GRAVES COUNTY AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES NEWS

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

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JULY 2023

IN THIS EDITION:

Agent Notes

July 2023

Happy Independence Day!

Summer is here and the Western Kentucky heat and humidity are here to stay for a while! I hope that everyone has been able to get some of the rain that has passed through the area in the last few weeks. Our friends in Wingo took a hard hit and some of our vegetable producers have shared that some of their crops took a beating. Let's hope for timely gentle rains from here on out!

We enjoyed a great Pest Management Field Day organized by UK at the research farm in Princeton. There is another field day coming up at the end of the month that has some great topics that will be covered. The flyer is in this newsletter, so be sure to sign up so that they can plan for lunch. Who doesn't love a free lunch?!

I am starting to plan my fall and winter programming. It will be here before we know it! If there is a topic you would like covered, I'd love to hear about it. Just give me a call or send me a message and let me know what you would like to see or hear about and I'll get to work on putting it together.

Our garden series is going strong and will continue through the end of the month. I will be adding an additional time for this class to meet the needs of our people who would rather attend throughout the day, especially as we move into less daylight in the fall and winter. There are some fun topics and workshops planned that I'll be sharing soon!

I hope that everyone enjoys their 4th of July holiday safely! Please reach out if you have anything that I need to come take a look at or have a question. I'm here to help and am always happy to hear from you.

Miranda Rudolph

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Want to be involved in any field studies that come up? Scan the QR code to fill out your info!

Schedule of Events

July 2023

What's Happening?

Bolded events are hosted by the Graves County Extension Office. Please call the office at 270-247-2334 for more information or to sign up to attend!

- July 4- Office Closed - HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY!
- **July 17 - Growing and Propagating Succulents Class- 5:30pm, GCEO**
- July 25 - UK Corn, Soybean, & Tobacco Field Day - 8am UKREC, Princeton, KY

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LEXINGTON, KY 40546

Disabilities accommodated with prior notification.

Monitoring for important corn diseases in 2023

Dr. Kiersten Wise
Extenstion Plant Pathologist

Farmers are annually concerned about corn disease, and this year will be no exception. Corn is moving through growth stages quickly, with much of the early April-planted corn approaching the ten-leaf stage, or V10. This growth stage has become a popular stage for a fungicide application timing with high-clearance ground sprayers, and there have been questions about what diseases are preva-lent and how to monitor for disease presence to determine if a fungicide application is needed in 2023.

To date, weather across most of Kentucky has not been conducive for foliar disease development. Most of the state has experienced low rainfall and low humidity for several weeks, and this combina-tion slows or prevents disease development. Even with spotty rainfall over the weekend, most areas will still be at reduced risk for foliar disease at this time. This said, it is never too early to scout for disease and monitor our resources to determine where and when disease has been reported so we are ready for action if needed.

One of the most important corn diseases to monitor in Kentucky is southern rust. The fungus that causes southern rust does not overwinter in Kentucky, but spores of the fungus move north on wind currents and weather each summer. We can track the movement of southern rust by watching the map on the cornipmpipe website here: https://corn.ipmpipe.org/southerncornrust/. On the map, red counties/parishes indicate that southern rust has been confirmed by university/Extension personnel. To date, no counties have confirmed southern rust that has been reported on the corn.ipmpipe, but I have heard from my extension colleagues that the disease is likely in the Florida panhandle. Southern rust typically arrives in Kentucky in mid-July, and whether a fungicide will be needed to manage southern rust at that time will depend on the crop growth stage at the time it is detected in your area. Fungicide applications may be needed to manage southern rust through the milk (R3) growth stage. More information on southern rust can be found here: https://cropprotectionnetwork.org/publications/an-overview-of-southern-rust

Another disease that can be monitored on the cornipmpipe website is tar spot. Tar spot is a new dis-ease in Kentucky, with only two counties having confirmed disease in 2021 and one county with con-firmed disease in 2023. In all cases, tar spot was not observed until mid-September and did not im-pact yield. This is a disease of concern in states to the north, and we can monitor real-time confirma-tions at https://corn.ipmpipe.org/tarspot/. No tar spot has been confirmed in the United States in 2023 to date. More information on tar spot can be found here: https://cropprotectionnetwork.org/publications/an-overview-of-tar-spot

If considering a fungicide application in 2023, remember to scout fields first and check hybrid re-sistance ratings prior to fungicide application. Hybrids that are moderately resistant or resistant to foliar diseases like gray leaf spot are less likely to demonstrate an economic response to fungicide ap-plication.

