

May 2025



Martin-Gatton
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment

Woodford County Extension Office
184 Beasley Drive
Versailles, KY 40383
(859) 873-4601
woodford.ext@uky.edu

Woodford Horticulture Update



Agent Note

Happy May!

Let's hope that the April showers we experienced - over 10" of rain - will bring plentiful May flowers! This is the month that we can finally begin to plant warm-season vegetable crops like tomatoes, peppers, and squash, along with annual flowers such as zinnias, marigolds, and sunflowers. Please reach out if you have any gardening questions! We are here to help.

Delia Scott, CEA for Horticulture

In This Issue

- 2 Plant Spotlight
- 3 Integrated Pest Management Guides
- 4 Growing Great Tomatoes
- 5 Periodical Cicadas
- 6 Bee Club
- 7 Upcoming Events
- 8 Horticulture Webinar Wednesdays
- 9 Garden Calendar Quick Tips

Plant Spotlight

Baptisia australis - Blue False Indigo

Description

Blue False Indigo is a native herbaceous perennial plant in the bean family (Fabaceae). It is native to central and eastern North America and grows in forests or natural areas in woodland borders.

This clump-forming plant grows 3 to 4 feet tall and 2 to 4 feet wide in full sun to part shade, but best blooming is in full sun and in average well-drained soil. The deep tap root makes it drought tolerant but difficult to transplant. Flowers are a bright, indigo blue. Prune after flowering if seed pods are not desired and to shape. Propagation is by seeds or stem cuttings.

Use this plant in the native, pollinator or drought-tolerant garden as a specimen or in the border. (NC State Extension)



Habit and flowers
Will Law
[CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](#)

Small Acreage & Backyard Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Guides

The University of Kentucky's Plant Pathology Department has put together a series of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) guides for different vegetables. They are a great resource! Check them out at:

- Cole Crop IPM Guide for Small Acreage & Backyard Production
- Cucurbit Crop IPM Guide for Small Acreage & Backyard Production
- Bean & Pea IPM Guide for Small Acreage & Backyard Production
- Tomato & Pepper IPM Guide for Small Acreage & Backyard Production



A vertical decorative border on the left side of the page, featuring a stack of various tomato slices. The slices are shown in different ways: some are halved to show the seeds, some are quartered, and some are whole. They are arranged in a slightly overlapping manner, creating a vibrant red and orange pattern.

Tips for Growing Great Tomatoes

Amanda Sears, Madison Co. Horticulture Agent

It's almost time to plant tomatoes! We could still get a late frost, so wait until after Mother's Day to be sure it's safe. Below are some tips for growing tomatoes:

1. Do not add lime to the garden unless a soil sample shows you need it. I know a lot of gardeners use lime as a way to combat blossom end rot, but our soils have plenty of calcium in them. Liming the area too much can lead to other problems, such as a soil pH that is too high. To combat blossom end rot, be sure soil moisture stays even. Calcium can only be taken up by the plant when there is adequate moisture.
2. Consider using a mulch around your tomato plant. It is best to use something that will break down over the course of the growing season, so I would avoid wood chips. In my own garden I use a couple of sheets of newspaper and a few inches of straw. Grass clippings (if your yard has not been treated with herbicides) and pine straw are two other options to use. Mulches keep the ground wet longer after rain or irrigating. They also cut down on weed problems. And because some plant diseases live in the soil, it reduces the risk of infection because when it rains drops of water do not hit the soil and go back up onto the plant.
3. Do not let your tomato plants lay on the ground. Put them up either with a tomato cage or tie them to a stake. Air flow is very important to the health of the plant. The longer a plant stays wet, the more likely it is to have disease problems. This is also the reason you should not plant them too closely together. Allow for about two feet between each plant.
4. Tomatoes, like most garden plants, need an inch of water a week. If you need to irrigate, the best way to do so is to use a soaker hose. That way water is allowed to go directly in the soil where it is needed. There is no benefit to the plant to have overhead watering. If you use a watering can, focus on watering at the base of the plant. For more information on gardening, check out the Home Vegetable Gardening in Kentucky Publication.

Periodical cicadas emerge across Kentucky this spring: How to protect your trees and shrubs

Jonathan Larson, Associate Extension Professor, Dept. of
Entomology, University of Kentucky

Kentucky will be the epicenter for the emergence of Brood XIV of 17-year periodical cicadas this spring. Periodical cicadas have appeared in Western Kentucky counties over the past few years, but the largest emergence area for 2025 will occur across most of Central and Eastern Kentucky.

While these time-keeping, red-eyed insects are not harmful to humans or pets, their egg-laying habits could damage the branches of young trees and shrubs. Tree netting is the most effective, non-invasive way to protect your landscaping and fruit trees.

