



Clark County Extension Service
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Clark County Horticulture Newsletter

From the Ground Up!

June 2024

<http://clark.ca.uky.edu/>

A Word from the Agent . . .



Happy June to you! The bees are buzzing and the temps are climbing, because summer is almost here! Saturday June 1st is National Trails Day, so let's use that as a reminder to be sure and visit one of our beautiful state or national parks.

June 13th is National Weed Your Garden Day, but I hope you sign up for the Succulents Class that night instead! I'll be choosing to weed my veggie garden another day.

Don't forget our second herbs class this month as well on June 6th! Also, be on the lookout for a Plant Propagation Class in July.


Reach out with your questions and concerns!

Carrie Spry
Clark County Extension Agent
for Horticulture

Be sure and check out the upcoming class flyers for more information!

JUNE
TEENTH
FREEDOM DAY


The Clark County Extension Office will be CLOSED June 19th.



Clark COUNTY FAIR

June 22-29, 2024

The 2024 Clark County Fair Books will not be published this year. The only way to access the Fair Book is online at: <https://clarkcountkyfair.org/>



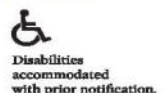
Clark / Powell Beekeepers Association Meeting

Monday, June 10
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.



Attracting Hummingbirds



By Carrie Spry, Clark County Extension Agent for Horticulture

Let us start with some hummingbird facts:

- The hummingbird is the smallest species of bird in the world!
- They are capable of hovering, flying backwards, and are the only avian species that can fly upside down and backwards.
- The rubythroat hummingbird is the only nesting hummingbird in Kentucky.
- The male rubythroat weighs only 3.03 grams or as much as 2.5 paperclips!
- Hummingbirds routinely cruise at 27 miles per hour but can reach up to 60 miles an hour while mating.
- The hummingbirds wings beat 53 times per second, they have little or no song, they have to eat 100% of their body weight in nectar per day just to survive, they cannot smell, they find food by site, feed every 5 minutes to one hour based on food sources, and often migrates over 500 miles in a single day!

Attracting hummingbirds is relatively easy as long as you feed them and have flowers near by. Feeders should be set out by mid-April to attract the first comers. You may need more than one feeder because each male will defend a feeder. Place feeders out-of-sight from each other to attract more hummingbirds. Hummingbird feeders don't have to be elaborate however red is their favorite color.

When feeding hummingbirds, store purchased nectar mixes are fine however not needed, you can make your own. A basic recipe consists of 4 parts water, one part sugar (don't mix it any stronger), boil the water and sugar for 2 minutes to kill any harmful bacteria. Cool the solution in the refrigerator and fill your feeders. Don't add any dyes or coloring to your feed it's not needed and some of them can actually harm the birds.

With all of the sugar water out in the elements your feeders will need to be cleaned regularly, weekly or bi-weekly. Wash it with a mild soap, rinse with bleach, and rinse thoroughly with water. Insects can become a problem but don't ever spray insecticides near feeders. If you follow the recommended mixing rates bees may not like it, if they do, mix a double strength amount in another feeder and the bees are likely to go to that feeder and leave the one for the birds alone. For ants just rub petroleum jelly on the wire hanger and the ants can't get to the feeder.

If you want to plant flowers for attracting hummingbirds several plant families are the best such as: the mint family which includes salvia, bee balm, and hyssop, the honey suckle family wild or tame with the native trumpet honeysuckle as a favorite, the columbines wild or tame, the bignonia family which includes trumpet creeper and cross vine, the penstemons, the lobelias which includes the native cardinal flower as well as cultivated species, the mallow family which includes hollyhock, hardy hibiscus, and rose of Sharon, the morning glory family, and woody species such as buckeye, clethra, Carolina Silverbell, native and cultivated azaleas and rhododendrons, and weigela. Other particular plants that hummingbirds prefer are nicotiana (flowering tobacco), zinnia, Mexican sunflower, snapdragon, obedient plant, foxglove, cleome, and canna.

If you don't have some of the hummingbirds favorite plants then now is a good time to plan the gardens. You will get a multitude of benefits such as beauty, butterflies, and most of all the summer long excitement of hummingbirds in your garden!





UK Cooperative
Extension Service

Hardy Succulents

Thursday, June 13

6:30 pm

Clark County Extension Service

No plant is as forgiving as a succulent!

Join us as we talk about gardening with these versatile little plants, both indoors and outdoors.

Participants will take home their very own hardy succulents to garden with.

*Space
is
Limited!*

FREE
Hardy
Succulents!

To register:



859-744-4682



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

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Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.



We've made it through spring, and we're into summer. Whether you started your first garden this year or you're a veteran gardener, we're coming up on the heart of harvest season. One of the (many) advantages of growing your own vegetables is that you can harvest your produce at its peak quality. Knowing when exactly you should harvest something can be difficult to determine, especially if it's your first time growing the crop.

