

HORTICULTURE NEWSLETTER

FROM THE GROUND UP

October 2025



Clark County Extension Service • 1400 Fortune Drive; Winchester, KY 40391 • 859-744-4682 • clark.ext@uky.edu • <http://clark.ca.uky.edu/>



Fall Festival - October 4th



A Word from the Agent



Hello and happy October friends! This is going to be a good month, I just feel it in the air! Or maybe that's the pollen floating around, HAAA!

Let's first talk tasks for the month. A thorough clean out of all gardens and beds to remove any dead or diseased plant material will help you a lot next year. If your houseplants were outside for the summer, be the best inspector you can be when bringing them in and check for insects that could turn into problems during the winter months. Clean up any fallen fruit from trees. And consider planting garlic for a 2026 harvest.

The next thing I want to talk about is our Fall Fest! I know we told you about it in the last newsletter, but I wanted to mention it one more time!! When I know something is good, I want to make sure you know about it, and the Fall Fest is going to be good. With all sorts of free things to do, and free goodies to walk away with, you will have a great time. AND you get to hang out with your favorite Extension office employees!

So, see you at Fall Fest and see you around the county!

Clark County Extension Agent for Horticulture
carrie.spry@uky.edu



Clark /Powell Beekeepers Association

Monday, **October 13, 2025**

6:30 pm

Powell County Extension Service
169 Maple Street; Stanton, Kentucky

~ POT -LUCK MEAL~

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Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.



Time to Start Thinking About Feeding the Birds

Source: *Matt Springer, Assistant Extension Professor of Wildlife Management, Department of Forestry and Natural Resources*

Fall is the time many of us start to think about feeding the birds. While some folks provide birds with food all year, others only feed during the colder, food-scarce months. For many people, watching birds through their windows, is a fun way to while away a dreary winter.

The food and feeders you choose to set out will depend on the types of birds and wildlife you wish to attract. Consider, too, whether you want to discourage or encourage squirrels from visiting your feeders.

Different birds prefer different foods, so if you want to attract a variety of birds, provide a variety of seeds. Black oil sunflower seed is a favorite of many bird species, including cardinals, blue jays, chickadees, finches, nuthatches and sparrows. If you're new to feeding the birds, this is a good seed to start with. It's fairly inexpensive and available everywhere, from grocery stores to feeder supply outlets.

If you want to dissuade squirrels from plundering your feeders, safflower is a good seed for that. Squirrels will not eat safflower, but cardinals, mourning doves, woodpeckers, blue jays, tufted titmice, finches and chickadees love it. The seed is high in fat, fiber and protein. It's more expensive than sunflower, but you'll get more bang for your buck, because the squirrels won't be gobbling it up.

Goldfinches love thistle or nyjer seed. Because it is so small, it requires a special finch feeder. These are usually clear tubes with small holes and perches. Some come with the perches above the holes, which discourages other small birds from eating the seed. It's also fun to watch finches feed using their unique ability to hang upside down.

Suet is animal fat and a good source of protein. It's usually hung in cages. Suet will attract many birds, but woodpeckers, in particular, love a good suet cake, and with their striking plumage, are a welcome visitor to the winter garden.

Seed mixes, found anywhere seed is sold, are often popular with beginning birders. They're often the least expensive choice and attract many different birds. But be aware that they can cause quite a mess, because birds scatter the seed looking for the type they prefer.

Birds also love other types of food, too, such as pieces of apples and oranges, peanuts, peanut butter and cracked corn. Though if you don't want squirrels, you might want to avoid these.

There are many styles of feeders and the choice often depends on the type of seed you're offering and the birds you want to attract. House or hopper feeders are good, all-purpose feeders that usually have walls, a platform and a roof to keep the rain off. Platform or tray feeders are ideal for ground-feeding birds, such as grosbeaks, cardinals and mourning doves, and are good ways to lay out a buffet of fruit and nuts.

