the email list to receive the link.

KEEPING YOU Informed

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https://www.facebook.com/ClarkCountyExtension

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Butterflys and Moths of Kentucky

Top 10 Commonly Reported Butterflies and Moths of Kentucky:

Eastern Tiger Swallowtail
Papilio glaucus

Male is yellow with dark tiger stripes. Female has 2 forms: one yellow like the male and the other black with shadows of dark stripes. Hindwing of both female forms has a row of striking blue chevrons and an iridescent blue wash over parts of the interior hindwing. The upperside hindwing has a prominent orange marginal spot that is generally larger than the row of pale marginal spots. On the underside of forewing of spring individuals the row of marginal spots may be merged into a continuous band, thus appearing similar to the Canadian Tiger Swallowtail.

Pearl Crescent
Phyciodes tharos

Quite variable. Males usually have black antennal knobs. Upperside is orange with black borders; postmedian and submarginal areas are crossed by fine black marks. Underside of hindwing has a dark marginal patch containing a light-colored crescent. Spring and fall broods (form marcia) have a gray mottled hindwing below.

Eastern Tailed-Blue
Cupido comyntas

One narrow tail on hindwing. Upperside of male iridescent blue; summer females uniformly brown, spring females smaller with much blue at the wing bases. Underside of hindwing pale gray with black bar at end of cell, distinct black spots, and three large orange spots at outer margin near tail.

Silver-spotted Skipper
Epargyreus clarus

Wings are brown-black; hindwing is lobed. Forewing has transparent gold spots; underside of hindwing has a metallic silver band.

Orange Sulphur
Colias eurytheme

Quite variable. Upperside of male yellow with orange overlay, yellow veins, wide black border, and dark black cell spot. Female yellow or white with irregular black border surrounding light spots. Underside hindwing spot silver with 2 concentric dark rings, and a spot above it.

Monarch
Danaus plexippus

Upperside of male is bright orange with wide black borders and black veins; hindwing has a patch of scent scales. Upperside of female is orange-brown with wide black borders and blurred black veins. Both sexes have white spots on borders and apex. The Viceroy butterfly (Limenitis archippus) is a Mullerian mimic; it has similar coloration and is also distasteful.

Sachem
Atalopedes campestris

Upperside of male is yellow-orange with a wide brown border and a large squarish black stigma. Female upperside varies from yellow-brown to very dark brown, but always has a square transparent white spot at the end of the forewing cell. Underside of female hindwing is brown with nearly square cream or white spots.

Great Spangled Fritillary
Speyeria cybele

Large. Upperside of male tan to orange with black scales on forewing veins; female tawny, darker than male. Underside of hindwing with wide pale submarginal band and large silver spots.

Clouded Sulphur
Colias philodice

Upper surface of male wings bright, clear yellow with solid black edging; lower side of forewing with some dark submarginal spots; hindwing with silver cell spot rimmed with orange-pink, usually doubled. Female has 2 forms: yellow form with uneven black edging enclosing yellow spots, and a white form which is greenish-white rather than yellow. Spring and fall forms are smaller and less conspicuously marked.

Pipevine Swallowtail
Battus philenor

Upper surface of hindwing iridescent blue or blue-green. Underside of hindwing with submarginal row of 7 round orange spots in iridescent blue field.

Cooperative Extension Service

DEALING WITH BACKYARD WILDLIFE

Thursday, April 17

6:30 pm

Clark County Extension Service

Free!

Squirrels and rabbits and groundhogs, oh my! Possums and chipmunks and skunks, oh no! If you are at your wits end trying to deal with nuisance wildlife around your home, tearing up your lawn, or eating your garden, then you will want to attend this class. Although there are limited options, we will discuss methods and techniques to try to keep those animals at bay.

Register:

CALL: 859-744-4682

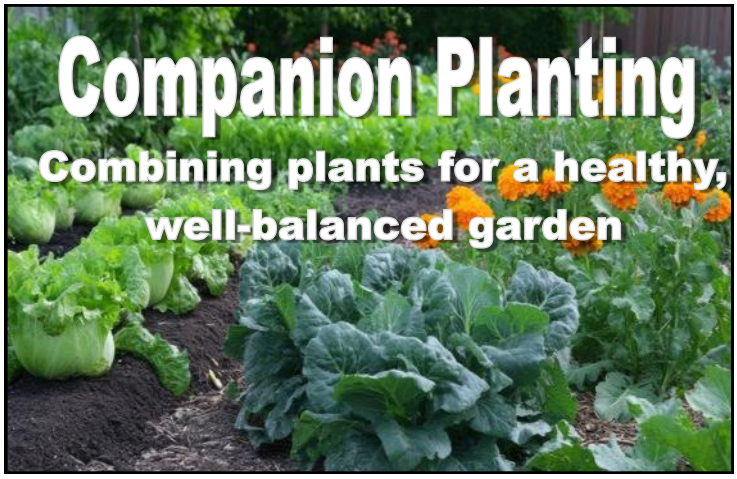
EMAIL: cynthia.carr@uky.edu

Cooperative Extension Service

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

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

Lexington, KY 40506



As we creep toward spring, many gardeners begin to get the urge to get out in the garden. Seed starting and garden planning activities are well underway. One gardening technique that many gardeners incorporate into their gardens is companion planting.

