



University of Kentucky
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment
Cooperative Extension Service

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Jefferson County Cooperative Extension Horticulture Newsletter

April 2023

The Latest Dirt



in this issue

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Wednesdays
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Spring is Here!

Dear Gardeners,

Spring has arrived and we are all so excited to be out in the gardens again and to be back working in the soil. I want everyone to know that the Jefferson County Extension Service is here to help.

If you have any horticultural issues during the season, please reach out to me at jennifer.palmer@uky.edu. Here is to another season in the soil!



Best,

Jennifer Palmer
Agent for Horticulture Education
jennifer.palmer@uky.edu

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LEXINGTON, KY 40546



Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.



APRIL CLASSES

Wednesdays
12:30 p.m. ET / 11:30 a.m. CT

April 5

SAY WHAT? Seed packet terminology

April 12

Tulips

April 19

Early Season Apple Care

April 26

TBD

Register Here:

<https://tinyurl.com/23AprHww>



Subscribe to the Kentucky Hort News here:

<https://kentuckyhortnews.com/subscribe/>

Articles contained in the Kentucky Hort News (KHN) e-newsletter are submitted by Extension Agents from across Kentucky and from University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Specialists in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment. Topics relate to home landscapes including lawns, trees and shrubs, flowers, vegetables, fruit and pests. Newsletter articles are posted bi-monthly throughout the year; e-mail notifications of new articles are sent to a subscription distribution list.

All information and recommendations in KHN are time-sensitive and apply only to Kentucky. Past issues should be used for reference only.

I find planning your garden is fun, however, a wonderful way is to also take notes as you go for the next year. Gardening is all about observation.

Here is a helpful guide to use on when to plant and to write observations on your garden for the year. Click on the following link to download the pdf:

https://www.planeatmove.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/NEP_GARDEN_calendar_agentsprintable2020_2.pdf






Even if you have not planted beans, sweet corn, and vining crops (cucumbers, squash), you can continue to plant them in May in all parts of the state.

Now is the time to plant crops that are particularly sensitive to cold and frost: this includes tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, and okra. It is very important to protect these plants from frost. The last frosts of the season usually occur in early May in western Kentucky, mid-May in central Kentucky, and later May in eastern Kentucky.

To protect plants from frost, use a large flower pot placed over the plant on the evening before the frost. Be sure to remove the pot as temperatures warm—sunlight hitting a dark-colored pot may quickly cause the pot to get too hot and damage the plant. Children might like to participate in covering and uncovering the plants.

As plants continue to grow, lightly turn the soil around plants to control weeds. A layer of straw, newspaper, cardboard, or plastic mulch between plants will help control weeds and keep the soil moist.

If you are growing in raised beds or containers, the soil will dry out faster than it does in a regular garden. Water when the top of the soil feels dry. Evenly apply water around the bed or container. For raised beds, apply enough water to wet the soil about six inches deep. Use a garden trowel or shovel to check how deep the water has moved. For containers, apply water until some water drains out the hole at the bottom of the container. Containers may need to be watered every day or two. Raised beds usually need to be watering about twice a week unless it rains.

APRIL	
	Garden Notes
Week 1 Seed peppers, tomatoes, melons, squash, cucumbers for transplants; turn compost	
Week 2 Update your garden journal with any new notes or plans	
Week 3 Prepare trellises or stakes for cucumbers and beans; turn compost	
Week 4 Buy herb transplants—these do well in pots or directly in soil in the garden	

Local Gardening Resources & Events

Save the Dates!

**LOUISVILLE
grows**

**Seeds & Starts Sale
2023**

**Saturday, April 15
Saturday, May 13**



Greenhouse
1639 Portland Avenue
10AM- 4PM



"CULTIVATING & COOKING WITH FRESH HERBS"

Wednesday, April 12, 2023

5:30 PM - 7:00 PM

Louisville Nature Center

\$15 fee

Join MG & Chef Mary Wheatley and MG Stacey DeCoste as they teach us how to grow & cook with herbs. You must register thru the Louisville Nature Center to attend.

<https://www.louisvillnaturecenter.org/camps-and-events/cultivating-and-cooking-with-fresh-herbs>

PARISTOWN GARDEN SHOW

Saturday, April 8, 2023

9:00 AM - 6:00 PM

720 Brent Street

Free entry

Jefferson County Master Gardeners are thrilled to return to this year's Paristown Garden Show! We will be under a large tent in the green space called Christy's Garden.



- Jefferson County Extension Service: <https://jefferson.ca.uky.edu>
- Urban Agriculture Coalition: www.foodinneighborhoods.org/grow
- Louisville Grows: <https://louisvillegrows.org>
- Home Vegetable Gardening in Kentucky: <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/id/id128/id128.pdf>
- Vegetable Cultivars for Kentucky: <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/id/id133/id133.pdf>
- Home Gardening Publications: <http://www.uky.edu/hort/home-horticulture>



Get Your Home Garden Off to a Good Start

Source: Rachel Rudolph, UK horticulture extension specialist

Springtime in Kentucky is the perfect time to get outside and start your home garden. A few tasks will help you have a successful season. Planning your garden on paper before you begin allows you to visualize the plants you want to grow and when they will be ready to harvest.