Scouting over the next few weeks and just prior to tasseling can help determine if fungicide applica-tions are needed. Although disease levels will continue to build over the course of the season, Uni-versity research indicates that foliar fungicides applied at tasseling or early silking (VT-R1) provide optimal foliar disease control for diseases like gray leaf spot compared to applications that occur earlier or later in the season. For southern rust, a fungicide application may be needed through milk (R3). Management of tar spot will be on a case-by-case basis at this time. Always check with your County Agent for updates on the diseases present in your specific county and help determining if management is warranted.

2023 UK Corn, Soybean & Tobacco Field Day

July 25, 2023

UKEC
1205 Hopkinsville St.

Talks begin: 8 am (CT)

Pre-register:
2023 C,S&T Field Day

Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment

EDUCATIONAL CREDITS:

GC IPM Stop
CCA: 1 PM
Pesticide: 1hr Cat 4

GC Management stop
CCA: 1 CM
Pesticide: 1hr Cat 10

Tobacco Stop
CCA: 0.5 CM, 0.5 PM
Pesticide: 1hr Cat 1A

TOPICS INCLUDE:

- Corn Disease Concerns for 2023
- Red Crown Rot of Soybean: A New Disease to Kentucky
- The New "Non-certified Pesticide Applicator's" Category
- UKREC Tobacco Barn Construction Update
- Evaluating Biological N Fixation for Corn
- Tobacco Types Grown in Kentucky: Old vs. New Varieties
- Do We Need to Spray for Caterpillars in Soybeans?
- Comparing Wheat, Barley, and Rye Cover Crops Before Corn
- Flea Beetle Management in Tobacco
- The Continuing Battle Against Problematic Weeds!
- Corn & Soybean Outlook
- Potassium Chloride Use in Tobacco
- Effect of Fungicides on Cigar Wrapper Leaf Production

Thanks to our lunch sponsors!

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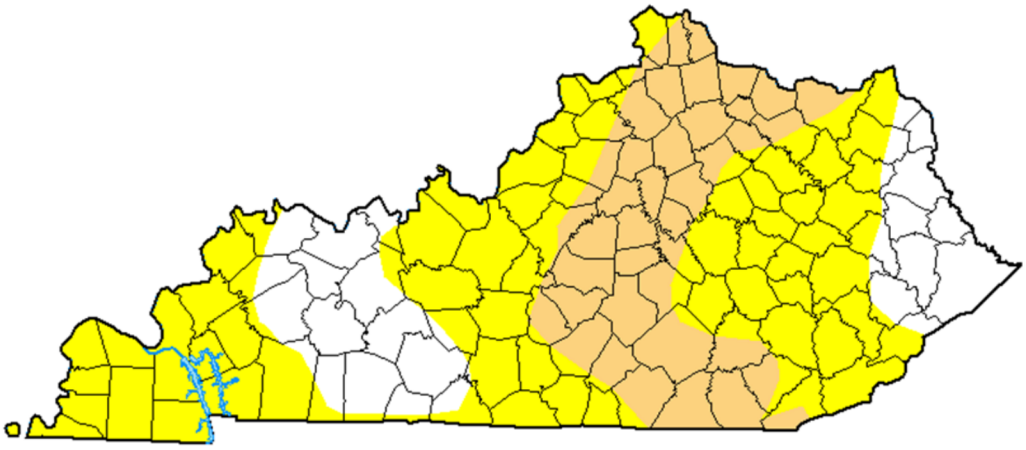
Managing Pastures During Dry Times

Chris D. Teutsch, UK Research and Education Center at Princeton

My farm old manager at the Virginia Tech's Southern Piedmont Ag Research station used to say that "the difference between a flood and drought is about two weeks. Truer words have never been spoken. In most summers we find ourselves teetering on the edge of drought multiple times and how we manage pastures prior to drought can have a profound impact on how quickly pastures recover after rain finally comes. Currently, significant areas within the Commonwealth are abnormally dry or under moderate drought conditions.

