

Mercer County Extension Horticulture Newsletter

From The Ground Up

November, 2023

The year has flown by, here we are in November with all of our holiday classes scheduled for the end of the year. Make sure to call and reserve your spot as many will fill up fast! Wishing you and your family a wonderful Thanksgiving! Happy Gardening!

Jessica Bessin,
Mercer County Extension Agent for Horticulture

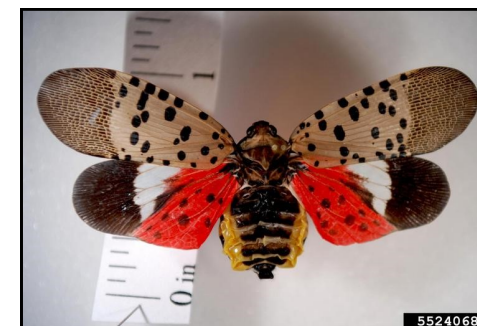


Spotted Lanternfly Officially Arrives In Kentucky

It was only a matter of time before Spotted Lanternfly (SLF) was officially confirmed in KY. SLF is very distinctive in appearance; the adult is about an inch long with strikingly patterned forewings. The upper portion of these wings have black spots and the tips have a latticework of black rectangles. The back wings are contrasting red, black, and white. The immature stages are black with white spots and develop red patches as they age.



Tree of Heaven (another non-native/invasive species) is the primary host for SLF. However, this pest is also known to feed on over 70 other plant species, including important hosts such as grapes, hops, maple, and black walnut, amongst other hardwoods and fruit crops. SLF is a true bug, part of the order Hemiptera, and they feed using piercing sucking mouthparts. As they feed, they excrete honeydew, a sugary fecal material that accumulates on nearby plants and surfaces and can attract black sooty mold issues.



Finally, females will lay their eggs on natural and unnatural surfaces alike. While they use trees, the cryptic egg cases have also been found on cars, trains (which makes Harrodsburg a prime location with our daily trains), lawn furniture, firewood, stones, and many other substrates. This causes issues for quarantine, and a headache for those that live in infested areas trying to move goods out of the quarantine area. As this pest makes its way across the state we can expect some of these quarantines to come into place. The UK Entomology Department has asked the public for assistance in the matter of the invasive species by taking pictures of suspected spotted lanternflies and sending them, along with the county it was spotted in, to reportapest@uky.edu. With help from community members we can track this pest and even try to slow it down.

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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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Sweet Potato Crisp

3 large fresh sweet potatoes, cooked until tender.
8 ounces reduced fat cream cheese, softened
1 cup brown sugar, divided

1 teaspoon vanilla
1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
2 medium apples, chopped

½ cup all-purpose flour
¾ cup quick cooking oats
3 tablespoons butter
¼ cup chopped pecans

- Preheat** oven to 350° F. Lightly spray a 13 x 9 x 2 inch pan with non-stick spray.
- Mash** sweet potatoes. Add cream cheese, ½ cup brown sugar, vanilla and cinnamon. Mix until smooth.
- Spread** sweet potato mixture evenly into pan.
- Top** sweet potatoes with chopped apples.
- In a small bowl, **combine** flour, oats, and ½ cup brown sugar. **Cut** in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbles. **Stir** in pecans.
- Sprinkle** mixture over apples.
- Bake** uncovered for 35-40 minutes or until topping is golden brown and fruit is tender.

Yield: 16, ¾ cup servings

Nutritional Analysis: 240 calories, 6 g fat, 3 g sat fat, 5 mg cholesterol, 200 mg sodium, 44 g carbohydrate, 4 g fiber, 20 g sugar, 4 g protein.

Yummy Sweet Potato Casserole

6 medium sweet potatoes
¼ cup maple syrup
2 tablespoons brown sugar
2 eggs
½ teaspoon salt

¾ cup low-fat vanilla Greek yogurt
¼ teaspoon vanilla extract
1 tablespoon cinnamon

Topping:
½ cup brown sugar
½ cup ground rolled oats
1 tablespoon maple syrup

3 tablespoons melted butter
¼ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon cinnamon
½ cup chopped pecans

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. **Peel** sweet potatoes and **cut** into 1-inch cubes. **Place** sweet potato cubes in a medium saucepan and **cover** with water. **Cook** over medium-high heat until tender. **Drain** and **mash**. In a large bowl, **mix** together mashed potatoes, maple syrup, brown sugar, eggs, salt, yogurt, vanilla and cinnamon. **Blend** until smooth. **Pour** into a 13-by-9 inch baking dish. Topping: In a medium bowl, **mix** the brown sugar and oats.

Add in syrup, melted butter, salt and cinnamon; **blend** until mixture is coarse. **Stir** in pecans. **Sprinkle** over sweet potato mixture. **Bake** 30 minutes, or until topping is lightly browned.