Next, select a good gardening site. Plan a site in full sun, relatively level, well-drained, close to a water source and dries quickly from morning dew. You may need to get a soil test to best prepare the soil. Add fertilizer according to soil test results.

Remember to only plan a garden as large as you can easily maintain. Beginning gardeners often overplant and fail because they can't keep up with the required tasks. You must manage weeds and pests and apply water so your plants will be ready to harvest on time.

A few other important tips:

- ❖ Grow vegetables that will produce the maximum amount of food in your available space.
- ❖ Plant during the correct season for the crop.
- ❖ Choose varieties recommended for Kentucky.
- ❖ Harvest vegetables at their proper stage of maturity. Consider how you will store them if you don't use them right away.

Consult the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment's Home Vegetable Gardening publication ID-128, available online
<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/id/id128/id128.pdf>.



Interested in Native Plants?
Here is a Helpful Guide.



♥ 1,890

**Growing
for the
future.**

#kysuag

**LEARN
MORE**

INFORMATION FROM
KENTUCKY STATE UNIVERSITY
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Carrots

Dr. Leigh Whittinghill, Assistant Professor of Urban Agriculture

Planting

- Carrots should be planted between Mar 10 and Aug 1, March 20 and July 15, and April 1 to July 1, in Western, Central and Eastern Kentucky.
- Plant at 3 week intervals to have carrots throughout the growing season.
- Plant seeds at a depth of $\frac{1}{4}$ inch
- Final plant spacing should be 2 to 3 inches apart.
- If planting in a container, it should be 10 inches deep.

Care and Harvest

- Carrots can take a long time to germinate, so pulling weeds too early, may damage seedlings. The long period of germination can also mean that weeds become a problem, so ensure that the bed is free of weeds and weed seeds before planting.
- Water about 1 inch per week (including rain), taking care during establishment and root enlargement.
- Excess nitrogen may reduce yield or the quality of fruit, so use less than with other plants. If using compost as a nutrient source, be sure it is fully matured, or it may inhibit germination.
- As they grow, some carrots may poke up out of the ground. These should be covered with soil to prevent them from turning green, which makes them bitter.
- Carrots are ready to harvest 60-80 days after planting in the spring or summer and 80-90 days after planting in the fall, or as soon as they reach the desired size. Leaving them in the ground longer can make them fibrous.



Storage and Use

- After harvesting, wash the roots and dry them thoroughly.
- Trim tops to ½ before storing the carrots to maintain root quality during storage.
- Carrots will keep for 2 to 4 weeks and can be stored in the refrigerator or a cold, moist cellar.
- Do not store carrots with apples. The ethylene produced by ripe apples can cause carrots to taste bitter.
- Carrots should be water blanched for 3 minutes or steam blanched for 5 minutes before freezing.
- Slice carrots and use a hot pack methods and leave 1 inch of head space if canning. Process in a pressure canner for 25 minutes for pints and 30 minutes for quarts.



References

- Home Vegetable Gardening in Kentucky. ID-128. University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service
- Markham, B.L. 2014. The MiniFarming™ Bible: The Complete Guide to Self-Sufficiency on ¼ Acre. SkyHorse Publishing. New York, New York.
- Rombauer, I.S. M.R. Becker, and E. Becker. 2006. “Roasted Carrots”. Joy of Cooking. Scribner. New York, New York. Pg 267.
- Shulman, M.R. 2018. Roasted Carrots with Parsley and Thyme. <https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1014219-roasted-carrots-with-parsley-and-thyme> (accessed 15 June 2018)
- Swiader, J.M. and G.W. Ware. 2002. Producing Vegetable Crops, 5th Ed. Interstate Publishers, Inc. Danville, Illinois.

RECIPE: ROASTED CARROTS

- Preheat oven to 400°F. Toss together:
- 1 ½ pounds carrots, peeled and cut into large chunks
- Olive or vegetable oil to lightly coat
- 1/8 teaspoon dried thyme or several sprigs fresh thyme
- Oregano, parsley, and garlic are other herbs used in roasting carrots.
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Spread the carrots in a single layer on a rimmed baking sheet. Roast until golden and tender, about 1 hour.



Compost

Excerpt from ID-128: Home Vegetable Gardening in Kentucky

Compost is easy to make; all you need is raw organic matter and a little bit of time. This microbial process will take care of itself. Microbes are ubiquitous in the environment and will feed on the organic materials over time provided they are warm enough to grow and reproduce. Leaves, grass clippings, weeds, garden refuse, and manure are excellent organic materials to feed the microbes. Special additives don't help, though nitrogen fertilizer may speed up composting. The finer the material being composted, the faster the decomposition and maturation of the compost. It is best keep limbs and other large woody materials out of the compost bin unless you use a chipper/ shredder.

