

Mercer County
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Harrodsburg, KY 40330-9203

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Cooperative Extension Service

Mercer County
1007 Lexington Road
Harrodsburg, KY 40330
859-734-4378 / Fax: 859-734-4379
<http://mercer.ca.uky.edu>

Mercer County Extension Horticulture Newsletter

From The Ground Up

October, 2025

Where did September go?! This month has flown by and brought some much-needed rain. The end of October is the perfect time to start thinking about adding a new tree to your landscape. It's also a great opportunity to take note of trees with striking fall color and consider adding one to your own yard.

Happy Gardening!

Jessica Bessin

Jessica Bessin,
Mercer County Extension Agent for Horticulture



Kissing Bugs In Kentucky

Have no fear your local entomologist is here to put your mind at ease when it comes to all of the kissing bug stories in the news. Kissing bugs have been a hot topic lately, due to their ability to spread Chagas disease. However, our local kissing bug, the Eastern Bloodsucking Conenose (such a friendly name) operates differently than its cousin that spreads Chagas.

Kissing bugs that do spread Chagas will bite near the face (thus the name) then immediately defecate after feeding. Fecal matter is then accidentally wiped into the wound transferring the pathogen. Our kissing bug can carry the Chagas pathogen, but being a much more polite insect does not defecate directly after feeding. This greatly reduces their ability to vector the disease. There are many look -a-likes out there, if you think you have found a kissing bug we are happy to ID it for you. However, the University of Kentucky Entomology Department is not offering testing for Chagas if samples are submitted to campus.

Kissing Bugs & Chagas in Kentucky?

Fast Facts

- KY has a local "kissing bug" called the **eastern bloodsucking conenose** (pictured above)
- This insect is **not good** at transmitting the parasites that cause Chagas disease
- There is **low risk** for contracting Chagas in KY
- For more tips and tricks <https://entomology.ca.uky.edu/ef655>

Look alikes

Wheel bugs


Western conifer seed bugs

Brown marmorated stink bugs

Pointy "wheel" on their thorax

Flattened legs like an oar or paddle

Lighter brown color than conenoses




Grilled Sweet Potatoes

6 medium sweet potatoes	Dressing: 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh basil	½ teaspoon lemon zest
3 tablespoons olive oil	1 tablespoon lemon juice	1 tablespoon olive oil
		¼ teaspoon salt

Prepare grill for hot, direct heat. **Peel** sweet potatoes and **cut** lengthwise or on a diagonal into ½-inch slices. **Coat** each slice with olive oil. **Lay** sweet potato slices on hot grill. **Cook** about 5 minutes on each side until slices are tender and crisp, being careful not to char. **Baste** sweet potato slices with dressing and **serve** hot.

Yield: 6 servings.

Nutritional Analysis: 200 calories, 9 g fat, 1.5 g saturated fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 170 mg sodium, 26 g carbohydrate, 4 g fiber, 5 g sugars, 2 g protein.



Fall Spiced Pumpkin Bread

½ cup all-purpose flour	2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice	½ cup honey
1¼ cup whole-wheat flour	½ teaspoon salt	2 cups pumpkin puree
1½ teaspoons baking powder	½ cup melted margarine	½ cup olive oil
1 teaspoon baking soda	½ cup sugar	2 eggs
		½ cup chopped walnuts

Heat oven to 350 degrees F. **Mix** flours, baking powder, baking soda, pumpkin spice and salt; set aside. In a large mixing bowl, **whisk** together margarine, sugar, honey, pumpkin puree and olive oil. **Blend** in eggs. **Add** flour mixture. **Stir** until dry ingredients are moistened. **Spray** a 8-by-4 inch loaf pan with non-stick cooking spray. **Pour** batter into pan; **sprinkle** walnuts on top of batter. **Bake** for 1 hour. **Remove** from oven and **cover** with foil. **Return** to oven and **bake** an additional 20 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. **Cool** for 10 minutes and **remove** from pan.

Yield: 16 slices

Nutritional Analysis: 220 calories, 13 g fat, 2 g saturated fat, 30 mg cholesterol, 270 mg sodium, 26 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 14 g sugars, 4 g protein.

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

Mercer 4-H

Holiday One Stop Shop

The Stable at Mercer County Fairgrounds
560 Linden Ave
Harrodsburg, KY

NOV 8 9AM- 3PM

VENDORS SCAN FOR APPLICATION **\$6 LUNCH AVAILABLE**

VENDORS WANTED FOR MORE INFORMATION
CALL 859-734-4378 OR EMAIL BETHMADDOX@UKY.EDU

Join Us and get ahead on Holiday Shopping

bit.ly/onestopshop25

KADF KENTUCKY AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

MERCER COUNTY 4-H YOUTH AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENT PROGRAM (YAIP)

- Money for on-farm investments available
- Applicants must be 9 years old & enrolled in elementary, middle or high school (includes home-schooled)
- Investment areas eligible:
 - Ag Diversification
 - Animal Production
 - Forage & Grain Improvement
 - Showmanship
 - Supervised Agriculture Experience (SAE)
 - Country Ham Projects
- Cost-share on a 50/50 basis
- Eligible up to \$1,500. per program year
- Youth must complete educational components

APPLICATION PERIOD WILL BE OCTOBER 1-31, 2025

APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE FROM:
Mercer County Extension Service
1007 Lexington Road, Harrodsburg, KY 40330
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Call 859-734-4378
Dana Anderson dana.anderson@uky.edu
Linda McClanahan linda.mcclanahan@uky.edu

Fort Harrod BeeKeeping Club

October 27 6:30pm

Join us this month as we host Jake “Beeman” Barker as our speaker. Jake is a Cornell and EAS Master Beekeeper.

