

Did you know that Harrodsburg's official flower is the hollyhock? If you look around, they should be blooming just in time for the Harrodsburg 250th anniversary! Don't forget the downtown Tuesday Farmer's Market opens this month! Happy Gardening!

Jessica Bessin

Jessica Bessin,
Mercer County Extension Agent for Horticulture



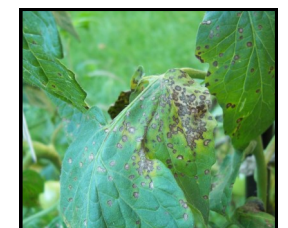
Early Blight and Septoria Leaf Spot, Oh my!

It has been a rainy spring so far, and I have already seen samples of our two most common tomato diseases; Early blight and Septoria leaf spot. Tomatoes produced in greenhouses and high tunnels may also experience this disease. These diseases may occur individually or together. While these diseases rarely result in plant death, the damage caused to leaves and fruit impacts overall yield and produce quality. Now is the time to have a plan for these diseases, to know what they look like and how to manage them so you can enjoy your tomatoes all summer long!



Early Blight

Starting with early blight. Symptoms often first appear on older leaves as small, brown lesions, which over time expand and develop a concentric ring pattern (bulls-eye). Disease spreads upward and lesions develop on newer growth as disease progresses. Lesions may merge together resulting in a rapid dieback of plant tissue. Fruit may also become infected. Affected fruit develop dark, brown to black lesions with concentric ring patterns near the stem attachment point. Now, for septoria leaf spot. Symptoms first appear as small circular lesions with tan-brown centers on older leaves and lower portions of stems. Over time disease progresses up the plant to new growth. As disease spreads, leaves may begin to dieback rapidly. However, individually, lesions can still be observed. During periods of high humidity, small, black reproductive structures may be seen in centers of spots. Septoria leaf spot does not affect fruit. Both of these diseases overwinter on plant debris, spread by water, and warm wet humid conditions.



Septoria Leaf Spot

There are a couple of things you can do help manage these diseases. Purchase disease free plants, manage weeds near planting, rotate crops, increase plant spacing for better air flow, remove and destroy infected plants and plant parts, avoid over-head watering, and remove and destroy all plant debris at the end of the season. The final option is a fungicide spray schedule. If you are interested in a fungicide spray schedule for tomatoes, please contact the Mercer County Extension Office. Source: KY Pest News Kim Leonberger UK Extension Associate for Plant Pathology

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Disabilities accommodated with prior notification

Squash Supreme

4 cups sliced summer squash
1 medium onion, sliced
½ cup diced red bell pepper
1 cup fat free sour cream
1 - 10% ounce can reduced fat cream of chicken soup
1½ cups dry corn bread stuffing mix
¼ cup melted margarine

- Preheat oven to 350° F.
- Steam the summer squash, onion, and red bell pepper until slightly tender.
- Combine sour cream and cream of chicken soup. Add steamed vegetables to soup mixture and toss to coat.
- Combine corn bread stuffing mix and melted margarine.
- Place half the stuffing mixture in the bottom of a greased 2-quart casserole dish.
- Add vegetable mixture; top with remaining stuffing mix.
- Bake for 45 minutes or until mixture bubbles.

Yield: 8, ½ cup servings
Nutrition Analysis: 170 calories; 7 g fat; 1.5 g sat fat; 5 mg cholesterol; 370 mg sodium; 22 g carbohydrate; 3 g fiber; 7 g sugar; 4 g protein.

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

Creamy Avocado Cucumber Salad

1 ½ cups diced cucumber
1 teaspoon dried basil
1 cup diced tomato
1 cup diced sweet onion
1 cup diced avocado
1 cup diced yellow pepper
1 cup chopped fresh parsley
1 cup chopped fresh mint
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
Salt and pepper, to taste

Wash fresh ingredients. Remove cucumber ends and peel if skin is tough or bitter. Slice lengthwise, remove large seeds, if needed, and finely dice. Place diced cucumber in a colander over a bowl, sprinkle evenly with basil, stir and let stand 15 minutes. Finely dice and chop tomato, onion, avocado, yellow pepper, parsley, and mint. Place in a large bowl and add cucumber.

Drizzle with olive oil, balsamic vinegar, and lemon juice. Toss, add salt and pepper to taste, and serve.

Yield: 8, 1-cup servings
Nutritional Analysis: 70 calories, 3.5 g fat, 0.5 g saturated fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 10 mg sodium, 9 g carbohydrates, 3 g fiber, 2 g protein, 3 g sugars, 0 g added sugars.

Slugs

It has been rainy the last few weeks and I have never seen so many slugs. They are destroying my marigolds of all things! I often get questions about slugs since they are small critters and grouped in with insects. Slugs are in the phylum Mollusca. this means they are related to snails, squid, octopus, clams, and oysters. They usually lay their eggs in holes or underneath debris. The number of eggs per batch and the number of batches vary between individuals. Some can lay up to 500 eggs a year! Slugs are hermaphroditic, meaning each slug contains both male and female sexual organs. When environmental conditions are harsh, a slug can fertilize its own eggs and therefore does not need to mate to produce young. The life span of a slug is one to six years, depending on the species.