What is companion planting?

There isn't really an agreed-upon definition of what companion planting is. Generally speaking, companion planting is the planting of at least two different types of plants together that will in some way benefit at least one of them.

Another way to think of companion planting is as intercropping, growing two or more crops together, or polyculture, which not only includes the crops being grown but also non-crop plants. Essentially, trying to increase diversity to create a healthy, well-balanced garden.

Some potential benefits of companion planting

There are a variety of different ways in which plants can potentially benefit, including improving the soil and pollination and reducing pest and weed pressure. So, what are some ways companion planting can be incorporated into our gardens?

Improving soil

While some may not consider them companion plants, cover crops are a great way to help improve soils, which will benefit the crops that will be following them. Cover crops can help reduce soil erosion, add organic matter to the soil, improve soil structure, and increase soil fertility.

Some plants, particularly those in the pea/bean family, will form symbiotic relationships with nitrogen-fixing bacteria. These bacteria form nodules on the plant's roots and can take atmospheric nitrogen and turn it into a plant-usable form. This nitrogen can become available to other plants as the nitrogen-fixing plants die, or it can potentially be shared via mycorrhizal fungi.

Reducing weeds

In addition to improving soil, cover crops can also be used to suppress weeds. Cover crops like winter/cereal rye can be used as mulch after they have been terminated. Cover crops can also be used as a living mulch to provide continuous ground cover to help suppress weeds. For example, white clover can be grown on walking paths to keep weeds down. The living mulch will need to be maintained, though, to prevent it from becoming a weed itself.

Managing pests

There are several ways companion plants can be used to help manage pests. Trap cropping can be used, where a 'sacrificial' companion plant is planted. These trap crops should be planted before the crop you're trying to protect (main crop). Pests will be attracted to them and can then be killed or disposed of. One example is using blue Hubbard squash, which is highly attractive to squash bugs and vine borer, to protect other pumpkin and squash cultivars.

Plant-eating insects will find their host plants using a variety of cues such as smell (plant volatiles), visual (colors), and taste. Having diverse plantings and little bare ground can make it difficult for plant-eating insects to find their preferred host plants and potentially decrease the amount of damage done to plants.

Support beneficial insects

Many vegetable crops, such as cucurbits (pumpkin, squash, cucumber, etc.), rely on pollination to produce fruit, while others, like beans, peppers, and tomatoes, may have increased production and quality if they are visited by pollinators. Incorporating flowering plants into vegetable gardens can help attract pollinators and improve pollination.

In addition to prey, many natural enemies (predators and parasitoids) need sources of pollen and nectar. These sources are especially important for parasitoid wasps as well as the adult stages of insects with predaceous larvae, like syrphid flies. By planting plants that are attractive to these natural enemies, you can help attract them into your garden and they can help manage pest populations.

The Three Sisters

Probably the best-known companion planting practice is the Three Sisters, which utilizes corn, beans, and squash. In this system, corn acts as a support for the vining bean plants, the beans act as a nitrogen-fixing crop, and the squash plants act as a living mulch to suppress weed growth and to help maintain soil moisture. While this combination has been used for thousands of years, according to Washington State University, "Though there may be historic or cultural reasons for planting a Three Sisters polyculture vegetable garden, there is no compelling, published evidence that it benefits plant productivity or soil quality."

Some caveats to companion planting

Unfortunately, there hasn't been a lot of research done, especially on a garden scale, on companion planting. Many recommendations are based on questionable methods (ex. sensitive crystallization) and anecdotal evidence. Others are based on large studies or lab results that may (or may not) apply to a garden setting.

The interactions between the different plants, pests, diseases, weeds, soil, etc., are complex, making it difficult to determine if growing particular plants together is beneficial. This is perhaps best summarized by Dr. Michael Bomford in his PhD dissertation: "Garden-scale intercropping [companion planting] can offer advantages over monoculture, but these are not achieved simply by combining certain compatible companion species. Crop density, ratio, and relative planting times all affect the way that companion species interact with one another and their environment."

