

Cooperative Extension Service
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Montgomery County Agriculture & Horticulture News & Events

Greetings Farmers:

December 9, 2024

December 2024/January 2025

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Montgomery County Extension Service now has a new Horticulture Agent. Below is her introduction.



Hello everyone! I am Cheyenne Lamb, your new Horticulture Extension Agent. I cannot wait to meet everyone face to face, but for now I will tell you a little about me.

I am from Estill County, and I graduated from Estill County High School in 2020. Growing up I was active in 4-H from ages 9-18. I started in a cooking club which led me to all the other clubs Estill County offered. I received my bronze, silver, and gold 4-H achievement awards and my 10-year award. After I aged out of the program I served on the 4-H council as President for 2 years and I was the 4-H horticulture club leader. I have also been in homemakers for 5 years where I have served as the county treasurer for the past 2 years. In addition to homemakers, I am also a member of the Estill County Cattlemen's Association. While attending college, I was an intern at Estill County Extension Office for the summer of 2023.

I attended college at Eastern Kentucky University (EKU). My classes were in things like greenhouse, vegetable, and fruit production. I also had floral design and advanced floral design. I cannot wait to make beautiful floral arrangements with you all and answer all your questions! While there I was also in several student organizations. I was a member of the horticulture and agriculture club. My favorite club I was a part of was Delta Tau Alpha which is the agriculture honors society. I was the Vice President for 2 years and I loved every second of it. At the agriculture senior sendoff, I had the honor of receiving the Outstanding Horticulture Student award. I graduated from Eastern Kentucky University in May 2024. I received a

Sincerely,

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Cheyenne Lamb,
Montgomery County
Horticulture Agent
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bachelor's degree in Fruit, Vegetable, Nursery, and Greenhouse Production and an associate's degree in Livestock Management. After graduation I was working in the greenhouses at ECU through the summer. I started teaching 8th grade science in August. When I saw the Montgomery County Horticulture position become available, I knew it was my dream job. I am so grateful and blessed to have this opportunity to work in your community. I cannot wait to meet all of you! **Cheyenne Lamb, Montgomery County Horticulture Agent**

POINSETTIAS ARE A HOLIDAY STAPLE

With their bright red, pink or white leaves, poinsettias herald the approach of the holiday season. They are beautiful as stand-alone plants or as components of bigger holiday displays. In the United States, we grow poinsettias as indoor potted plants, most in heated greenhouses, but you might be surprised to know that in its native climate, this subtropical species can grow to more than 10 feet tall.



The person responsible for bringing poinsettias to the United States was Joel Roberts Poinsett, a botanist, physician and the first U.S. ambassador to Mexico. Dec. 12 is officially Poinsettia Day and marks the 1851 death of Poinsett.

Growers cultivate more than 100 varieties of poinsettias, but the red leaf variety is the most popular. Contrary to popular belief, poinsettias are not poisonous. The plant was cleared of this charge by the National Poison Center and the American Medical Association. A study at Ohio State University found that a 50-pound child would have to eat more than 500 leaves to have any harmful effect. However, the leaves have an awful taste, so you probably don't want to make them part of your salad. It's still a good idea to keep pets away from plants, because consuming them can cause digestive upset.

More than 34 million poinsettias are sold each year, accounting for about a quarter of the sales of all flowering potted plants. Even though that may seem like a big money-maker for growers, production is a high-risk venture that has significant start-up costs and requires demanding labor and management. Growers must have a heated greenhouse structure. You can use tobacco greenhouses, but poinsettia production in late summer can compete with labor for tobacco harvest, housing and stripping.

The profit margin for most poinsettia growers is very low because of the highly competitive marketing environment of wholesale and retail markets like local garden centers, florists and grocers, roadside stands, farmer's markets, fundraisers and direct sales from the farm. Another consideration is the short sale window of about six weeks beginning in early November. Still, growers see a value in producing a crop of poinsettias, because it allows for spreading capital investments over the whole year versus having the greenhouse sit idle during later summer and fall.

Growers who cultivate multiple varieties can distinguish themselves a bit from the competition and have a market advantage. For more information on poinsettias or other horticulture topics, contact the Montgomery County Cooperative Extension Service.

WITH CARE SOME HOLIDAY PLANTS CAN BRIGHTEN YOUR HOME THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

The colorful plants you enjoy during the holidays can linger beyond the season. If you care for them, they may become a welcome addition to your houseplant collection.

