

HORTICULTURE HAPPENINGS & NEWSLETTER

Kristin's Comments



Happy Gardening!

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Welcome to the Winter 2023 Edition of the Horticulture Happenings Newsletter! I have included lots of information for you to use for the season, so here is a quick preview of what to find.

- Start the New Year off right by attending the 2024 Kentucky Fruit & Vegetable Conference being held in Bowling Green at the Sloan Convention Center on January 3rd and January 4th! See page 2 for more details on how to register for this event.
- Check out the Cut Flower Short Course Offerings that will also be held in conjunction with the 2024 Kentucky Fruit & Vegetable Conference this year! To see the full one-day schedule, turn to page 3 of the newsletter.
- Amaryllis bulbs make great gifts for beginner and more experienced gardeners! Get in the holiday spirit with selecting, planting and caring for amaryllis bulbs starting on page 4 and continuing on page 5!
- Stay ahead of the game with the winter garden checklist! Pages 6 and 7 tell what activities are best to be done in the winter for trees and shrubs, houseplants, fruits and vegetables, as well as miscellaneous areas.
- Try the Holiday Turkey Salad recipe that is featured on the back!
- Lastly, spend 10 minutes to complete the UK Community Needs Assessment Survey to help our Extension Office plan future programs, events and workshops for our community! To gain access to this survey, see the back page of the newsletter.



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Register for the 2024 Kentucky Fruit & Vegetable Conference today!

BY KENTUCKY HORTICULTURE COUNCIL

We are excited to be able to host the 2024 Kentucky Fruit and Vegetable Conference again this year at the Holiday Inn, Sloan Convention Center, in Bowling Green, KY! The event will kick-off on Monday, January 2 with a pre-conference Farmers Market Short Course, Farm Food Safety Plan Writing Workshop, Bringing the Farm to School Grower Training, followed by Round Table Discussions for the Vegetable, Tree and Small Fruit Growers.

The conference continues Wednesday January 3rd and Thursday, January 4th with additional educational sessions being offered as well as a trade show. Conference sessions include Direct Marketing, Commercial Fruit and Vegetable Production, Organic Production, Protected Ag (High Tunnel) Production, Marketing and Business Management, a Cut Flower Short Course, and more! The trade show will feature more than 60 exhibitors! You may pre-register by mail or online (<https://2024KYFruitVegConf.eventbrite.com>).

The \$50 meeting pre-registration fee or \$75 registration on site includes a year's membership in the KVGA, KSHS, or OAK and entrance into all educational sessions as well as lunch on both days. Pre-registration means your tickets and name tag will be ready for you at the registration table when you arrive at the conference. Name badges will be required to enter meeting rooms. Pre-registration forms or online registrations need to be in hand by Friday, December 15, 2023. After this date you may continue to register online or on-site at the conference at the \$75 rate.

Please note that registration includes the Exhibitor/Grower (Wednesday) and Conference (Thursday) Luncheons planned featuring Kentucky Proud products. A Trading Post bulletin board will also be available to sell used equipment, so bring along any descriptions containing your name, phone number, and the equipment price for posting.

To view the full schedule for the 2024 Fruit and Vegetable Conference being held in Bowling Green, make sure to check out the QR code listed at the top of this page!

View full program at the QR Code below.





Cut Flower Short Course Offerings!

SOURCE: KENTUCKY HORTICULTURE COUNCIL

Are you interested in learning more about commercial cut flower production? If yes, the 2024 Kentucky Fruit & Vegetable Conference will feature a day-long program filled with cut flower educational sessions that both the beginner and seasoned grower can utilize in Kentucky!

All commercial cut flower educational sessions will take place on Thursday, January 4th. To view the full schedule for the commercial cut flower short course, see the list below.

8:30 a.m. Blooming Opportunities: Digging Up Opportunities for Your Business — Angella Watson

9:00 a.m. UK - Who's That Bug: ID and Scouting Tips — Jonathan Larson

9:30 a.m. Maximizing Cut Flower Profits Through the Inclusion Of Dual-Purpose Vegetable Varieties — Eva Bogue and Anna Claire Griggs

10:00 a.m. Break & Visit Exhibits — Foyer Areas and Ballroom D

10:40 a.m. Are Hardy Annuals Hard to Grow? — Tara Watkins

11:10 a.m. It's a Bug Eat Bug World: Biological Control Basics — Jonathan Larson

1:30 p.m. Tips and Tricks for High Tunnel Growing — Alexis Sheffield

2:00 p.m. Kentucky Cut Flower Wholesale Collectives — SOKY Floral Exchange and Kentucky Flower Market

2:30 p.m. Making the Workshop Work for You — Savannah Columbia

3:10 p.m. Inviting the Public to Your Farm: What You Need to Know — Michelle Wheeler

To register for this one-day commercial cut flower short course being held in conjunction with the 2024 Kentucky Fruit & Vegetable Conference, make sure to visit the Eventbrite registration page by going to: <https://2024KYFruitVegConf.eventbrite.com>.