By: Ken Johnson, University of Illinois Horticulture Educator

The bearded irises are a common old-fashioned flower found in many gardens and landscapes throughout Kentucky. They are very easy to grow perennials that do best in full sun and well drained soils.

There are several classifications of the bearded iris from miniature dwarf, standard dwarf, intermediate and tall. The tall varieties are the largest group having thousands belonging to it.

While they are easy to grow, they still can have a few problems if not cared for properly. The iris borer larvae can invade the rhizome by tunneling through it allowing for bacteria to enter. This bacteria usually will result in bacterial soft rot, a very pungent smelling disease.

To prevent bacterial soft rot, it is important to use an insecticidal spray of Sevin or Malathion in the spring when the plants are about 3" tall and repeat spray weekly for 2 weeks.

Sanitation is also key to keeping this disease under control. Foliage should be cleaned up in the fall to prevent laying of eggs by the adult iris borer moth for the next year. It is also important to note that the iris prefers to be grown in a bed without mulch covering it, so it would be very beneficial to use a pre-emergent weed control regularly.

To help keep the iris rhizomes healthy it is important to remove declining blooms to keep seed from forming. If seed is allowed to form then the rhizome will have less production of stored food that can decrease the bloom production the following year.

Irises should be fertilized yearly in the spring when the foliage starts to grow. A general rule of thumb is to fertilize with a complete fertilizer such as 10-10-10 or 12-12-12 at a rate of 1-2 pounds per 100 sq.ft. This spring fertilization is the only one needed to help have a healthy rhizome.

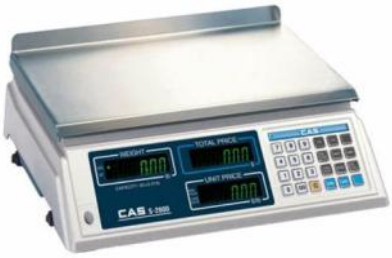
Spring blooming irises can be divided in August/September if they are getting to thick in the area you have them.

If you are an iris enthusiast check your area to see if there is a local iris society or a Master Gardener group that may have a member that is into raising irises to get some varieties you may not have – if they are willing to share their rhizomes. Also, many Master Gardener groups and local garden clubs sponsor spring and fall plant exchanges so you may want to check those out to see if there are any irises at these events to add to your garden collection.

Submitted by: Lori Bowling, Boyd County Horticulture Agent

FARMERS MARKET

It's **SCALE CERTIFICATION** time! If you sell produce by the weight directly off your farm, at a roadside stand, or at any of Kentucky's farmers markets, then your scale must be certified each year. Representatives from the Kentucky Department of Agriculture will be coming to the Clark County Extension Office to certify your scale.

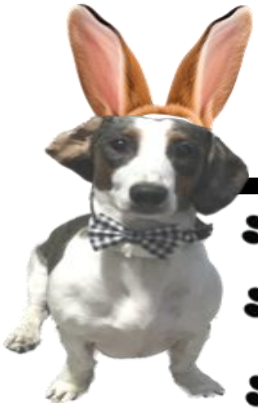


Scales MUST be dropped off :
Monday, **April 14:** 8:00 am - 4:00 pm
Tuesday, **April 15:** 8:00 - 4:00 pm

Scales can be picked up:
Thursday, **April 17:** 8:00 am - 4:00 pm
Friday, **April 18:** 8:00 - 4:00 pm

Scales must be for legal trade and made for commercial use. For more information about scales, please check out the Kentucky Farmers market manual at:
https://www.kyagr.com/marketing/documents/FM_Manual_and_Resource_Guide.pdf

**** NOTE:** *Please be sure to put your name and phone number somewhere on the scale, but **NOT** on the top of the scale where you weigh produce.*

