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AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2024



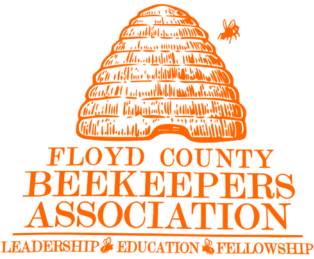
Chad Allen
County Extension Agent for
Agriculture & Natural
Resources

UPCOMING DATES OF INTEREST

October 1	Floyd County Beekeepers Association Extension Office 6:00pm
November 19	Will and Heirship Clinic 1:00 PM to 6:00 PM

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Please visit the Floyd County Beekeepers Association booth at the Jenny Wiley Festival Friday, October 11th and Saturday, October 12th.

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

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Disabilities accommodated with prior notification.

Introduction

First let me begin by welcoming everyone to the fall time of year. I'm hopeful we can experience a true fall vs what we have encountered the last few seasons. I've already noticed while writing this the much needed rain we are getting as we have been experiencing drought issues in our yards, gardens and as well as our pastures.



We closed out September with our 1st Floyd County Beekeeper School. It exceeded expectations with 65 total attendees. Beekeepers from not only Floyd County but surrounding areas were given the opportunity to experience all levels of beekeeping. It is my hope to expand upon this and make this an annual fall event. I want to personally thank all of those that helped from start to finish. Your efforts did not go unnoticed.

October will be especially interesting to many of you as the extension office is partnering with the conservation district to offer FREE soil test for Floyd County residents. You will be allowed one sample during this month. The process will be very simple. Contact Earl at the Conservation District and his contact information is below in another article. Remember this is for October only to avoid a cost to you.



Also, I wanted to give you a heads-up for November 19th, we will be having attorneys as our office FREE to discuss and help you prepare a simple will and ask questions about heirs' property. We were able to write a grant that is providing the funding for this. I realize this is something that is uncomfortable to discuss but currently Floyd County has over 40,000 acres that is listed as heirs' property. This happens when a break in the will cycle occurs and as a result there is no clear title. We have seen numerous properties that have been forced into a sale on the courthouse steps. We will post a link on our Facebook page for this event that you will have the opportunity to sign up for and discuss issues you may have. I hope this doesn't apply to anyone but unfortunately, I know some have already told me they are going through this. We want to help with those that may be in an heir's property situation and prevent others from going through this. If you are unable to sign up with the link or need help, please just reach out to us at the extension office. We can use our cell phones to sign you up at the times that are available. Walk-ins are also welcome. We have enclosed the flyer for this in the newsletter as well.



Lastly, as you prepare for winter, we all are putting up hay for our animals. It is important to know the quality and protein levels in this hay to meet the animals' nutritional requirements. If you want your hay tested contact me at the office and we can plan a time for me to come pull samples during October. Those samples will then be shipped to the UK lab for results.



Fall is a Good Time to Sample Soil



Fall is a great time to take soil samples for fertility analyses.

Doing it now can allow you plenty of time to follow fertility recommendations before planting season, and that could end up saving you time and money. When you receive the soil test results, look at the recommendations for lime and pH, a measure of soil acidity that affects plants' uptake of all nutrients. If the soil pH is too low, it decreases the uptake of essential nutrients, and elements like aluminum and manganese can become toxic to growing plant roots.

Applying limestone neutralizes soil acidity. Because agricultural lime takes about six months to break down and react with the soil, you should apply it in the fall so it will be fully effective in the spring. Unlike fertilizer, you really only need lime every three to five years, depending on your crop rotation and nitrogen fertilizer history. The only way to determine if your fields will need lime next year is by soil testing this fall.

All the recommended fertilizers, except nitrogen, also can be applied in the fall. Often a fall application will save you considerable money because fertilizer prices generally are cheaper in the fall because of lower demand. In addition to lower fertilizer prices, it is easier to get the spreader truck in the field during the fall because the soil is usually drier.