Squirrels, however, will find it very easy to feed from tray feeders, but if you use safflower in them, squirrels will move on.

If you live in an apartment or townhouse, there are feeders available that adhere to the outside of your windows or attach to a balcony.

Squirrel-proof feeders are widely available, but keep in mind that squirrels are smart creatures, and they can usually think their way around most obstacles we humans set for them. But that can be fun to watch, too.

You will attract more birds by using more than one feeder and placing them in different areas of your yard. It's a good idea to position feeders near a tree or shrub, so birds have nearby cover in the event a predator appears. On that note, we do not recommend feeding birds, if there are any outdoor or feral cats in the area. Cats are a major driver in the decline of songbirds and will kill upwards of a billion birds a year.

Clean your feeders once a month. Dirty feeders can promote mold and bacterial growth, which can infect birds and spread disease among neighborhood flocks. Goldfinches are particularly discerning when it comes to a clean feeder. Once a thistle feeder becomes damp and moldy inside, the birds will avoid it. A dirty feeder's foul smell can also attract wildlife you might not want, such as insects, mice or rats. Clean with a solution of one-part bleach to nine-parts hot water. You could also use a mild solution of unscented dish soap.

Once you start feeding the birds, it's a good idea to continue doing it regularly throughout winter. Birds need more calories to sustain them through those cold winter nights, so they will depend on your generosity. Look for sales. Buying in bulk or stocking up during sales is a good way to save money. Make sure you store your supply in a cool, dry place.

For more information about attracting wildlife to your yard, contact Carrie Spry, Clark County Extension Horticulture Agent, by calling 859-744-4682.



Clark County Extension

Fall Festival

October 4, 2025 • 5PM - 7PM

Pumpkins - Photo Booth - Food
Crafts - Games - Give Aways

Free Fun for Everyone!



Clark County Extension Office
1400 Fortune Drive, Winchester, KY

Watch our Facebook for updates and sneak peeks!

 Clark County Cooperative Extension, KY

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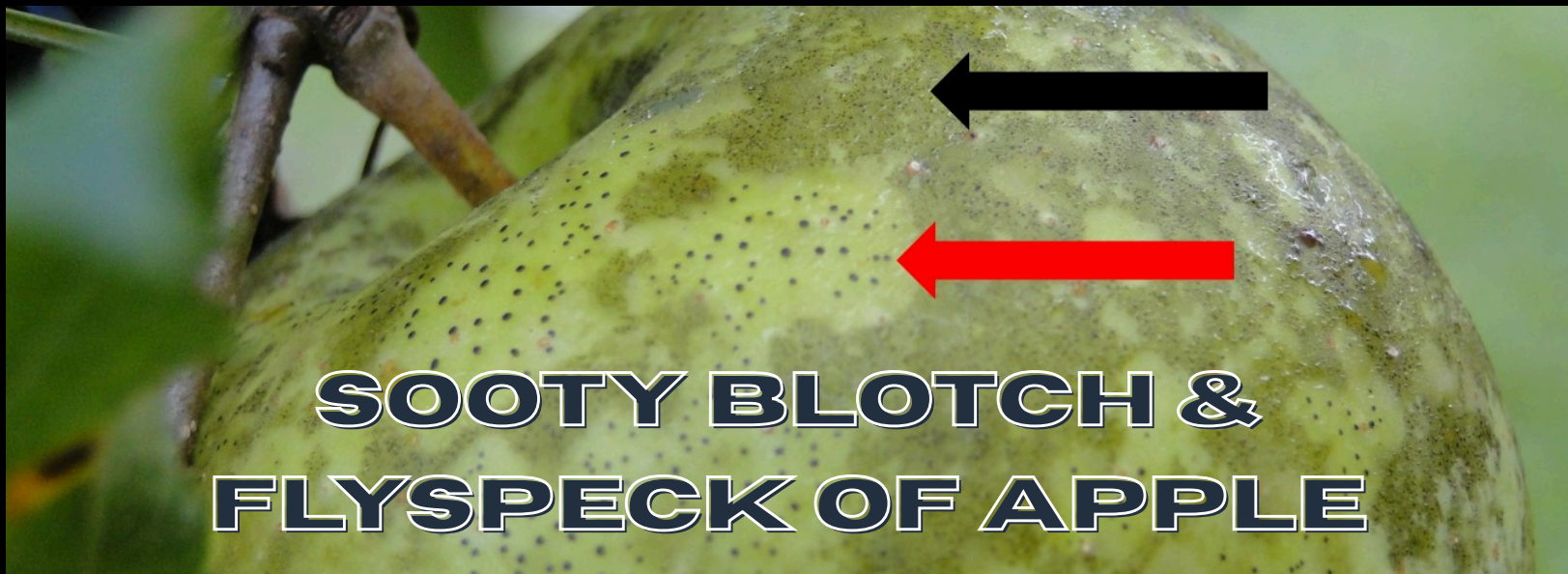