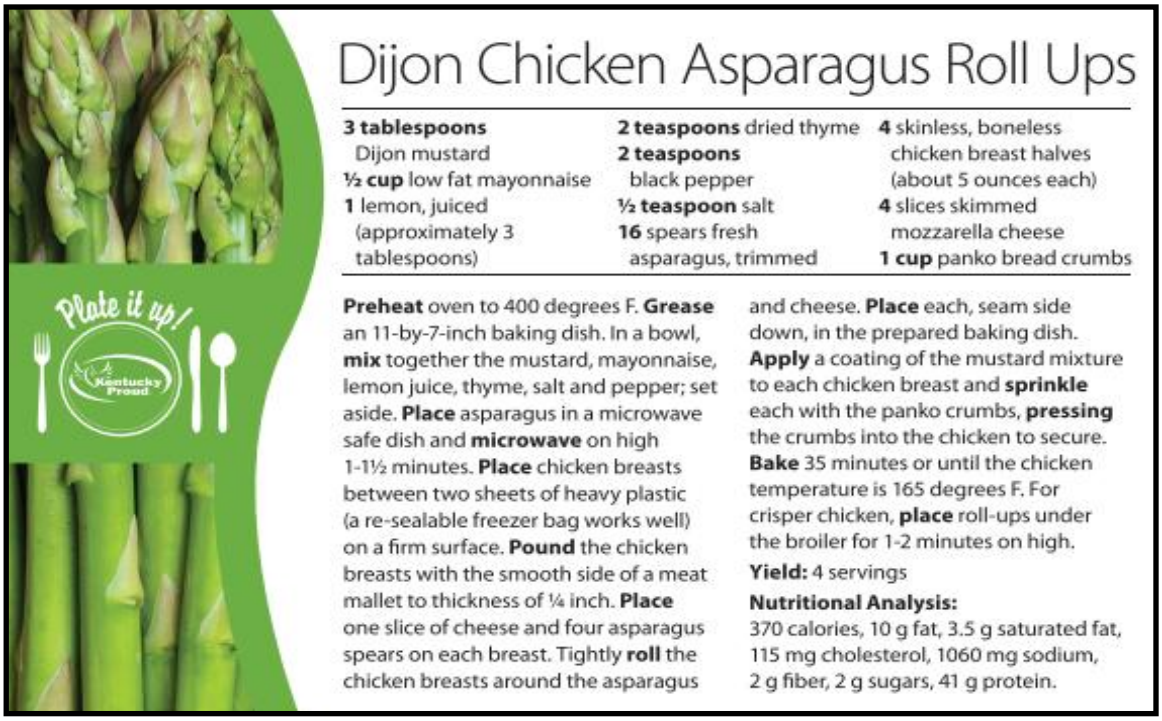


Gus' QUICK TIPS for APRIL

1. If you haven't trimmed back ornamental grasses and perennials, do so now.
2. Remove flower stalks from bulbs. Apply fertilizer and make sure to leave the foliage to die back naturally. The leaves provide food for next year's flowers.
3. Continue planting trees and shrubs this month.
4. You can begin trimming evergreens now through late summer. However, pruning after the spring flush of growth will result in less re-growth.
5. Add organic matter to flower beds and garden plots. Incorporate into the soil where possible.
6. Edge beds for a crisp, clean look. This will also keep creeping weeds from encroaching as rapidly.
7. Apply new mulch to beds as needed. Total mulch depth should not exceed 3-4" and a 2" layer is usually sufficient. Be sure to keep mulch away from tree trunks and bases of shrubs though.
8. If you have a spray program for fruit trees, begin spraying after flower petals drop. As always, follow the labeled directions very carefully. Better yet, plant fruit trees with natural disease resistance.
9. Sharpen mower blades. Clean cuts make for a healthier, more attractive lawn.
10. Crabgrass preventer should be applied by the middle of the month or when the forsythia are blooming.
11. If you start seedlings indoors, gradually toughen them up with brief trips outdoors on nice days. Start with short times in a shady spot at first because they sunburn easily.

RECIPE

What's Cooking?



Dijon Chicken Asparagus Roll Ups

3 tablespoons Dijon mustard
½ cup low fat mayonnaise
1 lemon, juiced (approximately 3 tablespoons)
2 teaspoons dried thyme
2 teaspoons black pepper
½ teaspoon salt
16 spears fresh asparagus, trimmed
4 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves (about 5 ounces each)
4 slices skimmed mozzarella cheese
1 cup panko bread crumbs

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. **Grease** an 11-by-7-inch baking dish. In a bowl, **mix** together the mustard, mayonnaise, lemon juice, thyme, salt and pepper; set aside. **Place** asparagus in a microwave safe dish and **microwave** on high 1-1½ minutes. **Place** chicken breasts between two sheets of heavy plastic (a re-sealable freezer bag works well) on a firm surface. **Pound** the chicken breasts with the smooth side of a meat mallet to thickness of ¼ inch. **Place** one slice of cheese and four asparagus spears on each breast. Tightly **roll** the chicken breasts around the asparagus and cheese. **Place** each, seam side down, in the prepared baking dish. **Apply** a coating of the mustard mixture to each chicken breast and **sprinkle** each with the panko crumbs, **pressing** the crumbs into the chicken to secure. **Bake** 35 minutes or until the chicken temperature is 165 degrees F. For crisper chicken, **place** roll-ups under the broiler for 1-2 minutes on high.

Yield: 4 servings

Nutritional Analysis:
370 calories, 10 g fat, 3.5 g saturated fat, 115 mg cholesterol, 1060 mg sodium, 2 g fiber, 2 g sugars, 41 g protein.