If you do not soil test, you can only guess at the fertility needs of your fields, and far too often assumptions are wrong. Guessing at the amount of fertilizer to apply often results in applying more than the recommended rate. Some producers want to be sure there is plenty of fertilizer available in case they have a bumper crop next season. However, studies have shown that crops need the same amount of fertilizer in a good year as in a poor year.

If you are interested in collecting fall soil samples, the Floyd County Conservation District offers a service to county residents. If you contact Tony Grubb at their office and allow him to take the sample, they will cover the costs. This service is limited to a certain number annually and excludes mine samples. You may contact Tony at 606-889-9800. If you wish to take the sample yourself, contact me for more information at the UK Cooperative Extension Service – Floyd County Office. I can give you details on how to take accurate soil samples and what to do with the collected cores.



Things to Remember:

- Keep materials (heavy paper or cardboard) on hand to cover tender plants on the first nights of frost. If they can be protected, they may bloom or produce for several more weeks.
- If we have a period of dry, hot weather during the next few weeks, it may be important to water plants and shrubs. Water them deeply once a week if that occurs.
- Cover crops for gardens can still be planted but should not be planted later than November 1. They should make some growth before hard frost kills them.
- Clean and sterilize your tools, pots, and any other items that you used around your plants.
- Do not forget about preparing your equipment for winter storage, follow manufacturers' guidelines.



**WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO YOUR PROPERTY WHEN YOU PASS?
DON'T LET IT FALL INTO HEIRSHIP!
COME WRITE YOUR WILL!**

WILL & HEIRSHIP CLINIC [FREE]

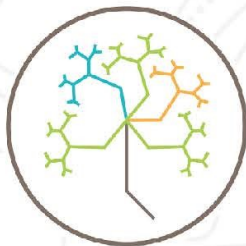
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19// 1:00 PM - 6:00 PM
LOCATION: FLOYD COUNTY COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION OFFICE 3490 KY-321 PRESTONSBURG, KY

Livelihoods Knowledge Exchange Network (LiKEN) has partnered with the **Floyd County Cooperative Extension Office** to offer a **FREE will-writing clinic and information session in Prestonsburg, KY**. Come sit down with a lawyer and prepare your will and learn about heirs' property! Scan the QR code on the reverse side of this flyer to save a time slot for yourself!

WHAT TO EXPECT

Participants will have the opportunity to sit down with a lawyer to write or revise their will for absolutely no cost. Come prepared to discuss all of your assets and what should be done with your belongings when you pass away. Bring your ID and a current will if you have one.

This event will also feature a recurring presentation on property in heirship, or "**heirs' property**," and a **FREE legal services** program we are offering to heirs' property owners. Heirs' property is land that is inherited by multiple family member and owned collectively but without a "clear title." Not having a clear title limits what you can do with a property and makes it vulnerable to being taken by real estate developers and investors. LiKEN is offering a free program to help heirs' property owners acquire a clear title to their family-owned land.



CONTACT

Kevin Slovinsky
Director of Land and Revenues
LiKEN's Land & Revenues Program
Email: kslovinsky@likenknowledge.org
(859) 279-2152

Scan for registration and more info!



linktr.ee/AppalachianHeirsProperty

Woodland Management Can Benefit Wildlife Habitats



Kentucky wildlife species are abundant and many live in our woodlands. Because the state's woodlands are privately owned, individual management of woodlands has a significant impact on our wildlife.

Depending on the woodland owners' objectives, they can consider timber management and wildlife habitat together. You do not necessarily have to choose between the production of high-quality timber and healthy wildlife populations. By taking a few management steps you can manage both trees and wildlife.

Remember any woodland management activity will benefit some wildlife species and discourage others from visiting your area. Management practices may include crop-tree release, thinning, tree planting, invasive-species control, or other timber-improvement practices that will also benefit certain wildlife species.