Figure 1: “Sooty blotch” (black arrow) and “flyspeck” (red arrow) symptoms occur together as part of the disease complex (Photo: Kimberly Leonberger, UK)

Sooty blotch and flyspeck, caused by a fungal complex, is a common cause for blemished, ugly apples. Sanitation, cultural practices, and fungicides all play roles in disease management.

Sooty Blotch & Flyspeck Facts:

Two types of symptoms appear in the sooty blotch/fly speck disease complex (Figure 1):

- “Sooty blotch” symptoms appear as black-brown to olive-colored irregular blotches (Figure 1, black arrow). Fungal reproductive structures (pycnidia) are often visible in darker spots.
- “Flyspeck” symptoms appear as sharp, black, shiny dots grouped into clusters (Figure 1, red arrow). These black dots are fungal reproductive structures (pseudothecia).
- Infection may occur during summer or throughout autumn.
- The fungi can disrupt the apple’s protective waxy layer resulting in moisture loss (desiccation), shortening storage life.
- Causal pathogens overwinter on fallen fruit, dried fruit (mummies), and in crevices in bark and dead wood.
- Pathogens are superficial and are restricted to fruit surfaces. The flesh of the fruit is not affected.
- Sooty blotch & flyspeck can affect apple, crabapple, and pear, as well as brambles, persimmon, squash, wild grape, and other hosts.

Management Options:

- Remove and discard diseased fruit to help reduce inoculum.
- At the end of the season, remove fruit from the ground, as well as cankers and dead wood that could harbor fungi.
- Homeowners and small-scale growers can bag apples to prevent disease onset ([ENTFACT-218](#)).
- It is too late for fungicides to be effective. Next season, begin a fungicide program in spring.
- Homeowners should consult the Backyard Apple & Pear Disease, Pest, and Cultural Practices Calendar ([PPFS-FR-T-21](#)) publication for fungicide information or contact a county Extension agent for additional information and recommendations regarding fungicides.
- Commercial growers should refer to ID-232 for fungicide recommendations.

Kentucky Native Flowers That Support Pollinators

Pollinators play a critical role in maintaining a healthy ecosystem and Native flowers play a crucial role in supporting pollinators. The flowers offer a reliable food source through their nectar and pollen while the pollinators, such as bees, butterflies, moths, and others, feed on nectar for energy and pollen for protein. However, many of their populations have declined in recent years due to habitat loss and other factors. Fortunately, Kentucky is home to a diverse array of native flowers that provide valuable resources for pollinators, such as food, shelter, and breeding grounds. Try not to think of all of these as “weeds” and consider adding some of these to your garden to support pollinator populations in your area.