Black Field Slug

Slugs prefer cool, dark, moist habitats. In woodland areas, they can be found under bark, logs, and other woody debris. In urban and residential areas, they are usually found under objects such as pots and garden ornaments or in garden mulch. Slugs are most active just after sunset and in the early morning hours before dawn. Besides keeping the slug moist, slug mucus also has several other functions. It aides in movement by protecting the slug from damage as it travels and it plays a role in courtship and mating. Slugs also use their mucus in defense. Most species of slugs secrete mucus to make it difficult for a predator to hold onto them or to make them taste bad. If the temperature becomes too hot or dry, slugs will retreat deep into the soil and return to the surface when conditions improve.

Slugs have very diverse dietary habits. Invasive slugs can be very destructive, feeding on flowering and leafy garden plants, as well as crops such as wheat and corn. These animals usually feed at ground level or just below the surface of the soil. Native slugs feed on fungi, lichen, carrion, and plant materials in wooded areas. They are very important for nutrient cycling.


So what do you do about them? We have a few tactics available, everyone's least favorite is hand picking them off when you see them. Throw them in a bucket of soapy water or collected them and feed them to your chickens. Another option is to partially bury small, shallow containers of beer so they are even with the soil surface. Slugs, which are attracted to the beer, will climb into the container and drown. Change the beer as needed. I've heard people say this one is quite enjoyable, a sip of beer for you and a sip of beer for the slugs as you take an evening stroll in your garden. Finally, there is also slug bait available that can be used to deter. These are only a few options when controlling slugs. Use the following link to read more about slugs and their control options. [Mild Winter, Good Spring for Slugs | Kentucky Pest News \(wordpress.com\)](#) Source: Jonathan Larson, UK Extension Entomologist



Marsh Slug

Cedar Apple Rust

Have you been noticing little yellow dots on your apple leaves? Cedar-apple rust is the most common and economically important rust disease of apple in Kentucky. The pathogen overwinters as galls on cedar and juniper. Removal of these pathogen sources on cedar can later reduce disease incidence on apple. Once apple trees become infected limited management options are available. We see it this time of year, but the time to act with treatments is when our trees are flowering. Check out this great spray guide for more information on apple tree spray schedules. <https://plantpathology.ca.uky.edu/files/ppfs-fr-t-21.pdf>





2024 Mercer County Farmers Market

Saturdays
May 4—October 26
 9:00am—1:00pm
 The Stable—560 Linden Avenue

Tuesdays
June 4th—August 27th
 4:00pm—7:00pm
 The Corner Lot—133 South Main Street

Thursdays in Burgin
June 6, July 11, and August 1
 5:00pm—7:00pm
 308 East Main Street

 [MercerCountyFarmersMarket](#)

Mark Those Calendars!!

Mercer County Farmers Market is Open!

Check out the flyer above for all the new times and locations.



Common Garden Insect Pest-June 11th, Mercer County Public Library 12:00 PM

We are meeting on a Tuesday, rather than our normal second Thursday.

Growing Sweet Potatoes-June 17th, Mercer County Extension Office 10:00 AM

Keeping Bees 2.0 (Extracting Honey) June 17th, 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- June 26th, 10:00 AM

Propagation field trip, more information to follow.

Fort Harrod Beekeeping Club-June 24th, Mercer County Extension Office 6:30 PM

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

Floral Hall Registration-July 1st

Registration officially opens to start entering all of your items for 2024 Mercer County Floral Hall.



Floral Hall Registration Help- July 2nd and 12th, Mercer County Extension Office

See insert for more details.



Growing Sweet Potatoes

June 17 at 10:00am

MUST RSVP to 859-734-4378

Did you know a sweet potato is a root and a potato is a stem? Join us as we share information on growing these tropical veggies!



Fort Harrod
Beekeeping Club

June 24, 2024

6:30pm



Former State Apiarist Tammy Potter will join us to share about her new position at Kentucky State University and the beekeeping programs they offer.

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

Mercer County Public Library Lunch & Learn:

Garden Pests

Tuesday, June 11 at 12:00pm



MERCER COUNTY
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Join us as we share information about all the pest that might be munching on your garden this summer. Insect collections and other live insects will be available for viewing.



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

Mercer County Floral Hall



Did you know there are a wide variety of horticulture items you can enter in Mercer County Fair Floral Hall? Choose from over 100 types of flowers, fruit, and vegetables to enter this year! Registration for Floral Hall closes 7/17/2024.

You can also find the catalog and other fair information by scanning the QR code or going to this link:
<https://mercer.ca.uky.edu/countyfair>



Keeping Bees 2.0

June 17, 2024

5:00pm



How To Extract Honey

**RSVP to Boyle Office at
859-236-4484**

Boyle County Extension Office
99 Corporate Drive
Danville, KY 40422

MERCER COUNTY FAIR & HORSE SHOW



Open Floral Hall

We have two days set in July for those needing help entering your items online:

Tuesday, July 2 and Friday, July 12

BY APPOINTMENT ONLY!

Please call [859-734-4378](tel:859-734-4378) to reserve your spot.

Opens July 1 for entry. DEADLINE TO ENTER is Wednesday, July 17 at noon.

<http://mercerfairky.fairentry.com>

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