The 17-year periodical cicadas are expected to emerge from the soil to molt into their flying, adult form in late April to early May, when the soil warms to the mid-60s. Periodical cicadas emerge much earlier than annual cicadas and in greater numbers.

Cicadas do not bite or sting, and the feeding habits of the adults do not damage plants. Some may find the abundance of molted shells and loud, near deafening singing a nuisance, while others will enjoy this pageantry of nature. The periodical cicadas' choral song, however, is a cue to protect landscaping and orchards.

Female cicadas will lay their eggs into the new, lower branches of several species after mating: apple, arborvitae, ash, beech, berry and grape vines, crab apple, cherry, dogwood, hickory, holly, maple, lilacs, magnolia, oak, peach, pear, rose bushes, spirea and willows are the most likely targets.

The cicada's ovipositor is long and sharp, and they will inject 200 to 600 eggs into the stem tissue. This "flagging" may cause the tender branches to snap. The fallen branch makes for a much shorter journey for the hatching nymphs from egg to soil but is not beneficial for the growing tree. Once the eggs hatch, the nymphs will feed on root sap, and a heavy population of nymphs in the soil may also impact the tree's root system.

While using insecticides may be less costly, the safest and most effective way to prevent tree and shrub damage is by using cicada netting, which prevents females from laying their eggs. Netting is suggested for use on new and smaller trees and should be installed when the cicadas begin to sing, about mid-May for most of the area. Trees that are established in the landscape—too tall to net for most people— will grow throughout the egg-laying period.

More information can be found at the University of Kentucky Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment publication here:

<https://entomology.ca.uky.edu/ef446>. Contact the Woodford County Extension Office for more information on protecting trees and shrubs from cicadas.

Buzzing for Bee Club

Local opportunity to get hands-on learning
about our fuzzy buzzy best friends!

3rd Wednesday each month

5:00PM Hive Inspection

6:00 PM Club Meeting

RSVP:

Attending EITHER or BOTH
Hive Inspection | Club Meeting

For further info, contact Joe Lacefield

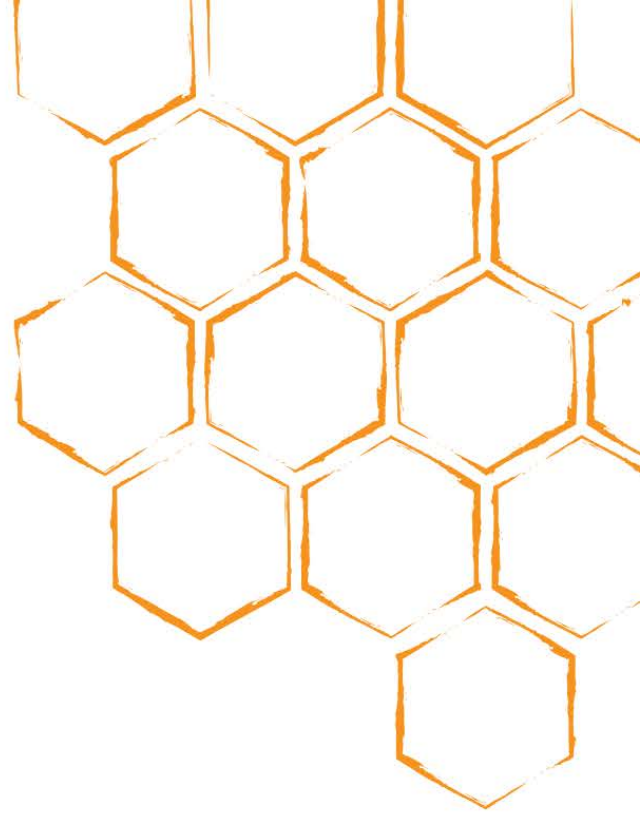
KY Dept. of Fish & Wildlife

180 Beasley Road, Versailles, KY 40383

Phone: (859) 879-8411

Email: joe.lacefield@ky.gov

RSVP: tfaragher@windstream.net



Calendar of Upcoming Events

May
10

Annual Master Gardener Plant
Sale at Falling Springs Park

May
19

Monarch Waystation Grant
Awards Presentation

May
26

Memorial Day holiday –
WCES is CLOSED

May 27–
June 1

Woodford County Fair
at Falling Springs

June
2

2025 Master Gardener Volunteer
Training Program applications
open



Horticulture Webinar Wednesdays

Source: Sharon Flynt, UK extension horticulture agent

If you would like to learn more about gardening from University of Kentucky experts and industry professionals, there is a weekly opportunity that might interest you. It is called a Lunch and Learn horticulture webinar and takes place weekly on Wednesdays, 12:30 to 1:30 p.m., EST via Zoom.