Mercer County Extension Office
1007 Lexington Road
Harrodsburg, KY 40330
859-734-4378

FORT HARROD GARDEN CLUB

November 10 10:00 am

The Fort Harrod Garden Club meets the second Monday of each month at the Mercer County Extension Office at 10:00 am. All are welcome.

This month we will share information on adding sedum to your landscape.

SHRED

The Shred Truck

Friday, November 14 1:00-4:00pm

In observance of America Recycles Day, Mercer County Extension Office will have “The Shred Truck” available for free to you!

Bring your old documents & sensitive papers to be recycled! Paper only. No electronics, paint, etc. Staples do not have to be removed but please take off any paper clips.

1007 Lexington Road Harrodsburg, KY 40330

Tree Care

- How Not To Kill Your Tree -

November 6th 10:00 AM


Join us as we discuss the do’s and don’ts of tree care.

Two lucky participants will go home with their own tree to plant in their yard.

RSVP to 859-734-4378

Mercer County Extension Office
1007 Lexington Road—Harrodsburg, KY 40330

Horticulture Class Reminders



Starting this spring, you have the option to receive a text message reminder about upcoming horticulture classes. Use the QR or the link below to sign up for our remind system. After calling the Extension Office to RSVP for one of our horticulture classes, you will receive a text message reminding you the class is happening, if you need to bring any additional supplies, or if we must cancel due to inclement weather. Stay in the loop with everything that is happening with the horticulture program! www.remind.com/join/mcehp



Heath Aster

This fall I’ve talked with several people about a plant with little white flowers that are covered in honey bees and other native bees. When coming home from work one evening I discovered this plant was scattered all over one of our pastures. After I did a little investigating, I discovered it was an aster, commonly called Heath Aster or White Aster.

In a pasture and lawn setting, these asters are considered weeds. However, when I approached these plants on a warm fall day all I could hear was buzzing. Covering this plant’s tiny white flowers were many different insects happily working the flowers. These asters provide an important source of nectar for honey bees, bumble bees, flies, solitary bees, butterflies and more in the fall.

Heath Asters are perennials and native to America. They can be found growing in dry rocky areas. Once they are established they are very drought and deer tolerant. My theory as to why we have seen so many is due to our dry summer and fall. They can grow to 1-3ft tall and 1-2ft wide. These plants can make a great addition to any pollinator garden, for a fall nectar supply. If they are more of a weed issue in your landscape, we also have a few different control options to eradicate them as well.



Mark Those Calendars!!

Harrodsburg Tree Board Meeting– October 20th, Mercer County Extension Office 5:00 PM

Mercer County Farmers Market-Final Market Day October 25th, The Stable

Be on the lookout as the market will be hosting a holiday pop up market on November 19th and a small biz Saturday market on November 29th. Follow their Facebook page for all the latest updates about these events!

Fort Harrod Beekeeping Club-October 27th, Mercer County Extension Office 6:30 PM

This month the bee club will be joined by Jake Beeman Barker! Make sure to check out the Fort Harrod Beekeeping Facebook page for all the latest updates and announcements!

County Extension Council Meeting-October 28th, Mercer County Extension Office 6:00 PM

Tree Care-November 6th, Mercer County Extension Office 10:00 AM

See flyer for more details.

Holiday One Stop Shop-November 8th, The Stable (Fairgrounds) 9:00 AM-3:00 PM

See flyer for more details.

Fort Harrod Garden Club– November 10th, Mercer County Extension Office 10:00 AM

This month we are learning all about Sedum.

America Recycles Day (Shred Truck)-November 14th , Mercer County Extension Office 1:00-4:00 PM

Kickstart the Canopy-November 15th, Anderson Dean Park 10:00 AM-12:00 PM

See insert for more details.



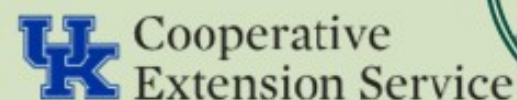
Fort Harrod
BeeKeeping Club



KICKSTART THE CANOPY

**TREE PLANTING EVENT
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**

Anderson Dean Community Park
Soccer Complex
November 15th @ 10AM



KICKSTART THE CANOPY



COMMUNITY TREE PLANTING DAY

HELP US GROW SHADE, BEAUTY, AND COMMUNITY!

Join us for a growing day around the soccer fields for a greener, cooler park for all!



DATE: [Insert Date – Spring or Fall]



TIME: [Insert Time, e.g. 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM]



LOCATION: Soccer Fields– Anderson Dean Community Park, 1501 Louisville Rd, Harrodsburg, KY



WHAT TO EXPECT:

- Tree planting around field aidelines
- Fun stations for kids and families
- Light snacks and refreshments
- Learn about the benefits of urban trees
- Community volunteer hours available

WHO CAN JOIN?

| Families, youth teams, schools, service groups & park supporters

WHAT TO BRING

| Gloves (some provided)

LET'S GROW SOMETHING LASTING – TOGETHER.

RSVP or learn more at:



[Your Email] | Website or Social Media Page