

August 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 . . .



Hello and happy August my friends! I hope everyone is doing well, despite the seemingly excessive humidity we have had given to us this year. If we keep the same weather patterns, don't be surprised if we end up with a lot of disease and insect problems in our vegetable and flower gardens.

Just keep dead plant material cleaned up, plants trimmed back off of each other to increase air flow, and shift any overhead watering to occur during the morning or daytime hours.

If you've been hanging out in the shady portions of your yard this summer and realize those areas need some more pizzaz, then be sure to sign up for the **Shade Perennials Class** (see flyer for more info).

As we move into the final stages of summer, start looking over any houseplants that you moved outside so that you can get ahead of any pest issues before it's time to bring them back in.

As always, call me when you need me!

Carrie Spry

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

KEEPING YOU
Informed



Find us on
Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/ClarkCountyExtension>



Follow us on
Instagram

[clarkextensionhort](https://www.instagram.com/clarkextensionhort)

**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

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, physical or mental disability or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Reasonable accommodation of disability may be available with prior notice. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating. Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.



Clark / Powell Beekeepers Association

Monday, August 11, 2025

6:30 pm

Powell County Extension Service

169 Maple Street, Stanton, Kentucky

~ POT-LUCK MEAL ~



Happy Birthday to all my peeps with August birthdays You know who you are! 😊

Autumn Vegetable Gardening

Did your plans for a summer vegetable garden not work out? Did you lose track of time and never got around to planting a summer garden? Did you go on vacation to come back to a weedy mess that you just didn't have the energy to correct before it was too late? If you answered yes to any of these questions it's not too late to get homegrown vegetables from your own backyard this season!

Early August is the time to start planting and planning for your fall garden. Many people don't even think about vegetable gardening in the fall but it is actually the best time to grow many of our cool season vegetables. Taste and quality of most cool season vegetables is better in the fall because the weather is getting cooler when harvest and ripening time nears instead of hotter like it does in the spring. Vegetables such as lettuce, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflowers, and turnips develop bitter compounds in hot weather; however in cooler weather such as in late September and October these plants store sugars and starches which greatly improve their taste.

Now is the time to plant broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower transplants into the garden. Keep in mind; these are cool season crops that will need extra water in hot dry weather to get established.

You can also seed crops such as beets, bush beans, kale, collards, Bibb lettuce, and radishes in early



Broccoli, *Brassica oleracea* var. *italica*, –Gerald Holmes, Strawberry Center, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Bugwood.org



Cauliflower, *Brassica oleracea* var. *botrytis*, –Rebecca A. Melanson, Mississippi State University Extension, Bugwood.org

August. Radish can even be planted all the way to mid September. With beans, keep in mind that generally bush beans can be planted until August 15 in West Kentucky and late July and early August for East and Central Kentucky and still make before frost, however be sure to pick early maturing varieties. The other crops mentioned can be planted anytime in August.

Many people in our area don't plant spinach because it tends to bolt (go to seed) and doesn't have a mild flavor. This is because they plant it too late in the spring and hot dry weather causes the flavor to deteriorate as well as stresses the plant which tells it to reproduce or bolt. Fall planted spinach in September won't go to seed because of the cool weather and short day length. Individual leaves can be harvested to cook or add to a salad. These smaller spinach plants will generally over winter and give you early great tasting spinach next spring.

After your fall crop is up and actively growing side dress it with nitrogen fertilizer such as urea. Apply 3 tablespoons of urea per 10 feet of row four to six inches away from the plants. If it doesn't rain water the plants soon to activate the fertilizer.

Submitted by Dennis Morgeson, Agent for Horticulture, Washington County Cooperative Extension Service



If you fertilize your lawn, apply it only in the fall timeframe.



Don't bag your clippings. Chop them up with more passes or swap to mulching blades.



Overseed in the late summer to early fall with newer lawn varieties that have better growth and disease resistance.



And if you want to go the extra mile, topdress the lawn with a half-inch layer of compost to add organic matter to the soil to improve water holding capacity. Make sure to spread or rake the compost down to the soil to avoid smothering the grass.

If you have any questions about your lawn, contact Carrie Spry, Clark County Extension Agent for Horticulture, at 859-744-4682.

Shade Perennials



Thursday, August 21

6:30 pm

Clark County Extension Service

1400 Fortune Drive; Winchester, Kentucky

Do you have a shady area in your lawn that is looking drab and boring? While hostas and ferns are valid choices, there are so many more options that can bring in lots of color and fun textures. Join us as we cover some great perennial plant choices, along with tips and tricks to keep the plants happy!

TO REGISTER: 859-744-4682 or cynthia.carr@uky.edu

FREE!

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

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, physical or mental disability or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Reasonable accommodation of disability may be available with prior notice. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating. Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.

What to Do with That Tree Stump?



A GUIDE TO TREE STUMP REMOVAL

A sad fact of life is that sometimes a tree must be cut down. Some trees are beset by invasive insects or disease, others may be mangled by storms, and some die from environmental stress or old age. Once the tree is removed, we are often left with a stump. Which leads me to a popular question: "What can I do to get rid of a tree stump?"