More than 80% of the Commonwealth is abnormally dry (yellow) or under moderate drought (brown) stress.



Developing and implementing a drought management plan will reduce the economic and emotional impact of drought on your operation and significantly speed up recovery of drought stressed pastures. The time to develop and implement this plan is before it gets dry. The strategies that are used will depend on the resources you have on your farm and your long-term goals. The remainder of this article will outline some strategies that could be used either alone or most effectively in a combination.

Ensure that livestock have access to adequate amounts of clean water. Water is the most important nutrient for livestock. During drought, the water requirement of livestock increases due to higher temperatures and the consumption of dry forage material and hay. In addition, naturally occurring water sources such as ponds, streams, springs, and seeps often have limited flow. So, it is important to make sure that livestock have unfettered access to clean water.

Water requirements of various livestock species and classes at 50 and 90°F.

Livestock Species	Water Requirement at 50°F	Water Requirement at 90 °F
	gallons/head/day	
Calf, beef, 400 lb	4	10
Feeder, beef, 1000 lb	8	17
Cow, beef	8	20
Cow, dairy	15	30
Heifer, dairy	6	15
Sheep and goats	1.5	3.5
Horses and mules	8	12

Adapted from Southern Forages, Fifth Edition.

Soil test and adjust fertility. Maintaining soil test levels in the medium and high range and soil pH in the range of 6.0 to 6.4, will optimize the growth of pastures and hayfields prior to and during conditions. Maintaining proper soil fertility removes a stress from pastures, allowing them to better cope with dry conditions.

Set a sustainable stocking rate. Having a perpetually light stocking rate that underutilizes pastures in most years but gets you through drought years is a viable drought management strategy.However, this strategy requires that you have a lot of land area and will tend to reduce profit per acre. In most cases this probably is not the best long-term drought management strategy. There is no better way to lose money than under or overstocking your pastures. The best approach is to set a sustainable stocking rate and focus on other drought management strategies. In Kentucky and neighboring states, a sustainable stocking rate will be 2 to 3 acres per cow-calf unit.

Implement rotational grazing. Although this does not sound like much of a drought management strategy, the first thing that people notice when they switch from a continuous to rotational grazing system is that pastures grow longer into a drought and recover faster after the rain finally comes. The reason for this is that rotationally grazed plants have larger and healthier root systems that can go deeper into the soil for water. In addition to a larger and healthier root system, not grazing closer than 4-5 inches modifies the microclimate (conditions) near the soil surface, keeping the plants growing point (crown) cooler and reducing evaporation of water from the soil surface. Good grazing management is not just a drought management strategy, but probably one the best ones.

Temporary fencing is a powerful for managing grazing before, during, and after drought.

Incorporate deep-rooted legumes into pastures. Interseeding deep-rooted legumes into pastures increases pasture quality, supplies nitrogen that is shared with grass, dilutes the toxic endophyte, and extends grazing during a drought. The most commonly used legume would be red clover. The primary advantage of red clover is that it has great seedling vigor and can be easily frost seeded into pastures. Alfalfa possesses a deeper tap root and is more drought tolerant than red clover, but requires higher soil fertility and well drained soils.Alfalfa mixes well with a variety of grasses like orchardgrass and tall fescue, but can be difficult to get established into a well managed sod. The most drought tolerant legume and our only truly perennial warm-season legume is sericea lespedeza. Its major limitation is poor seedling vigor making it difficult to incorporate into an established sod. Once established, sericea has amazing drought tolerance, however palatability can be low. Making sure it does not get too tall before grazing is key to maintaining palatability.