Healthy forests provide for a wide variety of wildlife species such as deer, wild turkey, songbirds, snakes, rabbits, grouse, and bats to name a few. Planning and implementing timber-management activities that also enhance the wildlife habitat of selected species can allow you to accomplish multiple objectives at the same time.

If you need help getting started, many agencies are ready to help. UK extension specialists and agents, and foresters with the Kentucky Division of Forestry, Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources biologists can visit your property and develop a plan to meet your management goals and enhance the wildlife habitat.

Technical assistance is available from these Kentucky agencies to show landowners how to implement the recommendations. Sometimes equipment and other supplies may also be available.

Occasionally, conservation programs will pay landowners to conduct certain management practices, so ask if these are available in your area.

Quality timber production and healthy wildlife habitats are possible with a well-planned and well-managed design. The key is to get the help you need so you will have a plan that will serve your needs and will also enhance wildlife populations.

Through your specific plan, you can enrich your woodlands and the quality of life of wildlife. The key is to match your objectives with the capabilities of your land and get the assistance you need to implement your plan.

For more information to help you get started on managing your woodlands, call me at the UK Cooperative Extension Service – Floyd County Office. We can help you get the expert help you need and put your plan into action. The sources of this article were Billy Thomas, Extension Forester and Tom Barnes, Extension Wildlife Professor.



Harvesting and Handling Pumpkins

For many people, pumpkins are a symbol of the fall season. Here in Kentucky, commercial farms are harvesting pumpkins, and they are readily available in local markets. For those Kentuckians that grow their own pumpkins, these are probably ready to harvest as well. Whether you grow or buy pumpkins for fall decorations, it is important to realize that careful harvesting and handling will help them last throughout the season.

Pumpkins should be harvested as soon as they are ripe and show a good orange color. Although ripe pumpkins can be left in the field for a period and tolerate light frost, heavy frost can cause damage. Do not try to harvest when the fruit and vines are wet since this can lead to the development of fruit rot. The best time to harvest is during sunny, dry weather. Cut vines with a pair of shears and leave four to five inches of stem, or handle, attached to the pumpkin to further reduce the chance for rot. Any pumpkins that display signs of rot should be left in the field since these will not store for very long.



Damaged pumpkins are much more likely to rot, so handle each fruit carefully to avoid bruising or puncturing the rind. Be sure to store pumpkins in a cool and dry location. To prolong the life of the fruit, avoid exposure to direct sunlight as much as possible. Also, store pumpkins in a single layer to promote better air movement, which creates a less than favorable environment for bacteria and fungi.

As a consumer, avoid buying pumpkins that show any signs of rot. Also, steer clear of fruit that do not have handles or have handles in poor condition or are rotting. Handle pumpkins with care on the way home and store them in a cool, dry place out of direct sunlight. Keep in mind that once a pumpkin is carved, its days are numbered. After cutting, exposed surfaces become colonized with fungi and bacteria. The warmer the weather after a pumpkin is carved, the quicker bacteria and fungi will break down the fruit.

For more information about harvesting and handling pumpkins, contact me at the UK Cooperative Extension Service – Floyd County Office.

Stink Bug Management

A stinky brown army is marching across Kentucky again this fall, accidentally entering your homes and offices and they look for protective overwintering sites. Brown marmorated stink bugs leave a stain and a very unpleasant odor when mashed. Once winter ends, the insects move on and resume their normal life cycle. But they can leave a path of plant damage in their wake. You take charge and reclaim your structures and fields from these invaders.

The best treatment is prevention. First, you need to learn to differentiate between the brown marmorated stink bug and other types of insect look-alikes. The brown marmorated stink bug has the characteristic shield-shaped stink bug body. Winged adults are approximately five-eighths-inch long with a mottled brown-gray body. The fourth segment of each antenna has a white band. Edges of the abdominal segments that extend laterally from under the wings are alternatively banded with black and white. The underside of the body is white to light gray with gray or black markings, and the legs are brown with faint white bands.