The internet is full of tricks for dealing with tree stumps. Some sound practical, while others seem dangerous. Let's examine some common tree stump removal techniques. First will look at techniques for physically removing the tree stump and then ways to treat the tree stump in place.

PHYSICAL REMOVAL

• Hand digging or grubbing:

For smaller trees, it is possible to dig them out by hand. While some information specifies trees with a 15-inch trunk diameter or less can be hand-dug, I personally wouldn't go much over a 6-inch trunk diameter. That's because digging out a tree is hard work, but with enough time, leverage, and pain relievers for a sore back, hand-digging a tree stump is an option.

Using an air spade or high-pressure water can help excavate soil around the roots to assist in cutting the roots and extracting the stump. High-pressure water can be quick, but a plan must be in place to handle the pooling water and mud. Saturated soil can make it difficult to gain leverage to remove the stump once it is severed from the root system.

• Mechanical Removal:

Pulling, pushing, or digging out a tree stump is made far easier with machinery. However, this adds additional equipment cost and potential damage to the surrounding landscape. Machinery needs a place to operate, and depending on access, may require disrupting adjacent parts of your yard.

To make stump pulling easier, saturating the soil surrounding the stump with water will help, so long as you are not also saturating the soil where the equipment will be.

Let's also make note that it is easier to remove a stump when leverage is applied straight up rather than sideways. So using a piece of equipment that can lift up rather than

pull from the side, will gain you more leverage against the roots.

Regardless of whether you dig up, push, pull, or use a combination of those methods, the tree removal crew will need to leave a taller stump of several feet for better leverage.

TREATING THE STUMP ONSITE

• Stump grinding:

Many tree companies offer stump grinding as an additional service charge when removing a tree. Various types of stump grinders can remove stumps to a certain depth, ranging from flush to the soil line to over a foot deep. Often, the deeper you want a stump ground out, the more it will cost you. Depending on how far down a stump is ground, you may be left with a large hole. If planting turfgrass where the former tree resided, it is recommended to haul off the chipped stump debris and fill the hole with quality topsoil.

Typically, the grindings from a tree stump get mixed in with the surrounding soil as the blade chews up the stump. Wood material mixed in with the soil can tie up nitrogen as the wood breaks down, making it difficult to grow lawn, or another plant where the tree once stood.

• Burning:

Stumps can be burned out, however, be sure to check your local ordinances to see whether open burning is permitted. Because stumps are buried in soil, drying the wood enough so it will burn can be difficult. Avoid pouring fuel on a stump, which can contaminate the soil.

Instead, create a "stove" of charcoal on top of the stump using a metal cylinder with no top or bottom. A stump fire will burn hot and possibly for many days. High heat can sterilize the surrounding soil, making it difficult for future plants to grow.

While burning can quickly break those strong bonds of the tree stump and release that energy into the atmosphere, charred remains that may be left behind of the stump are inhospitable to decay microbes and will resist further breakdown.

Digging around the stump to expose it to air can help in drying and providing oxygen for burning. Sometimes chemical pre-treatment to stumps (described in the next section) is suggested prior to burning. However, in some locations, this practice is not allowed.

- Continued on next page

- Continued from previous page

• **Chemical treatment:**

Unfortunately, chemically treating your tree stump will not liquify it overnight. Often, what is applied are salts to break down the tough woody material, but it is also detrimental to the living decay organisms that decompose tree stumps. A common ingredient used in stump chemical treatment is potassium nitrate also known as saltpeter. The salt pulls out water from the stump, which can help dry it faster for burning. Follow the label directions when using chemical stump treatments.

According to Dr. Coder, chemical treatment speeds up decomposition by about 25%, whereas enhancing natural decay (by increasing surface area, soil aeration, moisture, and nitrogen availability) can accelerate degradation by up to 50%. How quickly a tree stump decays depends on size, species, the date it was cut down, and many other site-specific features such as sun, drainage, soil biology, etc.

• **Do nothing:**

This is an ecologically valuable option. Dead trees are tough to find in a developed area and can be a refuge for wild animals. If you can leave a dead tree, then do it! If you must cut it down, but can leave a tall stump, then leave a tall stump. If you can't leave a tall stump, but

perhaps a shorter one, then do that. Dress up a stump as a fairy house or add containers of flowers.

• **Blow it up!:**

In bygone years, explosives were commonly used to remove tree stumps. Blasting or blowing out a stump using TNT was an important tool before we had modern heavy equipment. Human nature of using more than needed has not changed much, as there are many stories of over-charging explosives, which would fling debris well beyond the tree stump location.