Incorporate warm-season perennial grasses into grazing system. During the summer months, warm-season grasses will produce about twice as much dry matter per unit of water used when compared to cool-season grasses. There are several perennial warm-season grasses that can used, but in western Kentucky the most productive, persistent, and tolerant to close and frequent grazing is bermudagrass. Bermudagrass requires management to be productive, which means it needs to be grazed frequently to keep it vegetative and it needs nitrogen. Other perennial warm-season grasses include the native grasses such as big and little bluestem, Indiangrass, switchgrass, and eastern gamagrass. These grasses can be productive parts of grazing systems, but will require a higher level of grazing management to persist. The last perennial warm-season grass that I want to mention is johnsongrass.I am going on record to make clear that I am NOT encouraging anyone to plant johnsongrass, but sometimes it just shows up.

Johnsongrass occurs on many farms in Kentucky and could provide high quality summer grazing when managed. Because johnsongrass is extremely palatable, it needs to be managed under rotational stocking to persist. Otherwise it will be selectively grazed and eventually grazed out of the pasture.

Incorporate warm-season annual grasses into grazing system. Warm-season annual grasses like pearl millet, sorghum-sudangrass, sudangrass, and crabgrass can provide high quality summer grazing. The primary disadvantage with summer annual grasses is that they need to be reestablished every year, which costs money and provides the chance for stand failure. The exception to this is crabgrass that develops volunteer stands from seed in the soil. Although most people don't realize (or want to admit it) crabgrass has saved many cows during dry summers in Kentucky. Research has shown that crabgrass responds well to improved management and can produce 2-4 tons per acre of highly digestible forage. The best use of annuals in grazing systems is as a transition crop when pastures are being renovated.

Weaned calves grazing a brown midrib sorghum-sudangrass at the UK Research and Education Center at Princeton.

Irrigate pastures. Irrigating your pastures can increase dry matter production by about 50% in a normal year and much more than that in a dry year. The best grass to irrigate is warm-season perennial and annual grasses such as bermudagrass and sorghum-sudangrass. One common misconception is that irrigating a cool-season grass will make it grow in the summer. Cool-season grass growth is limited by not only moisture, but also temperature. Once temperatures exceed 70 F, cool-season grass growth greatly slows and even stops when nighttime temperatures remain above 80 F.In contrast, warm-season grasses do not even reach peak growth until 90 F.

Feed hay. The most efficient way to harvest forage is with the animal. In Kentucky we should strive to reduce hay feeding in our grazing systems. This doesn't mean that we will not ever need hay. Drought is certainly one of those cases that hay will likely be required.A common problem with the hay feeding strategy is that when you need it, everybody needs it and there is little to go around. In addition, the price of hay during a drought can be high. One thing to think about is buying hay when it is plentiful and the prices are low and storing it under cover. It is kind of like having money in the bank. Hay that was well cured will keep for years if it is kept off the ground and out of the weather.

A key to successfully using hay as part of managing drought stress is to start to feed it before pastures have been overgrazed. If you work through your rotation and the rested pastures have NOT regrown, it is time to feed hay. Your neighbors will look at you like you are crazy because your still have some grass, but what they don't understand is that you are managing for rapid recovery when it does rain. Hay feeding should be done in one paddock so that damage from overgrazing is confined to this area.

Utilize commodities to extend pastures. Commodities such as brewer's grain, corn gluten, and soybean hulls can be used to supplement and extend hay and pasture during drought periods.Things to consider are the availability, storage, handling, feeding, and price of commodities. The ability to readily get and store commodities and efficiently feed them is critical if they are going to be a key component in your drought management strategy.