Traditional Christmas plants, such as poinsettia, holiday cactus, Christmas pepper, kalanchoe, Jerusalem cherry or cyclamen, require a bright, sunny location in the home. Regular thorough watering whenever the soil is dry is also very important. A sunny location and regular watering are enough for these plants throughout December, but they will need more specialized care if you plan for them to flower again next year.

In January, decide whether to keep or discard your holiday plants. That decision is easy for Christmas pepper, Jerusalem cherry and chrysanthemum because they will not flower again in the home environment.



Holiday cactus, kalanchoe, or cyclamen can remain colorful through February with proper care. You may even keep them as houseplants after February if you provide the correct conditions. Holiday cacti are relatively easy to grow while kalanchoes and cyclamen are more difficult. While poinsettias may continue growing, they are difficult to bring into flower for the next holiday season and are best discarded.

The major difference you'll see in your holiday plant after a year will be its size. If you are successful, you may have plants with 40 to 50 flowers from the same plant that had only six to eight flowers the previous year. Holiday cacti with many flowers will be two to five times as large next year. Kalanchoe will also increase in size while cyclamen tend to stay compact.

For this season's poinsettias, choose plants with small, tightly clustered yellow buds in the center of the colorful leaf-like bracts commonly referred to as the flowers. Look for crisp, undamaged foliage. Water the plant when it feels dry and discard excess water in the saucer under the plant. Place the plant in a bright, naturally lit location with some direct sunlight. Keep the plant out of drafty areas and away from heat-producing appliances. After a few weeks, apply houseplant fertilizer according to the label directions. The colorful bracts may stay nice into January and February.



If you're wanting to make your poinsettia last, remove the faded flowers, bracts and dry leaves around St. Patrick's Day. Add more soil if the level in the pot seems low and fertilize again. Move the plant to the brightest window in your house; full sun is fine if you gradually allow the plant to adjust to higher light.

Around Mother's Day, your plant could be approaching three feet tall. Trim two to six inches off the branches to promote side branching. Repot in a larger container and move the plant outside to a location that receives full sun for at least six hours daily. Again, gradually introduce the plant to full sun and start in a shady area. Over a few weeks, gradually move the plant to higher light conditions. Fertilize the plant again in June. Trim your poinsettia again around July 4 and slightly increase the amount of fertilizer. Fertilize weekly August through September.

By Labor Day, the plant could be 3-5 feet tall. Prune it to a height of 18-24 inches. This will be your last chance to reduce the height. Around the first day of fall, Sept. 22, selectively remove the smallest new branches so that only 10-25 stems remain to produce flowers. This is also the time to move the plant indoors. The plant will need about 14 hours of uninterrupted darkness and 10 hours of bright sunlight daily. For example, place the plant in a light-free closet or under a box at 6 p.m. each evening and return it to the sunny window at 8 a.m. You can also place the plant in a little used south facing room, and do not turn the lights on from 6 p.m. to 8 a.m. daily. Any day you forget and accidentally turn the lights on will cause a delay in flowering.

Continue to water and apply fertilizer about every two weeks. Rotate the plant each day to give all sides even light. If the window does not get direct sun, you can supplement the daytime light with fluorescent or LED lights, but turn them off by 6 p.m.

Around Halloween, stop the day/night, light/dark treatment and keep the plant in a sunny area. Reduce fertilizer applications. The plant can remain in its usual full sun location as the upper leaves (bracts) turn red, pink or white. During November and December, fertilize every three weeks and water regularly. Next Christmas enjoy your beautiful "new" poinsettia.

For information about extending other holiday plants, visit <https://www.uky.edu/hort/sites/www.uky.edu/hort/files/documents/christmasflowers.pdf>.

For more information on horticulture topics, contact your Montgomery County Extension office. Information provided to you by Cheyenne Lamb, Montgomery County Horticulture Agent. Source: Rick Durham, extension professor, Department of Horticulture



Caring for Your Christmas Tree

Join Horticulture agent Cheyenne Lamb to learn about caring for your live Christmas Tree.

Friday, December 13th at 1:00 p.m.

There will be a short presentation about the care that goes into having a live tree!

After the presentation we will be making bird seed ornaments to hang on your trees outside.

Be sure to call and sign up!

Can't wait to see you there!



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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.

Don't let Poinsettia Diseases ruin your holidays!

Check out these tips to ensure disease-free poinsettias that will last well into the New Year!



Inspect bracts and leaves for spots or damage.



Check stems for lesions, especially near the soil line.



Examine roots for rot or damage if possible.



Maintain plant health and vigor with proper nutrition, light, and watering practices.