The program grew out of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 when extension horticulture agents were looking for ways to reach out to the public. Former Barren County extension horticulture agent Andrea Stith came up with the idea and got her extension horticulture colleagues on board and now the weekly webinar is continuing into its sixth year. Stith has since moved from Kentucky to Oregon, but the Webinar Wednesdays found an audience and is still going strong.

During the height of the pandemic, Webinar Wednesdays attracted up to 200 people for each program. With that demand for gardening information, horticulture agents decided to continue the weekly gatherings. You must register in advance for the weekly program by going to <https://kentuckyhortnews.com/>. There are also archived programs from the first five seasons that you may access at any time. You may also see the upcoming program topics are for the current month.

Garden Calendar Quick Tips: May

- Mulch beds for weed control and moisture retention.
- Make sure to keep mulch away from tree trunks and the bases of shrubs.
- Monitor evergreens for bagworms. Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) is an effective chemical control if you catch the larvae while they are small. Do not wait for the large “bags” to appear, as control will be difficult on older insects.
- Plant and seed vegetable gardens. Most warm season vegetables can be planted early this month and heat-lovers like peppers, squash, and sweet potatoes can go in later in the month.
- Replace pansies and other cool season plants with appropriate summer choices.
- Move house plants outdoors later this month. Make sure you place them in a shady spot, or they are likely to sunburn.
- Prune evergreens now through August.
- Carpenter bees are actively digging holes in wooden structures to lay eggs. The males can be aggressive but lack a stinger.
- For a healthy turf, make sure to mow at the recommended height. Tall fescue lawns are best mowed at 2” – 3 ½” tall.
- Refrain from adding fertilizer to lawns at this time. Fertilizing now can increase disease pressure and increase the frequency of mowing.
- Continue spraying fruits for insect and disease prevention. Consult Disease and Insect Control Program for Homegrown Fruit in Kentucky including Organic Alternatives ([ID-21](#)) to properly time sprays.

Find Us on Facebook:

Woodford County Extension Page:
<https://www.facebook.com/woodfordcountyCES>

Woodford County Horticulture Page:
<https://www.facebook.com/woodfordCEShorticulture>

Woodford County Extension Master Gardener Page:
<https://www.facebook.com/WoodfordCountyMasterGardeners>

Plate It Up Recipe Card



Kale and Cauliflower Salad

1 15-ounce can chickpeas, drained and patted dry
1 tablespoon olive oil
4 cups finely chopped kale
4 cups (1 large head) finely chopped cauliflower
2 tablespoons diced red onion
½ cup roasted sunflower seeds
½ cup dried cranberries

Dressing:

1 clove garlic, minced
4 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
2 teaspoons sugar
½ teaspoon ground black pepper

Pre-heat oven to 400 degrees F.
Toss chickpeas with olive oil and spread on baking sheet. Roast 20 minutes, stirring once and then let cool. Combine kale, cauliflower, onion, sunflower seeds, cranberries, and cooled chickpeas in a large bowl. In a small bowl whisk together dressing ingredients until combined.

Pour dressing over salad ingredients and toss to combine.

Yield: 10, 1-cup servings

Nutritional Analysis: 200 calories, 11g total fat, 1.5g saturated fat, 0mg cholesterol, 200mg sodium, 22g total carbohydrate, 5g fiber, 9g total sugars, 1g added sugars, 6g protein

Kentucky Kale

SEASON: May through June and September through November.

NUTRITION FACTS: Kale is a good source of vitamins A and C. A half-cup serving contains 20 percent of calcium needed daily. It is low in calories and sodium, and contains no fat.

SELECTION: Choose dark-colored, small- to medium-sized leaves. Leaves should be fresh, young, and tender. Avoid greens with coarse stems or yellowed, dried, limp leaves.

STORAGE: Store kale and other greens in the coldest part of the refrigerator for no more than 2 or 3 days.

PREPARATION: Wash leaves in lukewarm water. Remove roots, rough ribs, and center stalks if they are large or fibrous.

To cook: Add washed greens to a medium-sized saucepan with ¼ inch of water. Bring water to a boil. Cover and cook until tender. Crisp and tender leaves may require 5 to 10 minutes.

To freeze: Wash young, tender green leaves thoroughly and cut off woody stems. Blanch greens for 2 to 3 minutes, cool, drain, and package. Leave ½ inch of headspace, seal, label, and freeze. Greens can be stored for up to 1 year.

KALE

Kentucky Proud Project
 County Extension Agents for Family and Consumer Sciences

University of Kentucky, Dietetics and Human Nutrition students
 January 2020

Source: www.fruitsandveggiematter.gov

Buying Kentucky Proud is easy. Look for the label at your grocery store, farmers market, or roadside stand.
<http://plateitup.uky.edu>



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, or physical or mental disability. For more information, contact your county's Extension agent for Family and Consumer Sciences or visit www.uky.edu/ce



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

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.