Wean and sell calves early. This has a two-fold effect, first it reduces the number of grazing units and the total forage needed, and second it reduces the nutritional requirements of the brood cows. A dry cow has an energy and protein requirement that will be 15% and 30% lower than a lactating cow (Table 1). If this a drought management strategy that you are going to employee, make sure and sell calves before markets are flooded and prices drop.

Nutrient requirements of various livestock classes.

Animal Class	Total Digestible Nutrients (%)	Crude Protein (%)
Growing steer, 450 lb, gaining 1.5 lb/day	65	12
Growing steer, 650 lb, gaining 1.7 lb/day	68	10
Beef cow, lactating	60	10
Beef cow, mid-gestation	50	7
Lamb, finishing	70	12
Ewe, lactating	65	13
Ewe, mid-gestation	55	9
Meat goat, lactating	66	15
Meat goat, growing	62	13
Pleasure horse	70	10

Adapted from Southern Forages, Fifth Edition.

Sell cows. This could be a good time to get rid of those older cows that you have been meaning to cull.However, selling your better animals is probably one of the least desirable drought management strategies.If you have invested time and money developing a superior herd, you are probably not eager to sell those animals when prices could be low. In addition, if you sell off a considerable portion of your herd it may take years to build back up to that level. However, if this is the management strategy that you have chosen then you need to sell at the set time. By doing this you may limit losses by beating the flood of animals that typically enter the market as the drought worsens.

Managing Pastures in the Short-term

This article layouts a series of practices that together will improve drought tolerance of grazing systems in the long-term. In the short-term, the best thing that we can do to mitigate the impact of drought is to close the gates and feed hay in a sacrifice area BEFORE pasture become overgrazed. The worst possible scenario is that we simply open all the gates and allow cows to damage our entire grazing platform. So, keep the gates closed and feed hay on your weakest paddock. This will ensure that the remaining paddocks will be protected and ready to grow when rain finally comes! Last thing, it never hurts to ask the Good Lord for a little rain!

Managing Drought at a Glance

✓ Ensure that livestock have access to adequate amounts of clean water.
✓ Set a sustainable stocking rate (2 to 3 acres per cow-calf unit).
✓ Soil test and apply lime and fertilizer as needed.
✓ Implement rotational stocking prior to and during drought.
✓ Incorporate deep-rooted legumes into pastures.
✓ Incorporate warm-season perennials into grazing systems.
✓ Incorporate warm-season annuals into grazing systems.
✓ Feed hay in a sacrifice area BEFORE pastures become overgrazed.
✓ Feed commodities to extend pasture and hay.
✓ Sell calves and in some cases cows before markets are flooded.

Poison Hemlock - What the Home Gardener Needs to Know

Source: Sharon Flynt, UK Extension Horticulture Agent

County extension offices around the state have fielded many phone calls this spring and summer from homeowners and gardeners concerned about poison hemlock. The concern seems to be justified but only if the poison hemlock is ingested by humans or livestock.

Poison hemlock is one of the most toxic plants in the world. It is well known throughout history for accidental deaths of humans and animals. One of the most well-known poison hemlock deaths took place in 329 B.C. when Greek philosopher Socrates ingested the deadly plant.

Poison hemlock has been getting closer to populated areas recently and Kentucky isn't immune. Poison hemlock is a biennial flowering plant, meaning it takes two years to complete its biological lifecycle.

The first year the plant grows leaves, stems and roots. Low rosettes of parsley or fern-like shiny green, triangular leaves with a very pungent odor is noticeable. It will grow no taller than 2 to 3 feet the first year.

The second year of the plant's biennial season, plant growth completes with the formation of longer stems, flowers, fruit and seeds. It's easy to confuse poison hemlock with Queen Ann's Lace, which is in the carrot family and is not poisonous. In year two, the plant can grow from 2 to 10 feet tall, and the stems have purple splotches. The purple spots are what distinguishes it from other plants. Each plant can produce up to 40,000 seeds.