While explosives successfully shear off roots and elevate the stump for easier extraction, it is really NOT practical in our modern communities. Many utilities are buried beneath the soil that can be impacted by an explosive charge, not to mention nearby building foundations. Blasting the soil also creates a compaction layer beneath where the explosive was detonated. Today, using explosives to remove a tree stump would require specialized training and being a certified explosives expert. This technique is included as a glimpse of what used to be done, **not a recommendation of how to remove a stump today.**

By: Carrie Spry, Clark County Extension Agent for Horticulture



Lawn Care Advice for People Who Don't Care About Lawns

By: Carrie Spry, Clark County Extension Agent for Horticulture

The Big THREE Mowing Tips:

Each year I try to write a couple of articles about lawns. Each time I've written one of these, I have assumed you, the reader, care about your lawn. Turns out, there are a lot of people who have lawns, that don't care about having a perfectly manicured turf. You just want to know enough to get by, and that's ok! Lawncare takes time, and we're all busy. After all, if it's green then it's good! So, what is a person to do if we want to apply minimal effort? Then this article is for you. *Please note: this information is for cool-season lawns in Kentucky.*

(1) Mow high

Cool season lawns that are typically grown in Kentucky benefit from a taller mow height. The myth of mowing a lawn short to reduce mowing, is just that, a myth. Plants feed themselves through photosynthesis which takes place in the leaves. By removing the plant's food source, it must grow faster and deplete more energy to make up for the loss. Turf-type tall fescue prefers a taller height of 3 to 4 inches while Kentucky bluegrass can be cut a bit shorter at 2½ to 3 inches. If you are not sure what type of grass you have, just mow at 3 to 3½ and it'll be just fine!

(2) Mow often - (Follow the one-third rule)

Mow often? Wait, I thought this was for the less invested lawncare household? Bear with me here. There is some long-term study of the effects on mowing and pasture grasses that translates well to lawns. When more than one-third of the leaf blade is removed during one mowing, this stresses out the grass plant. We can see this same stress period on overgrown lawns when they get chopped back to their normal cut height. Stressed lawns are less competitive to weeds, resisting disease, and outgrowing insect feeding. Just mow often enough to remove one-third of the leaf blade or less. I know, easier said than done.

(3) Sharp blades make a difference

A sharp blade cuts and creates a smaller wound on the grass leaf. A dull blade beats, shreds, and tears at grass blades, which creates larger wounds and a more ragged appearance to the overall lawn. Larger wounds present more opportunities for disease and take more energy to heal. Plus, a dull blade makes work harder.

And that's it! The bare minimum to lawn care that will get you on your way to a decent stand of turf.



Gus'

QUICK TIPS

for August

- 1** Many short season vegetables can be planted now for a fall crop. Look at beans cucumbers, squash, radishes, lettuce etc. Keep in mind the shortening days will cause plants to mature more slowly.

Allow at least two weeks longer than the predicted days to harvest.

- 2** Plant cool season crops like broccoli, cabbage, brussel sprouts and cauliflower now for best results. These crops perform better for us in fall than spring.

- 3** Finish trimming shrubs and hedges this month to allow time for re-growth to mature before winter.

- 4** Do not spray pesticides in the heat. Wait until late evening or early morning when temperatures are cooler. Always read labels thoroughly for additional precautions.

- 5** Divide crowded perennials now through mid September. This will help prevent diseases and provide you with more plants to share!

- 6** Harvest vegetables as they mature. Allowing fruits and vegetables to ripen seed on the plant will reduce further yields.

- 7** Monitor plants in the squash and pumpkin family for squash bug and squash vine borer. Treat as necessary before a significant problem develops.

- 8** Bagworms are still a problem on evergreens. Monitor plants closely as small bagworms are much easier to control than the more mature larvae.

- 9** Late summer brings the common tomato blights to forefront. Inspect plants regularly and remove any infected leaves as they appear. This will help control the spread of the disease. Also be careful not to wet foliage when watering as splashing water often spreads disease organisms.

RECIPE



Crispy Oven Zucchini Fries

Servings: 8 / Serving Size: 1 cup

Source: [Eat Smart to Play Hard: Cook Together, Eat Together by the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service](#)

Ingredients:

- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- Pinch of salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 egg + 1 egg white
- ½ cup plain or panko breadcrumbs
- ¼ cup grated parmesan cheese
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- Dash of salt
- 4 medium zucchini
- Nonstick spray

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 450° F.
2. In a pie pan, whisk together flour, salt and pepper. In a second pie pan, beat egg and egg white together. In a third pie pan, whisk together breadcrumbs, parmesan cheese, paprika and a dash of salt.
3. Slice zucchini lengthwise into ½-inch thick pieces. Cut into 4-inch lengths and then into "fries" or strips.
4. Dip zucchini strips into the flour, then the egg and then through the breadcrumb mixture. Place on a baking sheet treated with nonstick spray.
5. Bake for 10 minutes. Turn slices and continue baking for another 10 minutes until golden-brown and crisp. Serve immediately.

Nutrition Facts per Serving: 80 calories; 2g total fat; 1g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 30mg cholesterol; 190mg sodium; 11g total carbohydrate; 0g dietary fiber; 0g total sugar; 0g added sugars; 4g protein; 0% Daily Value vitamin D; 4% Daily Value calcium; 6% Daily Value iron; 0% Daily Value calcium