Most vegetables are at their best when they are allowed to ripen on the plant. However, we often harvest vegetables before they are fully mature, so bigger is not always better. Plants like zucchini should be harvested before the fruit is mature. If allowed to mature (get big), the quality is significantly reduced.

When it comes time to harvest your vegetables, make sure your plants are dry. If you harvest while plants are wet, you risk spreading any diseases that may be present in your plants. It's also important to handle your plants with care. Try to damage your plants as little as possible. Damaged areas can provide openings for diseases to enter. If the vegetables you are trying to harvest don't easily come off, cut them off with a knife or pruners to avoid damaging the plant.

Also, make sure you frequently check your plants once they begin to produce. If you wait too long, not only can your vegetable quality be reduced, your plants may slow or stop production.

Most plants and seeds that we purchase will include information on days to maturity. This information can give you a general idea of how long it will take for your vegetables to be ready to harvest. Unfortunately, it won't tell you when your vegetables will be ready to pick. Instead, you'll have to take a look at your plants for different signs to see when they are ready.

- **Snap beans (commonly called green beans)** should be picked when the pods are fully grown but before the seeds have started to get large (you shouldn't be able to see any bulges on the pods). The beans should be crisp and snap

easily. When picking, break off the stem above the cap and harvest frequently.

- **Beets** can be harvested when they are 1 ½ to 3 inches in diameter. For many varieties, once the roots get larger than three inches, they begin to get tough and fibrous (woody). The leaves of beets can also be eaten; they should be picked when they are 4 to 6 inches long.
- **Broccoli** heads are actually clusters of flowers. They should be harvested when the head has fully developed but before the buds begin to yellow and loosen up. When harvesting, cut the stem 5 to 6 inches below the head. Some varieties may produce secondary side shoots that can be harvested later.
- **Carrots** can be harvested once they reach your desired size, typically ½ to 1-inch diameter (usually 60-70 days). Carrot tops may break when pulled, so digging or loosening soil may be helpful. Carrots planted in late summer and fall can be and harvested until the ground freezes.
- **Sweet Corn** should be harvested early in the morning while in the milk stage (the juice of the kernel will be milky when punctured). At this stage, the kernels are fully formed, but not mature. As harvest time approaches, the silks will begin to dry and brown, the tip kernels will start to fill, and the ears will become firm. Ears should be eaten or processed as soon as possible after picking for the best quality.
- **Cucumbers** should be harvested before their skin begins to turn yellow and seeds become hard. The size of the cucumber will vary depending on the type; pickling are usually picked between 2 and 6 inches long, slicing 6-8 inches long, and burpless 1-1½ inches in diameter and up to 10 inches long. Cucumbers develop quickly, so plants may need to be checked every other day.
- **Garlic** should be harvested when half of the leaves have turned yellow (usually around late June/early

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July). Bulbs should be cured in a cool, dry, well-ventilated area for several weeks. Once the garlic is cured, the stems and roots can be cut off and bulbs cleaned by removing the outermost skin.

- **Leaf lettuce** can be picked whenever it is large enough to use. The entire plant or individual outer leaves can be picked. Harvest before hot weather causes lettuce to turn bitter and bolt
- **Onions** can be harvested as green onions when they are 6 to 8 inches tall. Begin harvesting dry onions (bulbs) when the tops begin to fall over and die (usually late July or early August). Once the bulbs are dug, air-dry for several days in a dry, sheltered area with good air circulation to thoroughly dry and cure.
- **Pea** harvest depends on the type. Garden (English) peas are picked when pods are firm and feel full, but before pods begin to yellow and peas become hard and starchy. Snap peas should be harvested when the pods begin to fatten, but before the seeds get large. Snow peas should be harvested when the pods have reached their full length, around 3 inches, and the peas are the size of BBs.
- **Peppers** can be harvested at any size. Green bell peppers are typically picked when they are mature (3-4 inches long, firm, and green). If you are growing colored types of bell peppers, wait until the fruits change color (red, yellow, orange, etc.). One way to tell if the fruit is mature is that they will easily break off of plants when picked. Hot peppers can also be picked at any stage but are typically picked when fully ripe (they are also at their hottest). The mature color of the fruit will vary on the variety (red, orange, yellow, etc.).
- **Potatoes** should be harvested after most of the vines have died. Potatoes develop 4-6 inches below ground, so a shovel or spading fork may be useful.

Take care not to damage potatoes while harvesting.