Poison hemlock is usually found in unmaintained disturbed sites along fence rows, field edges, ditches, roadsides and low-lying areas with moist soil and shade. Disturbances, such as construction, utility work, or people working the land where poison hemlock is present, help to germinate the abundant seeds. Keeping the plant from going to seed is the best way to prevent spread. You can use preemergent and post herbicides to prevent or kill poison hemlock, but timing is key when applying.

Weather Notes

July 2023

Heat Safety

By Tony Edwards - National Weather Service Charleston, WV

While it's been a relatively cool start to summer across the Bluegrass State, heat and humidity more typical of summer are bound to arrive sooner rather than later. Heat is one of the leading weather-related killers in the U.S., resulting in hundreds of fatalities each year. During extremely hot and humid weather, your body's ability to cool itself is challenged. A body heating too rapidly, or losing too much fluid or salt through dehydration or sweating, can result in death or permanent injury. While everyone can be vulnerable to heat, some are more vulnerable than others. Infants, children, the elderly, chronically ill, and pregnant women are especially vulnerable.

During excessive heat, avoid heavy activity and direct sunlight. Stay hydrated, find a cool indoor place, and check on children, the elderly, and pets. Protect yourself outside by wearing light, loose-fitting clothes, stay hydrated, and spend time in the shade. Also, never leave anyone (or pets) alone in a locked car, even in the winter, as death can occur in as little as 10 minutes.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides a list of warning signs and symptoms of heat illness, and recommended first aid steps.

Heat Cramps

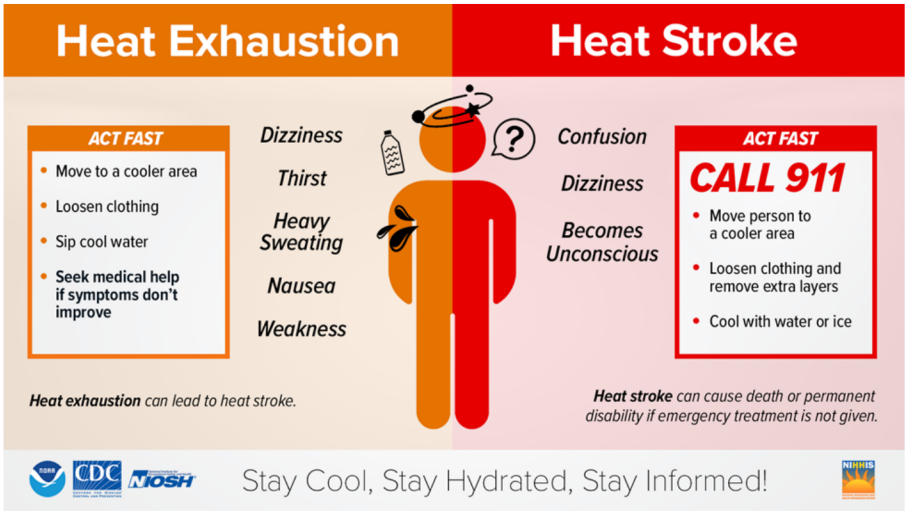
Heat cramps may be the first sign of heat-related illness, and may lead to heat exhaustion or stroke. Symptoms include painful muscle cramps and spasms, usually in legs and abdomen, and heavy sweating. First aid for someone experiencing heat cramps includes applying firm pressure on cramping muscles or gently massage to relieve the spasms. Give sips of water unless the person complains of nausea. Seek immediate medical attention if cramps last longer than 1 hour.

Heat Exhaustion

Symptoms include heavy sweating; weakness or tiredness; cool, pale, clammy skin; fast, weak pulse; muscle cramps; dizziness; nausea or vomiting; headache; and fainting. If you suspect someone is suffering from heat exhaustion, move the person to a cooler location, preferably an air conditioned room. Loosen clothing. Apply cool, wet cloths or have the person sit in a cool bath. Offer sips of water. Seek immediate medical attention if the person vomits, symptoms worsen, or last longer than 1 hour.