Register NOW
for the Cut
Flower Short
Course using
this QR code.





Selecting & Planting Amaryllis Bulbs

SOURCE: UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA EXTENSION

Amaryllis bulbs come in various sizes. Whether purchasing a bare bulb to plant or bulbs planted in a pot, the size and condition of bulbs will influence amaryllis performance.

- Select the largest bulbs available for the desired plant variety as they will produce more stalks and blooms in the first year. The larger the bulb, the more flowers it will have.
- Bulbs should be firm and dry with no signs of mold, decay, or injury.
- It is common to see new growth (leaves, buds) emerging from bare or planted bulbs.
- Choose bulbs with bright new green growth and without spots or visible damage.
- Some bulbs may have an offshoot growing from their base. This will eventually grow into a new bulb and can be removed and planted separately.

Amaryllis grow best in narrow containers. Containers may be made of plastic, metal, ceramic, or terracotta.

- Bulbs should be firm and dry with no signs of mold, decay, or injury.
- Select a container that has one or more holes in the bottom and drains easily.
- Good drainage will minimize the chance of bulb or root rot (rotting from excess moisture).
- The diameter of the pot should be about 1 inch wider than the widest part of the bulb and twice as tall as the bulb to allow space for good root development.
- Fill the pot about half full of sterile, new potting soil high in organic matter such as peat moss.
- Set the bulb in the pot so the roots rest on the potting soil.
- The bulb should sit up above the edge of the container.
- Add more soil, tapping it down around the bulb, until one-third to one-half of the bulb remains visible.
- Firm the potting medium around the bulb.
- Set the pot in a sink where it can drain freely and water until the potting soil is thoroughly moist. Allow it to drain completely.
- Set the pot on a saucer and place in a sunny window.
- Water the plant when the top 2 inches of soil feels dry, allowing the container to drain freely each time.



**QUICK
TIPS**

**The largest
bulbs will
produce
more stalks
and blooms
for display.**





Did You Know?

Caring for Amaryllis

SOURCE: UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA EXTENSION

- Water the plant when the top 2 inches of soil feels dry, allowing the container to drain freely each time.
- Do not let the plant sit in water as wet soil can promote bulb and root rot and attract pests.
- Fertilize amaryllis each time you water at half the recommended strength when new growth is visible (including on newly purchased bulbs).
- To promote blooming, use a houseplant fertilizer with a high phosphorus content.
 - Fertilizer packaging always provides an analysis shown in three numbers such as 10-20-15.
 - These numbers represent the percentage of each of three important macronutrients for plant growth: N (nitrogen) – P (phosphorous) – K (potassium).
 - In this example, the fertilizer contains 10 percent nitrogen, 20 percent phosphorous, and 15 percent potassium.
- Move the plant out of direct sunlight when the flower buds have begun to open.

The secret to keeping amaryllis thriving for years is to keep the plants actively growing AFTER they have finished blooming.

- After the flowers have faded, cut them off to prevent seed formation. Seed formation will deplete important energy reserves in the bulb and reduce blooming.
- Do not remove the flower stalk until it has turned yellow.
- A green stem will continue to promote photosynthesis, which creates energy that is stored in the bulb for future leaf growth and flowers.
- If the bulb does not produce a flowering stalk in the next blooming period, it is likely that has not stored enough nutrients during the post-blooming period.
- Keeping the plant healthy and growing will promote blooming.
- After your plant has finished blooming, place it in the sunniest possible location indoors. It will continue to grow long, smooth leaves. These leaves will promote photosynthesis.
- Continue to water and fertilize the plant regularly with an all-purpose houseplant plant fertilizer

The secret to keeping amaryllis for years is to keep plants actively growing AFTER blooming.