- **Sweet Potatoes** are often harvested around, but before, the first frost of the fall. Dig/lift sweet potatoes with a shovel or spading fork, taking care not to cut, bruise, or damage the roots. Cure in the warmest room of the house (above 70°F) for two weeks.
- **Radishes** should be harvested when they are about 1 inch in diameter (about 3-4 weeks after planting). Radishes become hot and tough when left in the ground too long.
- **Spinach** leaves can be harvested when they reach 3 to 6 inches long. The entire plant or individual outer leaves can be picked.
- **Summer Squash**, such as straightneck, crookneck, and zucchini, should be harvested when small and tender (rind can be punctured with your thumbnail). Pick when fruit are 2 inches or less in diameter and 6-8 inches long. When growing conditions are favorable, you may need to harvest every other day or daily.
- **Winter Squash**, such as acorn, butternut, hubbard, and pumpkins, can be harvested when the fruits have turned a deep, solid color, no longer have a glossy appearance, and the rind is hard (cannot be punctured with your thumbnail). When harvesting, try to leave at least 2 inches of stem attached. Complete harvest before heavy frosts arrive.
- **Tomatoes** are at their highest quality when allowed to ripen on the vine. Tomatoes should be firm and fully colored (red for most, but will vary depending on variety). During hot conditions (90+°F), tomatoes will quickly soften, and color development is reduced. During these conditions, pick tomatoes when they begin to develop color and ripen indoors. Before the first frost of the fall, you can harvest mature green fruit and ripen indoors.



 Cooperative Extension Service

COOKING WITH HERBS

Thursday, June 6
6:30 pm
Clark County Extension Service

REGISTER NOW:

 859-744-4682  cynthia.carr@uky.edu

Don't Miss Out!

Learning to use herbs allows us to transform meals prepared at home into even more flavorful and robust dishes.

Join us as Shonda Johnston, Family and Consumer Sciences Agent, covers the best ways to use, incorporate, and experiment with herbs when cooking, and more. Carrie Spry, Horticulture Agent, will cover harvesting and storage tips for the herbs you have grown yourself.





Gus'

QUICK TIPS

for

JUNE june

- 1 Prune evergreen shrubs now through late August. The longer you can tolerate leaving this year's growth on the plant, the more energy the plant will create equaling a healthier plant. This also means less of a chance of a second trimming.
- 2 Mound soil around potato plants to improve quality. We call this hilling.
- 3 Thin fruits on fruit trees when they reach the size of a dime. Leave one fruit for every 6-8" of branch.
- 4 Mow grass at three inches for a healthier lawn. Leave clippings on lawn for a natural source of fertilizer.
- 5 Use chemical controls as a last resort. Patrol plants regularly for insects and hand pick before populations explode. If you must resort to chemicals avoid spraying during the heat of the day and ALWAYS read and follow label directions.
- 6 Remove flower buds from culinary herbs to keep them growing and productive.
- 7 Keep mower blades sharpened. Clean cuts make for less disease problems and easier mowing for you. And we are all about keeping things easy!
- 8 Mulch plants for the summer. It will conserve moisture in hot weather and prevent weeds from growing.
- 9 Keep gardens and beds well weeded. Weeds compete for light and nutrients, reducing yields. By preventing weeds from setting seed you will lessen weed problems in future years.
- 10 Pinch chrysanthemums back every few weeks until mid July. This will promote fuller bushier plants that are less likely to fall over when in bloom.
- 11 Start planning your fall vegetable plantings now. Many cool season crops like lettuce, peas, and cole crops will be finished from the spring planting and can be planted again in late July and August for a fall crop.

RECIPE

What's Cooking?



Farmer's Market Skillet Bake

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| ½ small onion, finely chopped | 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese, divided | 4 medium sized tomatoes, sliced |
| 2 cloves garlic, minced | 1 medium summer squash, sliced | 1 teaspoon salt |
| 4-5 small red potatoes, sliced | 1 medium zucchini, sliced | 1 teaspoon pepper |
| 1 tablespoon olive oil | | 5 fresh basil leaves, finely chopped, divided |

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. **Prepare** onion, garlic and sliced potatoes (about ¼ inch thick). **Heat** olive oil over medium heat in a 10 or 12-inch oven safe skillet. **Add** onion, garlic, and potatoes to pan and **stir** to coat with oil. **Cook** over medium heat, **stirring** occasionally until golden brown and tender. **Add** 1 cup mozzarella cheese. In a bowl, **toss** together the squash, zucchini and tomatoes with salt, pepper, and half of the finely chopped basil. **Layer** squash

and tomato slices over the potato and cheese layer. **Top** with remaining mozzarella cheese. **Bake** 35 minutes or until vegetables are tender and cheese is melted. **Remove** skillet from oven and **top** with remaining basil.

Yield: 8, 1 cup servings

Nutritional Analysis: 200 calories, 8 g fat, 4 g saturated fat, 20 mg cholesterol, 490 mg sodium, 24 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber, 5 g sugars, 10 g protein.