

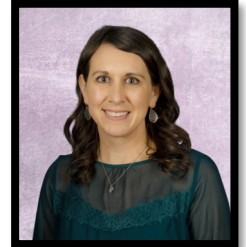


Our seed display will be available at the Extension Office April 1st, and that is no April fools joke! Many of you have been asking about the seeds and they are finally here! This months newsletter is full of horticulture myths, that I hope you will enjoy reading. We have a lot of great classes coming up this month as a part of our Homesteading Series. Don't forget to call the Extension Office at 859-734-4378 to RSVP!

Happy Gardening!

*Jessica Bessin*

Jessica Bessin,  
Mercer County Extension Agent for Horticulture



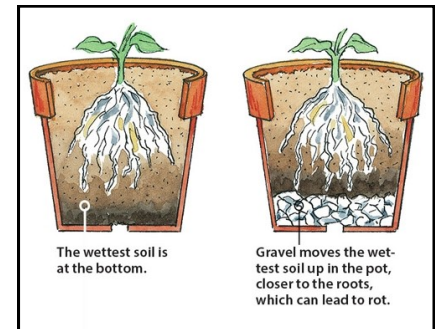
### Rocks in Pots?


Do you put gravel in the bottom of your flower pots? Over the last month, as I have met with fellow gardeners about upcoming planting projects, it has been mentioned we need to purchase gravel to place in the bottom of our planters. It is thought that it will help with drainage, this is the first myth of the two horticulture myth articles in this newsletter.

Once a recommended practice, research has shown adding gravel to a flower pot will actually reduce drainage and cause a perched water table. Ideally, when watering our plants, the water saturates through the soil and out of the drainage hole. When pots are filled with gravel the water moves through the soil and upon hitting another layer moves sideways, creating a saturated zone. The more coarse the material, the more saturated the area becomes. It doesn't have to be just rocks that can cause this, sand, water bottles, styrofoam, old broken flower pots, anything you are using to fill up the space of the pot. It is ironic to think we are actually causing the issue we wish to avoid by placing these materials in flower pots.

If you are worried about soil coming out the bottom of your pot place a coffee filter or piece of newspaper. It will keep the potting soil in the pot but still allow drainage. If you have a large pot and are not wishing to fill it completely of soil try cutting a piece of plywood that fits inside the pot at the depth you wish to plant. This gives your pot a false bottom, you can also use small plastic flower pots within a larger pot. Just make sure your new false bottoms also have drainage holes.

Finally if you are worried about wind, consider placing bricks or stones in the bottom of the pot before your false bottom goes into the pot. (Picture source from Texas Extension)





### Asparagus Ham Quiche

**1 pound** fresh asparagus, trimmed and cut into ½ inch pieces  
**1 cup,** finely chopped ham  
**1 small** finely chopped onion  
**2 (8 inch)** unbaked pie shells


**1 egg** white, slightly beaten  
**2 cups** shredded reduced fat cheddar cheese  
**4 large** eggs  
**1 container** (5.3 ounces) plain Greek yogurt


**½ cup** 1% milk  
**¼ teaspoon** ground nutmeg  
**¼ teaspoon** salt  
**¼ teaspoon** pepper

**Preheat** oven to 400 F. **Place** asparagus in a steamer over 1 inch of boiling water and **cover.** **Cook** until tender but still firm, about 4-6 minutes. **Drain** and **cool.** **Place** ham and onion in a nonstick skillet and **cook** over medium heat until lightly browned. **Brush** pie shells with beaten egg white. **Spoon** the ham, onion and asparagus into pie shells, dividing evenly between the 2 shells. **Sprinkle** 1 cup shredded cheese over the mixture in each shell. In a separate bowl, **beat** together

eggs, yogurt, milk, nutmeg, salt and pepper. **Pour** egg mixture over the top of the cheese, dividing evenly between the 2 shells. **Bake** uncovered in a preheated oven until firm 25-30 minutes. Allow to cool approximately 20 minutes before cutting.

**Yield:** 16 slices  
**Nutritional Analysis:** 200 calories, 11 g fat, 4.5 g saturated fat, 65 mg cholesterol, 370 mg sodium, 14 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 3 g sugars, 10 g protein.

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



### Strawberry Salsa


**1 tablespoon** olive oil  
**2 tablespoons** white vinegar or white balsamic vinegar  
**½ teaspoon** salt

**2 cups,** coarsely chopped fresh strawberries  
**8 green** onions, chopped

**2 cups** chopped cherry or grape tomatoes  
**½ cup** chopped fresh cilantro

**Yield:** 7, ½ cup servings.  
**Nutrition Analysis:** 40 calories; 2 g fat; 0 g saturated fat; 0 mg cholesterol; 170 mg sodium; 6 g carbohydrate; 1 g fiber; 4 g sugar; 1 g protein; 60% of vitamin C.  
**Source:** www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov

- Whisk** olive oil, vinegar, and salt in large bowl.
- Add** strawberries, green onions, tomatoes, and cilantro. Toss to coat.
- Cover** and chill for 1 hour.
- Serve** with tortilla or pita chips.

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### NOTICE

#### Public Notification of Procedure for Filing a Complaint:

The Cooperative Extension Service prohibits discrimination in its programs and employment on the basis of race, color, age, religion, gender, disability, or national origin.

To initiate a complaint at the college level, contact Tim West in the Business Office at 859-257-3879. At the University level, Terry Allen and Patty Bender in the [UK Office of Institutional Equity and Equal Opportunity](#) (859-257-8927) may be contacted. Additionally, employee or clientele complaints involving any research or extension sponsored program or activity may be directed to the USDA, Director Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W Whitten Bldg., 14th & Independence Ave. SW, Washington DC 20250-9410 (202-720-5964).