Heat Stroke

Symptoms include a throbbing headache; confusion; nausea; dizziness; body temperature above 103°F; hot, red, dry or damp skin; rapid and strong pulse; fainting; and loss of consciousness. **Call 911 or get the victim to a hospital immediately as heat stroke is a severe medical emergency**. Move the victim to a cooler, preferably air-conditioned, environment. Reduce body temperature with cool cloths or a cool bath. Use a fan if heat index temperatures are below the high 90s. A fan can make you hotter at higher temperatures. Do NOT give fluids.



State Cost Share Program for 2023-2024

Applications are currently being accepted until November 15, 2023. Ranking of applications will be performed once each year on the state level by the Kentucky Soil and Water Conservation Commission at the Kentucky Division of Conservation in Frankfort. Approval of applications is based on a statewide ranking criterion and the availability of funds. Cost share rates are a maximum of 75 percent of the actual installation cost of the practice not to exceed $20,000 per year.

Practices eligible for cost share are agriculture and animal waste control facilities; animal waste utilization; vegetative filter strips; integrated crop management; pesticide containment; sinkhole protection; pasture and hay land forage quality; heavy use area protection; rotational grazing system establishment; water well protection; forest land and cropland erosion control systems; closure of agriculture waste impoundment; on-farm fallen animal composting; soil health management; precision nutrient management; strip intercropping system; livestock stream crossing and riparian area protection. Once approved, applicants will have 12 months to complete their new practice.

For more information stop by the Graves County Conservation District at:
USDA- Department of Agriculture Service Center
1000 Commonwealth Drive
Mayfield, KY 42066.
Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Phone: 270-247-9529 ext: 8118

Would you like to participate in any upcoming field studies/surveys? Use the link below or scan the QR code to fill out the information so we can add you to our database!

https://uky.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1ImbHa1KVEaLYc6

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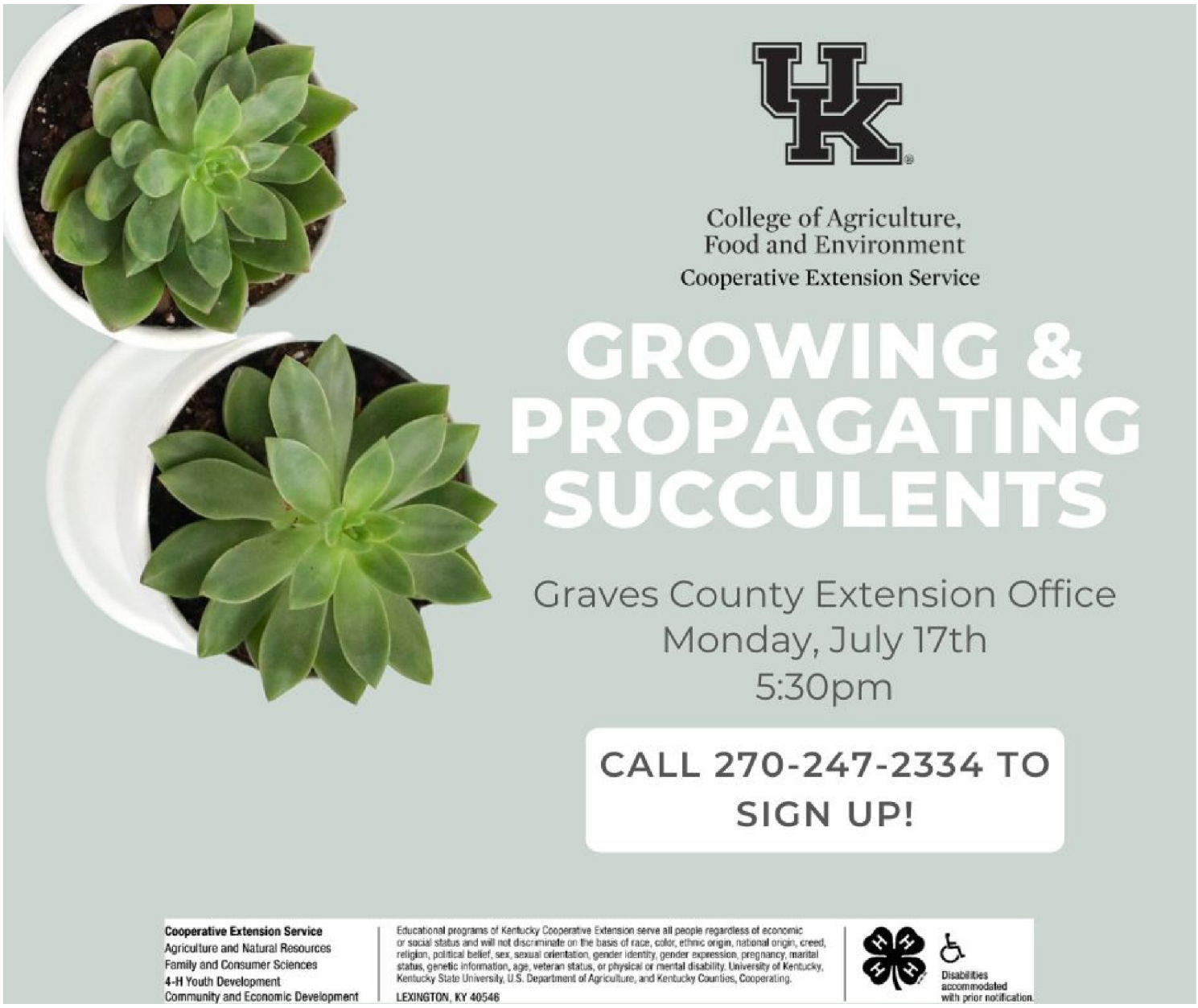
Join our next class!