Compost can be started anytime. Choose an area convenient to the garden so that garden residue and kitchen parings can be easily added. The best location is a shady spot; however, do not build directly under a tree, because the tree's roots may grow into the pile. Make two or three open ended bins or boxes to hold the compost. To maintain appropriately warm temperatures, compost piles need to be 3 square feet in size. You can build the boxes of wire fencing supported by posts, or they may be constructed of boards or masonry material. They can be made attractive enough to be part of the landscape or you can hide them among landscaping.

An appropriately-sized pile of organic material will mature to compost in time, but it is quicker to alternate layers of raw organic material, a small amount of N fertilizer or a high N-containing green waste (e.g. grass clippings) and a small amount of top soil (which contains an abundance of microbes, see Figure 15). Start with organic matter—6 inches deep if the material is fairly solid, or 12 inches deep if it is loose. If the material is dry, add a small amount of water. The material consistency should feel like a damp, wrung-out sponge. Next, add either an organic or small handful of synthetic fertilizer (e.g. 34-0-0).

After you fertilize, add a small handful of soil. The soil introduces microorganisms which decompose organic matter. Commercial microbial preparations which claim to enhance composting are unnecessary. Continue to alternate layers of organic matter, fertilizer and soil until the pile is 3 to 4 feet high, but slightly lower in the center for easy watering. Complete the pile with a layer of soil on the top.

Keep your compost moist but not soggy. With moisture and a layer of soil on the top, there should be no offensive odors. Turn or mix your compost pile several times during the year. A second bin and a shredder come in handy for this purpose. After mixing your pile into the second bin, you can start a new compost pile in the first one. If you start your compost in the fall and turn it several times, it should be ready for use about June 1.

Note—Fresh animal manures sometimes contain organisms that can make people sick (pathogens), such as the bacteria *Salmonella* sp. and *E. coli* O157:H7, or the parasite *Cryptosporidium parvum*. These pathogens can be present in soil that adheres to roots or low-growing leaves and fruits. The risk is minimized if no fresh manure is used in the garden. Careful peeling or washing fruits and vegetables with detergent removes most pathogens, but some risk remains. Thorough cooking effectively kills pathogens.

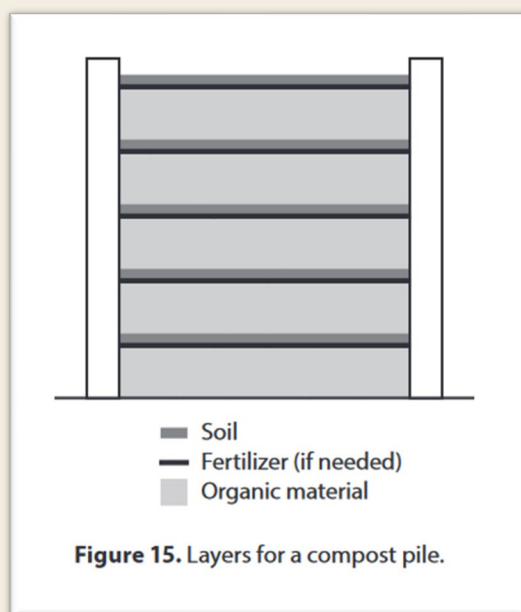


Figure 15. Layers for a compost pile.

finalthoughts...

"In some native languages the term for plants translates to 'those who take care of us'."

- Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*



Asparagus Tomato Salad



UK College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment

Ingredients:

- 1 lb of fresh asparagus, trimmed & cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 small zucchini, halved and cut into 1/4 inch slices
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1/4 teaspoon seasoned salt
- 1/4 teaspoon honey mustard
- 1 cup cherry or grape tomatoes, halved
- 1/4 cup sliced green onions
- 1/4 cup shredded fresh mozzarella cheese
- 1/4 cup minced fresh parsley

Directions:

Place the asparagus and zucchini in a steamer basket. Place in a saucepan over 1 inch of boiling water. Cover and steam for 2 minutes. Rinse in cold water. In large bowl, whisk together olive oil, red wine vinegar, garlic, seasoned salt and honey mustard. Pour over asparagus mixture; toss to coat. Toss in tomatoes and green onions. Sprinkle with mozzarella cheese and parsley.



<https://www.planeatmove.com/>

Source: *Plate it up! Kentucky Proud Project.*

- FSHE-17- Vegetables for Wellness: Kentucky Asparagus, Sandra Bastin, Ph.D., R.D., L.D., Food and Nutrition Specialist, University of Kentucky, Cooperative Extension Service.
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention - Nutrient Information for Fruits and Vegetables. <http://www.fruitandvegetablematters.org/cdc-resources>.

110 calories; 7g fat; 1g saturated fat; 5mg cholesterol; 35mg sodium; 5g carbohydrate; 2g fiber; 3g sugar; 4g protein.