Remove plants from decorative pot covers. These may hold water.

Holiday Tree Removal

Check out these eco-friendly ways to dispose of a cut tree:

- Donate your tree to be used as a fish habitat in local lakes.
- Create a winter wonderland for birds by placing your tree outdoors with bird feeders and natural decorations.
- Take your tree to a local chipping station and use the mulch in your garden.
- Contact your local county extension office for more information!

UK Beef Management Webinar Series

Registration is necessary, however, if you received this email directly from Darrh Bullock then you are already registered. If you received this from another source, or have not registered previously, then please send an email to: dbullock@uky.edu with Beef Webinar in the subject line and your name and county in the message. You will receive the direct link with a password the morning of each meeting. This invitation will directly link you to the site and you will be asked for the password which can be found just below the link. Each session will be recorded and posted for later viewing. All meeting times are 8:00pm ET/7:00pm CT.



November 12, 2024

Shooting the Bull: Answering all your Beef Related Questions! – Updates and Roundtable discussion with UK Specialists <https://youtu.be/FTVlgyWPzj4?si=wF8BCNQWcvUS2TQx>

December 10, 2024

Winter Feeding Strategies to Extend Short Hay Supplies – Lawton Stewart, Professor, University of Georgia

January 14, 2025

Important Traits for Bull Selection in Kentucky – Matt Spangler, Professor, University of Nebraska

February 11, 2025

Marketing Opportunities for the Spring – Kenny Burdine, Professor, and Kevin Laurent, Extension Specialist, University of Kentucky

March 11, 2025

Preparing for a Successful Spring Breeding Season – Les Anderson, Extension Professor, University of Kentucky

April 8, 2025

Health Update and Internal Parasite Field Study Results – Michelle Arnold, Extension Veterinarian, and Jeff Lehmkuhler, Extension Professor, University of Kentucky.

For additional information on the UK Beef Management Webinar Series, please contact your local Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Agent.

FARM RECORD BOOKS AVAILABLE -For many years, the UK College of Agriculture has printed and made available an easy to keep but effective farm record book for farmers. We have a supply of the record books in the Montgomery County Extension Office. Stop by before the first of the new year to pick one up.

Civil Rights Act-Compliant statement - The College of Agriculture, Food and Environment is an Equal Opportunity Organization with respect to education and employment and authorization to provide research, education information and other services only to individuals and institutions that function without regard to economic or social status and will not discriminate on the bases of race, color, ethnic 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. Inquiries regarding compliance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and other related matter should be directed to Equal Opportunity Office, College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, University of Kentucky, Room S-105, Agriculture Science Building, North Lexington, Kentucky 40546, the UK Office of Institutional Equity and Equal Opportunity, 13 Main Building, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40506-0032 or US Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410.

NOW IS A GREAT TIME TO SAMPLE SOIL



If you think spring is the best time to take soil samples, you might want to rethink that. Fall is actually the optimum time to take soil samples for fertility analyses.

Fall sampling gives you plenty of time to follow fertility recommendations before planting season. As soon as 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, it should be applied in the fall to be fully effective in the spring. Unlike fertilizer, lime is needed 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.

The turn-around time for test results is much faster in the fall, usually within a week of submission, because fewer people are submitting samples. You can also apply all the recommended fertilizers, except nitrogen, in the fall. Often a fall application will save you considerable money, because fertilizer prices generally are cheaper in the fall as a result of lower demand. In addition to lower fertilizer prices, it's easier to get the spreader truck in the field during the fall, because the soil usually is drier.

If you don't soil test, you can only guess at the fertility needs of your fields, and far too often those 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's 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're interested in collecting fall soil samples, stop by your local county Extension office. We can give you details on how to take accurate soil samples and where to send the collected cores.

Remember, spending some effort on soil sampling this fall can keep you from wasting time & money. Fall soil samples also can provide big returns for next year's crop. Samples are Free to our county residents. Out of county residents will pay \$8 each sample.

BUTTERCUP SPRAY PROGRAM SIGNUP

Was your pasture covered in small yellow flowers this past spring? If so, you more than likely have the weed, buttercup. If you did have pastures with severe buttercup problems, the Montgomery County Extension Service is planning a buttercup spray program for March & April of 2025. Call the Extension Office @ 859-498-8741 to be put on a list to be notified of the program details when they are complete.