Yield: 12, ½ cup servings



Nutritional Analysis: 190 calories, 7 g fat, 2.5 g saturated fat, 10 mg cholesterol, 190 mg sodium, 31 g carbohydrate, 20 g sugars, 4 g protein.

Heath Aster

This fall I've talked with several people about a plant with little white flowers popping up in their lawns. 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 call 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.





Sweet Potato or Yam?

Pass the sweet potatoes or is it pass the yams? Either way, not to ruin the magic of Thanksgiving but you are probably eating sweet potatoes. True yams are native to Africa and Asia and are tubers. Sweet potatoes are native to Central and South America and are roots.

Yam tubers are rough, scaly and difficult to remove. They are starchier and drier compared to sweet potatoes. Sweet potatoes smooth thin skin and come in two types 'soft' and 'firm'. When cooked, the 'soft' varieties become soft, moist and sweet, and these are often marketed as yams.

So why do we call these sweet potatoes yams? When soft varieties were first grown commercially, there was a need to differentiate between the two. African slaves had already been calling the 'soft' sweet potatoes 'yams' because they resembled the yams in Africa. Thus, 'soft' sweet potatoes were referred to as 'yams' to distinguish them from the 'firm' varieties." Today the USDA requires that when the term 'yam' is used to describe sweet potatoes, it must also be labeled as a 'sweet potato.' If you are in the market for real yams, your best bet is to search your local ethic grocery store. Source: Illinois Horticulture Extension



Extension Expansion Meeting

November 9 6:00pm



Join us to share your input on programs and facility needs! Pizza will be provided. **Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend!**



Mercer County Extension Office
1007 Lexington Road
Harrodsburg, KY 40330

Save The Date

Mercer County Cooperative Extension Open House

December 7 from 4:00—7:00pm

Please join us to learn more about your local extension office and check out the available programs we have to offer.

Family-friendly event,
all ages welcome.

**Mercer County
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College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment
Mercer County

Mark Those Calendars!!

- Fort Harrod Garden Club-November 7th, Boyle County Extension Office 10:00 AM**
- Join us as we share information on making your own hypertufa planter.
- Holiday Plant Care-November 9th Mercer County Library 12:00 PM**
- County Extension Council Meeting-November 9th 5:00 PM**
- Recycle Truck Day-- November 15th, Mercer County Extension Office 1:00-4:00 PM**
- See insert for more information.
- Beginning Beekeeping Series-November 15th , Boyle County Extension Office 6:00 PM**
- Mercer County Farmers Market Holiday Market-- November 18th, The Stable 9:00 AM-1:00 PM**
- Thanksgiving Holiday-November 23rd-24th, Mercer County Extension Office is Closed**
- Fort Harrod Beekeeping Club – November 27th, Mercer County Extension Office 6:30 PM**
- Make sure to check out the Fort Harrod Beekeeping Facebook page for all the latest updates and announcements!
- Mercer County Big Blue Open House-- December 7th, Mercer County Extension Office 4:00 - 7:00 PM**
- Holiday Day of Fun-- December 8th, Mercer County Extension Office**
- See insert for more details.

Fort Harrod
Beekeeping Club



Mercer County Public Library
Lunch & Learn:

Holiday Plants

November 9 at 12:00pm



It's that time of year for Thanksgiving cactus, amaryllis, and poinsettias. These make great gifts during the holidays, but what do you do when they are done flowering? Join us as we cover all the post-flowering care for some of our favorite holiday plants with Mercer County Extension Horticulture Agent, Jessica Bessin.

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


Boyle and Mercer County Extension Offices

Beginner Beekeeping

November 15
6:00pm

Enemies of Bees
with Tammy Horn Potter

Boyle County Extension Office
99 Corporate Drive
Danville, KY 40422
859-236-4484



America Recycles Day

Wednesday, November 15
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



Fort Harrod
Beekeeping Club

Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner

November 27 at 6:30pm

Join us for our annual dinner meeting! Families are invited and the club is providing chicken. Members please bring the sides.



Mercer County Extension Office
1007 Lexington Road
Harrodsburg, KY 40330

Mercer County Extension Office

Day Of Holiday Fun

December 8

10:00 am—Gift Wrapping On A Budget
10:00 am—Sewn Christmas Tree
10:00 am—Homemade Caramels

1:00 pm—Bow Making
1:00 pm—Easy Appetizers
1:00 pm—Holiday Jewelry Making

2:00 pm—Fresh Greens Garland—\$10

6:00 pm—Bourbon Ball Demonstration
6:00 pm—Fresh Greens Mini Wreath—\$10

Spots are VERY limited!
RSVP to 859-734-4378

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