Field Goldenrod

(*Solidago nemoralis*)



Plant: Forb (Perennial)
Light: Full Sun
Moisture: Dry to Medium
Height: 6" - 2'
Spread: 6" - 2'
Blooms: Aug to Oct
Flower: Yellow
Range:

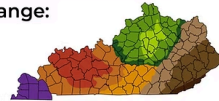


Hollow Joe-Pye Weed

(*Eutrochium fistulosum*)



Plant: Forb (Perennial)
Light: Full Sun to Part Shade
Moisture: Medium to Wet
Height: 4' - 7'
Spread: 2' - 4'
Blooms: Jul to Sep
Flower: Pink-Purple
Range:



Butterfly Milkweed

(*Asclepias tuberosa*)

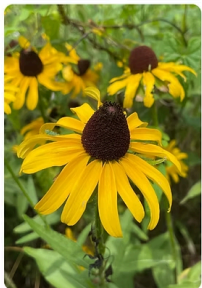


Plant: Forb (Perennial)
Light: Full Sun
Moisture: Dry to Medium
Height: 1' - 2'
Spread: 1' - 1' 6"
Blooms: Jun to Aug
Flower: Orange
Range:



Orange Coneflower

(*Rudbeckia fulgida*)



Plant: Forb (Perennial)
Light: Full Sun
Moisture: Dry to Moist
Height: 2' - 3'
Spread: 1' - 2'
Blooms: Jul to Oct
Flower: Yellow
Range:



Aromatic Aster

(*Symphyotrichum oblongifolium*)



Plant: Forb (Perennial)
Light: Full Sun to Part Shade
Moisture: Dry to Medium
Height: 1' - 3'
Spread: 1' - 3'
Blooms: Sep to Nov
Flower: Purple-Blue
Range:



Lance-leaved Coreopsis

(*Coreopsis lanceolata*)



Plant: Forb (Perennial)
Light: Full Sun
Moisture: Dry to Medium
Height: 1' - 2'
Spread: 1' - 1' 6"
Blooms: May to Jul
Flower: Yellow
Range:



Frostweed

(*Verbesina virginica*)



Plant: Forb (Perennial)
Light: Part Shade to Shade
Moisture: Dry to Moist
Height: 3' - 6'
Spread: 3' - 6'
Blooms: Aug to Oct
Flower: White
Range:



Swamp Milkweed

(*Asclepias incarnata*)



Plant: Forb (Perennial)
Light: Full Sun
Moisture: Medium to Wet
Height: 3' - 5'
Spread: 2' - 3'
Blooms: Jun to Aug
Flower: Pink
Range:



New England Aster

(*Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*)

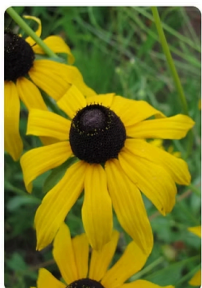


Plant: Forb (Perennial)
Light: Full Sun
Moisture: Medium to Moist
Height: 3' - 6'
Spread: 2' - 3'
Blooms: Aug to Oct
Flower: Purple-Pink
Range:



Black-eyed Susan

(*Rudbeckia hirta*)



Plant: Forb (Biennial)
Light: Full Sun
Moisture: Dry to Moist
Height: 2' - 3'
Spread: 1' - 2'
Blooms: Jun to Sep
Flower: Yellow
Range:



Common Boneset

(*Eupatorium perfoliatum*)



Plant: Forb (Perennial)
Light: Full Sun to Part Shade
Moisture: Medium to Wet
Height: 4' - 6'
Spread: 3' - 4'
Blooms: Jul to Sep
Flower: White
Range:



Tall Ironweed

(*Vernonia gigantea*)



Plant: Forb (Perennial)
Light: Full Sun to Part Shade
Moisture: Moist
Height: 5' - 8'
Spread: 3' - 6'
Blooms: Aug to Sep
Flower: Purple-Pink
Range:





Gus'

Quick Tips

for October . . .



Make it a point to be thorough in cleaning up any diseased plants. Many diseases over-winter in plant debris. Diseased perennials and annuals should be removed from the garden in the fall. Similarly, any trees that have had disease problems should have all the leaves raked and removed from the garden to lessen the chance of infection next year.