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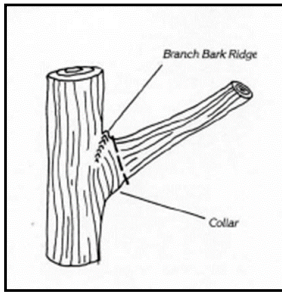
## To Paint or Not To Paint?

It's spring and everyone is excited to get out in their yard and do a little spring cleaning. It could be something as simple as mowing your lawn, pulling weeds or maybe you are doing a little pruning. When pruning trees you might feel the need to dress the wound. Dressing tree wounds was another recommendation research has proven to have adverse effects on trees.

Tree wound dressing is a petroleum based product used to cover freshly cut wood to inhibit decay or insect infestation. The dressing seals in moisture and decay, serves as a food source for pathogens, prevents wound wood from forming, inhibits compartmentalization, and eventually will crack exposing the tree to pathogens. What it does not do is prevent the entrance of pathogens or prevent rot.

Trees isolate their damage through a process called compartmentalization. When a tree is wounded they create a protection zone to prevent more damage and create wound wood. Wound wood is callus tissue that forms to close the wound from the outside. It often looks like a donut as it forms.

How can you make sure a tree heals properly? Its simple, proper pruning cuts. Avoid cutting into the branch collar, basically avoid making a flush cut up against the tree trunk (see image above). Some trees are better at wound response than others. Pruning at the right time of year (most when they are dormant) and not during periods of stress (drought or as they are going dormant) and most healthy trees will seal wounds effectively without any additional help.



Avoid cutting into the branch collar



This is what a tree looks like healing from a proper pruning cut.



Fort Harrod  
Beekeeping Club

April 29 at 6:30pm

This month's meeting is being hosted at one of Dan Stoltzfus' apiaries. Bring your bee suit as we will be opening hives. Please meet in the Extension Office parking lot at 6:30.



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



FREE SEEDS

Beginning in April, we will have complimentary seeds courtesy of the Mercer County Cooperative Extension Horticulture Program.  
**Please, no more than 3 seed packets per person.**

## Mark Those Calendars!!

How to Grow Strawberries-April 8th, Mercer County Extension Office 5:30 PM

See insert for more details.

Poultry 101-April 9th, Mercer County Extension Office 6:00 PM

How to Plant to Conserve Energy-April 11th, Mercer County Public Library 12:00 PM

Keeping Bees 2.0 (Planting for Pollinators)-April 11th, Boyle County Extension Office 5:00 PM

Attend all four classes in this series and get a free honeybee friendly plant! Please RSVP with the Boyle County Extension Office by calling 859-236-4484.

Fort Harrod Garden Group— April 24th, Mercer County Extension Office

This month the garden group will take a field trip to Wilson's nursery. You must have attended two garden group meetings in order to attend the field trip. Please RSVP with the Mercer County Extension Office at 859-734-4378 by April 19th.

All About Eggs-April 30th, Mercer County Extension Office 10:00 AM

Fort Harrod Beekeeping Club-April 29th, Mercer County Extension Office 6:30 PM

This month the club will be visiting one of our local beekeepers apiaries, see insert for more details. Make sure to check out the Fort Harrod Beekeeping Facebook page for all the latest updates and announcements!



Fort Harrod  
Beekeeping Club



Mercer County Public Library Lunch & Learn:

## Energy Efficient Landscaping

April 11 at 12:00pm

Join us as we discuss how adding plants to your landscape can make your home more energy efficient.



MERCER COUNTY  
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Mercer County Public Library  
109 W Lexington St—Harrodsburg, KY 40330



## Mercer County Conservation District Backyard Conservation Grant

This program offers a 50/50 reimbursement up to \$200 to assist Mercer County homeowners in establishing, enhancing, restoring and/or maintaining backyard conservation project.

- Applications are available May 13<sup>th</sup> through May 31<sup>st</sup> and **CAN ONLY be picked up at the Conservation Office.**
- Applications are limited and first come first serve

Possible project ideas include: rain barrels, bat houses, compost bins, raised bed gardens, high tunnels, beekeeping supplies, pollinator gardens



Mercer County Conservation District  
227 Morris Drive—Harrodsburg, KY 40330  
859-734-4326 ext. 3





## Growing Strawberries

April 8 at 5:30pm

Strawberries are a fun and easy crop to add to any backyard homestead. Join us as we cover the basics of growing strawberries and how you can make them a staple in your garden.

## Freezer Jam

April 16 at 10:00am

Do you grow your own strawberries? Are you looking for different ways to preserve your home or locally grown strawberries? Join us to learn how to make Strawberry Freezer Jam! All participants will leave with a jar of freshly made Strawberry Freezer Jam.



**RSVP to 859-734-4378**



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Harrodsburg, KY 40330

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University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating.  
Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities  
accommodated  
with prior notification.

## Backyard Poultry Basics

April 9 at 6:00pm

This program will cover the basics of raising backyard poultry from housing to nutrition and more! If you're interested in starting a small flock for meat or eggs, then this class just might be for you!



**RSVP to 859-734-4378**

## All About Eggs

April 30 at 10:00am

Do you find yourself with an abundance of eggs from your backyard chickens? Are you interested in buying eggs in bulk to save money? This class will teach you all about eggs! From the structure and nutrients of an egg to unique ways to cook eggs and safe ways to preserve eggs.



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