2025 KDA NUISANCE WEED SPRAYING PROGRAM SIGN-UPS

This program offered by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture consists of weed spraying demonstration plots. The department will provide the sprayer and enough chemical for the treatment of 10 acres of agricultural land or 100 gallons of spot spraying mix to be used on agricultural land. The department's representative will demonstrate proper mixing and application techniques. A number of nuisance weeds can be treated under this program depending on the needs of the participant. This program is limited to broadleaf weeds.

The Broadcast Spraying demonstration plots consist of: 10 acres of agricultural land will be treated with chemical provided by the department. Application is performed with a two-wheeled trailer type sprayer equipped with boom less nozzles. If additional chemical is provided by the participant, an additional 10 acres can be treated.

The Spot Spraying demonstration plots consist of: 100 gallons of broadleaf chemical mix which is applied until sprayer is empty. Application is performed with a two-wheeled trailer type sprayer equipped with a handheld spray wand used by the tractor operator. If additional chemical is provided by the participant, an additional 100 gallons can be sprayed.

For each demonstration: The participant must provide water source. The participant must provide tractor and operator. All chemical products must be labeled and the product label will be strictly followed. A maximum of 7 participants per county. This program is designed to target weeds that have a negative impact on the participant's agricultural production. There will be an annual online application period to participate in this program. Applications can be completed from February 1 to February 29 at www.kyagr.com/consumer/nuisance-weed-spraying-program-application.aspx

The Montgomery County Extension Office does not registration applicants for this program.



2025 KENTUCKY FRUIT & VEGETABLE CONFERENCE

Jan. 6th-7th, 2025

Pre-conference events Jan. 5th

Marriott Lexington Griffin Gate
Lexington, Kentucky

The 2025 Kentucky Fruit and Vegetable Conference will be Monday and Tuesday January 6-7, 2025 with pre-conference events on Sunday, Jan. 5 at the Marriott Lexington Griffin Gate Golf Resort & Spa in Lexington, KY.

This premier, state-wide event annually brings together approximately 600 growers, researchers, and technical support providers. The conference is devoted to **fruit, vegetable, and cut flower** production, handling, harvesting, marketing, storage, and related topics. The conference kicks-off with pre-conference events including fruit and vegetable grower roundtable discussions with university specialists where the group debriefs on the production year, challenges are discussed and questions are answered. The main conference program has more than 20 different educational tracks with more than 70 speakers. The trade show offers more than 60 vendors featuring horticulture products and services.

Download the draft program here! https://kyhortcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/2025-FV-Conf-Program_10Nov2024.pdf

Attendee registration is now open!

ATTENDEE REGISTRATION

Go to this Link to find on-line registration on TicketSpice.

<https://kentuckyhorticulturecouncil.ticketspice.com/2025-kentucky-fruit-vegetable-conference-attendee-tickets> Mail-in registration is also available. To Download the Registration form to print and mail in, Go here <https://kyhortcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/2025-Registration-Form.pdf> . You may pay by check by mailing checks and registration form to Kentucky Horticulture Council, PO Box 21736, Lexington, KY 40522-1736.



Eden Shale Farm Tour



APRIL 25, 2025
10:30AM - TOUR



**To register call
859-498-8741**

The Montgomery County Extension Office is attempting to get a group together to tour the UK/KBN Eden Shale Farm. Eden Shale is a demonstration farm that highlights many innovative practical ideas you can adopt on your farms. For example, farm layout, fence line feeders, livestock water collection, fencing ideas & forage management.



ATTENTION PLEASE

BUS SPACES ARE LIMITED TO THE FIRST 24 PEOPLE THAT REGISTER & REQUEST A SEAT IN THE BUS. THE BUS WILL LEAVE THE EXTENSION OFFICE AT 8:30AM

FOLKS CAN ALSO DRIVE & MEET US AT EDEN SHALE THAT DAY.

REGISTRATION REQUIRED BY: APRIL 4, 2025

**Cooperative
Extension Service**

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

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Beginners Beekeeping Workshop

Join us for this **FREE** workshop taught by **Larry Young, Past Kentucky Beekeeper of the Year and President of the Clark & Powell Beekeepers Association.**

Great for anyone interested in beekeeping or as a refresher for existing beekeepers!

Topics will include:

- **What to expect the first year of beekeeping**
- **Beekeeping equipment costs**
- **Pest and diseases of bees**
- **Selecting a site for your hive**
- **And much more!**

6:30 p.m.

**January 30th,
February 6th, 13th,
20th, and 27th**

**at the Montgomery
County Extension
Education Center
104 E. Locust St.,
Mount Sterling**

**For more information or to register, contact the
Montgomery County Extension Office, 859-498-8741**

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Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.