The best way to manage the insects is to seal up structures so they never make it inside in the first place. Look around your homes and other buildings for cracks around windows, doors, siding, utility pipes, behind chimneys, underneath the wood fascia and other openings. Seal the cracks with a good quality silicone-latex caulk. You should also repair or replace damaged screens on windows and doors.



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Exterior insecticides may offer some relief from infestations when sealing a structure is difficult or impossible. Products containing active ingredients deltamethrin, cyfluthrin, lambda-cyhalothrin, cypermethrin or permethrin are some options for you to consider. You need to apply these products in the fall as the bugs begin to congregate. Sunlight will break down these chemicals, so you will have to stay vigilant and be ready to reapply every few days or every week to make sure they are effective.

If the bugs make it inside your home or building, try to find where the insects are entering and seal those entrances up with caulk. You can remove live and dead insects with a vacuum cleaner; but understand that your vacuum may acquire a smell of stink bugs for a time. Entomologists at the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment do not recommend using insecticides after bugs enter a structure. Although insecticidal dust treatments most likely will kill stink bugs, you will have a possible problem with carpet beetles feeding on the dead stink bugs and then moving on to your woolens or stored dry goods.

Aerosol foggers will kill stink bugs that have amassed on ceilings and walls. More insects often appear after the room is aerated. So, these are just not good long-term solutions once you already have a problem.

The source of this article was Lee Townsend, UK Extension Entomologist. For more information about the brown marmorated stink bug, contact me at the UK Cooperative Extension Service – Floyd County Office.



Tracking the First Fall Freeze

by Derrick Snyder - National Weather Service Paducah, KY



As the calendar moves into October, nights continue to become longer, leaves begin to turn color, and first frosts and freezes begin to occur. The first freeze of the fall typically marks the end of the growing season. Most locations across the Commonwealth typically see their first freeze of the season during the latter half of October into the early days of November. Typically for Floyd County it will be the latter part of October.

Frost can often develop on plants even when thermometers show the temperature to be a few degrees above freezing. This is because most thermometers are mounted several feet above the ground, and the temperature a few inches from the ground can be colder than what a thermometer reads. This most often occurs on clear nights with calm winds.

To protect your plants from frosts and freezes, consider taking preventive measures like covering them with tarps or blankets in the evening before temperatures drop. This can help trap the ground heat and provide insulation. Additionally, placing mulch around the base of plants can help retain soil warmth. If possible, relocate potted plants indoors or to a sheltered area. Watering the plants before the onset of frost can also provide a slight protective effect, as water releases heat as it freezes, helping to moderate the immediate environment around the plants.

Apple Harvest Basics

Fall is a busy time for apple growers. Ripening times vary from year to year depending on the weather. If apples have codling moth damage, they will drop up to two weeks before the crop is ripe.

The best and most time-tested method of judging when to pick fruit is the taste method. When enough starch has been converted to sugar and the flavor is developed, the fruit is ready to eat. Fruit continues to ripen in cold storage, so pick fruit before it is ripe if you want to store it.

As fruit ripens, it changes color. The base color, or ground color, is the color underneath the red striping or blush of peaches, apples, pears, and cherries. In most fruits, the fruit is ripening when the ground color turns green to yellow. The surface color may develop before the fruit is actually mature.

If storing fruit, cool it as soon as possible after picking. The sooner you can remove the heat from freshly picked fruit, the longer it will keep.

Be gentle when you handle fruit for storage. Bruises and wounds allow pathogens to infect the fruit, and disease will spread to adjacent fruits once it gets established.

You'll be able to find many varieties of Kentucky apples at farmers markets or on many Kentucky farms that provide fall agritourism activities from Lodi, Red Delicious, and Winesap to Gala, Jonathan, Honeycrisp, Cortland and more, Kentucky growers offer a wide selection to consumers.

