

Pay Dirt

HORTICULTURE
September 2025



Cooperative Extension Service
Madison County
230 Duncannon Lane
Richmond, KY 40475
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Hello Horticulturalists!

The days are getting shorter, but there is still gardening left to be done! Check this newsletter for some neat opportunities coming up!

Sincerely,

Amanda Sears
Amanda Sears

County Extension Agent for Horticulture
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Visit <https://madison.ca.uky.edu/> and click on
"Program Areas" and then "Horticulture"

What's Going On With the Tulip Poplars?

As you drive around the county, you may notice the leaves on tulip poplars turning yellow and dropping. The tree at our office and my neighbor's are showing these symptoms. When I checked them, it does not appear to be a disease or insect problem!

After talking to a forester, I think it's just hot dry weather hitting them! Tulip poplars have this response to hot dry conditions (leaves turn yellow and drop) then will put out more when they get rain. The tree is behaving normally! Since it is so late in the season, the tree will not put on new leaves this year but should be fine in spring.



Looking for Local Food and Products?

Check out the farmer's markets! We are fortunate enough to have two markets here in Madison County.

Berea Farmers' Market

The market is open from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm on Saturdays at the Chestnut Street Pavilion at 635 Chestnut Street in Berea. \$10 Sprout Vouchers are available to those under 18 through October. Follow their Facebook page for distribution dates & other updates. <https://www.facebook.com/bereafarmersmarket>; website: <https://www.bereafarmersmarket.org/>

Madison County Farmers' Market

Market open:

- Saturdays at White Oak Pond Church from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm
- Tuesdays from 5:00 to 8:00 pm at Tasty Tuesdays at Irvine McDowell Park in Richmond
- Until September 18th, Thursdays on ECU's campus at the A.B Carter Building across from the stadium 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.

The market offers a kid's event the second Saturday of each month, a basket giveaway the last Saturday of the month and there will be music on Saturday, September 27th at the Market. For more info, check out their website at mc-fm.org. You can also find them on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/>

Cooperative Extension Service

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Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.



MAKING MAPLE SYRUP IN KENTUCKY

Tuesday, October 21, 2025 6:30-8:30 PM

Madison County Cooperative Extension Service
230 Duncannon Lane, Richmond, KY 40475

Join us for an introduction to making maple syrup in Kentucky. We will cover tree identification, tapping, processing, equipment and marketing, and utilization of maple syrup. Snacks will be provided.

Call 859-623-4072 to register



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GARDEN PALOOZA



Saturday, October 18th, 2025
9:30AM -12:00 PM

Item drop off: 9:30am - 10:30am

Swap begins at 10:30am

Madison County Cooperative Extension Service
230 Duncannon Lane, Richmond, KY 40475

**Join us for a
garden item
swap!**

Bring any of the following to the swap: plants, gardening books (or magazines), tools, seeds or any other garden item. Please do not bring chemicals, invasive or weedy plants, non-horticulture books.

In addition to the swap, there will be information about **growing fruit, vegetable gardening, local foods, composting and more!** We will also **be accepting soil samples that day.** We need two cups of soil to run a test. For more information, on soil testing, go to <https://madison.ca.uky.edu/horticulture>

Everyone is welcome to attend this FREE event, even if you do not bring items to swap! Participants can sign up to win a rotary composter.

If you plan to attend, have any questions or need more information, call 859-623-4072 or email amanda.sears@uky.edu.

Items cannot be dropped off prior to the event



SAVE THE DATE FOR FARM CITY BANQUET



**Come join us in celebrating agriculture
in Madison County!**

Monday, November 10, 2025 at 6:00 PM

Madison County Cooperative Extension Office

Tickets will go on sale Thursday, October 2, 2025

More information to be announced soon.



What is a Spotted Lanternfly?