October is prime bulb planting time. Plant tulips, daffodils, crocus and other spring favorites now for a beautiful early display.



Feeding lawns is best done in the late fall. The end of this month and all of November are great times to fertilize your turf.....if you want to.



House plants should be treated as necessary for insects before coming indoors for the winter.



Store any pots or containers that may be damaged by freezing temperatures.



October is an excellent time to plant most trees and shrubs. Make sure to plant at the proper depth. The root flare of trees (the point where the roots branch off the trunk) should be at soil level.



Needled evergreens drop their old needles in the fall. Yellowing, browning, and subsequent needle fall is normal if it is only occurring in the interior of the plant.



Many insects find their way indoors in the fall. Most are not harmful, just annoying. Your vacuum cleaner is an easy way to get rid of an occasional insect.



Make notes of your gardening successes and failures for reference next year. It is never too early to start planning next year's garden.



After the first hard freeze, remove non-hardy annuals and cut back perennials to near ground level. The removed plant material can be placed in the compost bin.



Clean up around fruit trees by raking leaves and removing dried fruit. This will help control several diseases and insects.



Remove and burn bagworm cases from evergreens. The cases contain eggs which will hatch in spring to produce next year's population.



Many insects can also be found in dead leaves in and around the garden and landscape. Getting rid of those dead tomato vines, bean bushes, and squash vines and fruit will lessen the chance that these pests will be able to overwinter in the garden and so will lessen the incidence of pest problems in the spring.



Don't forget to water newer trees and shrubs during fall and winter. Continue watering (in the absence of adequate rainfall) until the soil freezes. Keep the soil under your woody plants moist, not wet.



A layer of mulch applied at this time of year can have many beneficial effects in the home landscape. Mulch moderates the normal freeze/thaw cycle than can force many herbaceous perennial plants out of the ground. Mulch will also help conserve soil moisture and will serve as an insulating agent during severely cold temperatures.

RECIPE

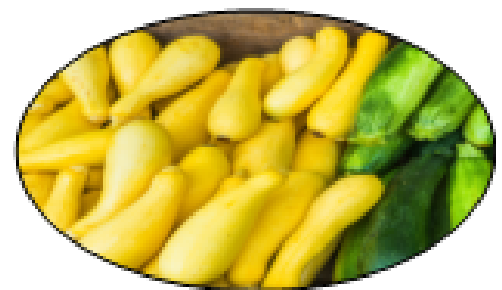
Farmers Market Squash Sauté

Servings: 8 / Serving Size: 1 cup

Source: Plate It Up! Kentucky Proud Project

Ingredients:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 2 cups whole grain rotini pasta | 2 medium yellow squash, diced |
| 3 boneless chicken breasts | 2 garlic cloves, minced |
| 1 tablespoon olive oil | 2 tablespoons fresh chopped basil |
| 2 medium zucchini, diced | 3/4 cup light Alfredo sauce |
| 4 medium carrots, peeled and diced | 2 tablespoons shredded Parmesan cheese |



Directions:

1. Cook pasta according to package directions.
2. Roast chicken breasts at 400 degrees F to an internal temperature of 165 degrees F. about 25-35 minutes. Let cool.
3. Dice chicken into bite sized pieces
4. In a large saute' pan, add olive oil, zucchini and carrots
5. Saute' until slightly cooked.
6. Add yellow squash and garlic and saute' until all vegetables are tender.
7. Remove from heat and stir in basil, diced chicken and pasta.
8. Add Alfredo Sauce and toss until ingredients are evenly coated.
9. Reheat by tossing the ingredients in the saute' pan for 3-5 minutes over medium heat.
10. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and serve.

Nutrition Facts per serving: 230 calories; 7 g fat; 2.5g saturated fat; 40mg cholesterol; 210mg sodium; 27g carbohydrates; 4g sugars, 18g protein.