The source of this article was John Strang, UK Horticulture Extension Specialist. For more information about apples, contact me at the UK Cooperative Extension Service – Floyd County office.



What is that Goo? Nostoc!

You may have noticed greenish/brown jelly like blobs appearing in your driveway or lawn. That is called Nostoc. It is a type of bacteria that gets its energy from photosynthesis like plants do. Following a period of rain, it may appear suddenly in lawns, pastures, paved surfaces, roofs, or stones.

Nostoc has many colorful names including witches' butter, mare's eggs, and meadow ears, among others. In fact, one of the earliest names for it was star jelly, based on the belief that it was a remnant of shooting stars fallen to earth. It can be hazardous on paved surfaces as it is very slippery when wet. From its gelatinous, green state, it dries to a black crust that comes back to life when there is sufficient rain.

When found in lawns, it is generally on a site where the grass is growing poorly due to severe compaction, overwatering or both. It has not caused the lawn's decline; it has simply colonized an area where it has favorable conditions to grow. Poor drainage, compacted soils and fertilizers containing phosphorus create a favorable environment for colonies of Nostoc.

To discourage its growth, improve drainage and eliminate phosphorus fertilizers. Products that contain potassium salts of fatty acids may be used to kill it in lawns. Core aerating the lawn to reduce compaction may help but tilling the soil will merely break it into more pieces and encourage its spread.

For paved surfaces and small patches in lawns, shoveling it up and discarding it in a landfill may be an option. Another option would be to choose a lawn chemical designed to control algae and moss.



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The good news is that although they are a bit alarming looking, they do not cause any harm. Although we may not appreciate it growing in our lawns or on our pavement, Nostoc possesses many redeeming properties. Several Nostoc species have been used as both a food and medicine for centuries and have more recently been evaluated for their pharmaceutical properties, including antibacterial metabolites, cholesterol regulation and control of certain cancers.

The source of this article was Amanda Sears, Madison County Horticulture Agent. For more information on this topic, contact me at the UK Cooperative Extension Service – Floyd County Office.



Fall Tips for Kentucky Gardens

Fall is a beautiful time in Kentucky gardens, but it can also be a messy time. Tree leaves turn from green to vibrant fall colors and then drop, creating big piles. Then there are the leaf and spent shoots from our flower beds.

The way we address our yard waste can have a significant impact on our gardens and on the environment. Gardeners commonly rake up and bag leaves to haul away to yard waste dumps.

This option, while tidy, uses a lot of energy, both yours and the energy to transport the leaves and mixed garden waste.

An alternative is to mulch leaves and yard waste. You could use the bountiful resource to enrich your lawn and garden, while creating less waste and air pollution.

A very simple technique with leaves is to rake them into a line and mow over them with your lawn mower.

The mower will chop the leaves into pieces small enough to fall between the blades of grass in your lawn. The chopped leaves will break down out of sight, provide nutrients to your lawn and improve the quality of your soil.

For larger items like spent flower stalks, composting is a simple, easy, and environmentally friendly option. Done properly, it produces no odor and provides a generous amount of nutrient-rich organic compost for your garden, which reduces or eliminates the need to buy fertilizer.

Composting also eliminates the need to transport garden waste, making composting a triple-win situation for your garden, wallet, and the environment.

The speed of compost production is influenced by the size of the material placed in the bin, so the more you can chop up the garden debris, the quicker you will have usable compost. Many options for compost bin design and construction are well suited to any location and budget.

Using leaves as mulch has many benefits. The mulch helps retain moisture in the soil and insulates plants from extreme winter temperatures. The decomposed leaves become an excellent conditioner for warming spring soil, helping to attract worms and other beneficial microorganisms.

The source of this article was Richard Durham, UK Extension Horticulture Specialist. For more information on mulching and composting, contact me at the UK Cooperative Extension Service – Floyd County Office.





FLOYD COUNTY

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