You may have heard of Spotted Lanternfly. Abbreviated SLF this insect is an invasive treehopper that arrived from Asia to an area around Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 2012. Since then, it has spread to neighboring states. SLF is not a great flyer but an excellent hitchhiker. It is found on another invasive, a tree from Asia called Tree of Heaven, which reseeds itself and can be found in disturbed areas, such as along railroad tracks. Infestation spread seems to follow rail lines and highways. They also lay their eggs on any hard surface, including vehicles, firewood, landscape furniture. It is important to check your personal belongings for spotted lantern fly egg masses before leaving areas known to be infested by the spotted lantern fly to prevent the spread of this insect to new locations.



Adult lanternflies

The spotted lanternfly has been reported to feed on over a hundred species of plants, including grapes, maples, apples, pears, and the invasive plant tree of heaven. This insect has become a major agricultural, forestry, and residential pest in its introduced range and could potentially cause billions of dollars in economic losses.

Spotted lanternfly eggs hatch in early summer and nymphs feed until reaching maturity in late summer or early fall. Adults begin mating and laying eggs in the early fall and die off in the winter. These insects overwinter as eggs and emerge in the early summer, restarting the cycle.

Spotted lanternfly lookalikes

While SLF is unique looking, there are some insects that resemble it!

Some moth species have similar looking under-wings. They will be fuzzy and lack the other designs SLF has.

Ornate bella moth

White lined sphinx moth

Pink underwing moth

Ailanthus webworm moth

Other insects may have spots or stripes but not quite the same mixture as the SLF.

Leopard moth

Harlequin bug

Boxelder bug

Large milkweed bug

Kentuckians should be on the lookout for this pest. Report suspicious looking bugs and egg cases to the Office of the State Entomologist at reportapest@uky.edu. When making a report, please include an image or a sample of the suspect, otherwise it will be difficult to confirm the problem. It is also important to include geographic information. It is true that this is a difficult pest to eliminate, but with the help of citizens monitoring for populations, there is hope that their spread can be slowed to allow communities more time to prepare.



Lanternfly egg masses

Perennials Looking Puny? May Be Time to Divide Them

If your perennials didn't look great this past spring, it may be time to dig and divide them. Perennials need space and once they become crowded, blooms can become smaller and infrequent. Dividing the plants to create more room usually restores their vigor.

Another sign perennials need to be divided is the center of the clump will start to look thin or bare.



Dividing perennial plants can rejuvenate them.

remaining "new" plants created from your with gardening friends and relatives. Or come share your extras at the Garden Palooza next month!

Not sure if now is the right time to divide? As a rule of thumb, if the plant blooms in the spring, divide it after it blooms or in the fall. If the plant blooms in the summer or fall, divide it in the spring.

Perennials grow from underground structures such as fleshy roots, rhizomes or bulbs. This is the part of the plant that needs to be divided. Dig up the plant, remove old leaves and shake off loose dirt to expose the underground parts. Gently pull or cut the plant apart into several sections making sure each section has some recent growth at the top. Use one section to replace the original plant and set it in so that the crown is just at soil level. You can use the divisions to expand your landscaping or share

What is Growing on My Corn?

That weird growth is called corn smut. Smut is common in most places where corn is grown but does not usually cause significant losses.

Galls (abnormal growths) can appear anytime throughout the growing season on any above ground plant part. Young, actively growing tissue is especially susceptible. Galls commonly develop on ears, leaves, stalk, or tassels and are initially covered with white to silvery tissue. Later, dark masses of spores develop inside the galls. Leaf galls generally remain small.

Common smut is often most severe when young tissue is wounded by hail, wind, or mechanical damage. Rainy, wet weather may enhance this disease, as may poor pollination and excessive nitrogen fertilization. Dry or other conditions that interfere with pollination may also favor common smut infection of ears.

The pathogen is a fungus called *Ustilago maydis*. It overwinters in crop debris or soil and can remain viable for several years.

Though strange to look out, this fungal disease is considered a culinary delicacy by Native Americans. It is said to have a smoky, sweet, earthy flavor and a texture like a cross between mushrooms and fresh corn.



Corn Smut, a fungal infection.