Confetti Chicken Quesadillas

1 small green bell pepper, seeded and diced
1 small red bell pepper, seeded and diced
1 tablespoon hot pepper, minced (optional)
1 pound skinless, boneless chicken breast, diced
10 (10 inch) whole-wheat tortillas
1 (1 ounce) packet fajita seasoning mix
1 (8 ounce) package reduced fat cheddar cheese, shredded
1 tablespoon olive oil

Preheat the broiler and prepare baking sheet with non-stick spray. **Toss** the 3 tablespoons cheddar cheese. **Fold** over diced chicken with the fajita seasoning and flip tortilla to crisp other side. Repeat and place on the baking sheet. **Spread** until all quesadillas have been prepared. chopped peppers on baking sheet. **Cut** each quesadilla into wedges and **Place** under the broiler and broil until serve with salsa, if desired. the chicken pieces are thoroughly cooked and no longer pink in the center, **Yield:** 10 servings about 10 minutes. **Brush** skillet with oil **Nutritional Analysis:** 270 calories, 10 g and heat to medium. **Place** one tortilla fat, 3 g saturated fat, 40 mg cholesterol, in skillet. **Layer** half of tortilla with 880 mg sodium, 2 g sugar, 23 g approximately one-third cup chicken carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 19 g protein

Buying Kentucky Proud is easy. Look for the label at your grocery store, farmers' market, or roadside stand.

Watermelon Tomato Salad

5 cups seeded watermelon cubes (¾ inch)
3 cups of cubed tomatoes (¾ inch)
¼ teaspoon salt
1 small red onion, quartered and thinly sliced
¼ cup red wine vinegar
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 teaspoon black pepper
6 lettuce leaves

Directions: Combine watermelon and tomatoes in a large bowl. **Sprinkle** with salt; toss to coat. Let stand 15 minutes.

Stir in onion, vinegar, and oil. **Cover** and chill 2 hours.

Serve chilled on lettuce leaves, if desired.

Sprinkle with cracked black pepper to taste.

Yield: Makes 6, 1½ cup servings

Nutritional Analysis: *100 calories, 5 g fat, 2 g protein, 18 g carbohydrate, 0 mg cholesterol, 105 mg sodium.*

Buying Kentucky Proud is easy. Look for the label at your grocery store, farmers' market, or roadside stand.