Winter Garden Checklist

SOURCE: MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

Trees & Shrubs

- Continue watering trees and shrubs, especially evergreens, until the ground freezes.
- Roses should be overwintered after a heavy frost. Place a 6-10 inch layer of mulch over the plant. Prune sparingly, just enough to shorten overly long canes. Climbing roses should not be pruned.
- As the ground can be worked, trees and shrubs can be planted. Plant them at the depth they grew in the nursery and no deeper. Remove all wires, ropes, and non-biodegradable materials before back-filling. Add mulch and ensure proper watering until the ground freezes.
- Apply mulch as a “donut” around trees as opposed to “volcano” mulching which can cause plant damage such as root girdling.
- Only female hollies bear the red berries. There must be a male tree nearby for pollination and fruit production to occur.
- Branches of apples, pears, and other rose family plants that were infected with fire blight can be safely pruned off now.
- Be sure the root zones of shrubs are thoroughly mulched. Any organic material will do.
- Live Christmas trees hold needles longer when you make a clean, fresh cut at the base and always keep the trunk standing in water.
- Hollies may be trimmed now. The cuttings can be used in holiday decorations.

Houseplants

- During the winter, houseplants typically need less water than in the summer due to reduced hours of sunlight. Err on the side of caution and use tepid water instead of cold water. Overly wet soils can lead to increased numbers of fungus gnats that lay eggs in the wet soil.
- When purchasing houseplants during the winter, be sure to protect the foliage from the cold on the trip home. Place plants in a cardboard box or other protective covering to prevent damage to leaves.
- On extremely cold nights, move houseplants back from icy windows to prevent chilling injury.
- Holiday poinsettias do best with bright, indirect light and night temperatures in the 50-60's. Let the soil dry out slightly between thorough waterings. Ensure the water can drain and evaporate; punch holes in the decorative foil if needed.





Winter Garden Checklist continued

SOURCE: MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

Fruits & Vegetables

- Harvest pecans when they start to drop from trees.
- Add finished compost to garden beds to improve soils.
- To prevent diseases from overwintering in the garden, clean up and dispose of diseased plant material.
- Ensure all spoiled, mummified, and fallen fruit is cleaned up.
- Mulch strawberries with straw for winter before temperatures drop into the teens. Apply straw loosely but in a thick layer to hide plants from view.

Miscellaneous

- Mulch garden beds to prevent injury to plants from frost heaving and to protect plant roots from severe cold temperatures.
- Now is a good time to collect soil samples to test for pH and nutrient levels.
- Clean and winterize yard and garden equipment: roll up and store hoses, shut off outdoor water pipes and valves, and winterize the lawn mower. This is also a good time to clean and oil garden hand tools.
- Reduce or eliminate fertilizing of houseplants until spring.
- Warm weather followed by sudden freezing temperatures can result in damage to plants. Some of this damage wont be evident until the next growing season.
- Be sure to check houseplants and treat them appropriately for spider mites, scale, whiteflies, mealybugs, and fungus gnats.
- By the end of November or early December, paperwhite narcissus and amaryllis bulbs can be forced indoors. No chilling period is required. Simply pot up the bulbs and water sparingly until growth begins. They should bloom in 4-6 weeks.
- Monitor overwintering dormant plants, bulbs, and tubers by ensuring they are not completely dried out or rotting.
- Check to see if any seeds purchased for the next season require stratification in order to germinate. The seed packet should indicate if this process is needed. Some common seeds that require stratification include Asclepias, Echinacea, Rudbeckia, And Baptisia.



Holiday Turkey Salad

SOURCE: PLAN. EAT. MOVE!

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 pounds cooked turkey breast, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 cup plain nonfat Greek yogurt
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 (14 ounce) can pineapple chunks, drained
- 1 cup halved red grapes
- 3 celery stalks, chopped
- 2/3 cup pecan halves

Directions:

Heat oil in large skillet over medium heat. Add turkey pieces and cook until lightly browned. Let turkey cook slightly. In a small bowl, mix together yogurt and honey, set aside. In a large bowl, mix together pineapple, grapes, celery and pecans. Add turkey. Add yogurt dressing until desired texture. Refrigerate until well chilled.

Yield: 6 servings

Nutritional Analysis: 390 calories; 11g total fat; 1.5g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 1255mg cholesterol; 180mg sodium; 21g carbohydrate; 2g fiber; 18g sugar; 0g added sugar; 14g protein.



How can we serve you, Kentucky?

Take a ten-minute survey to help us develop programs addressing needs in your community.

go.uky.edu/serveKY



KENTUCKY
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
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Survey here!



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Warren County Residents:

Once you have completed the survey, please scan the QR code below to register for a chance to win a Coleman cooler! (\$100 value)

Drawing will be held on 12/19/23



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