WELCOME!

Welcome to the first monthly newsletter about the Kentucky State University Cooperative Extension Program. Our program includes four distinct program areas:

- Family and Consumer Sciences
- Agriculture and Natural Resources
- Community and Leadership Development
- Youth Development

Within this newsletter, you will find information pertaining to each of these areas and more. Much of the content comes from the newsletters that our Cooperative Extension agents send out to their communities each week.

We hope this newsletter will be fun and informative, as well as a way for our vast community to feel connected. Thanks for reading!

FROM THE PHOTO ARCHIVES

UPCOMING EVENTS

Controlling Aquatic Weeds
Join Kentucky State University’s aquaculture program as Dr. Robert Durborow and Forrest Wynne discuss aquatic weeds at 10 a.m. EST on July 10. Join the Zoom meeting here.

Third Thursday Thing
Third Thursday Thing is Kentucky State University Land Grant Program’s monthly sustainable agriculture workshop. This month’s workshop, which will be held on July 16, will be focused on Aquaculture. All workshops are currently being held via Zoom. For more information as the date approaches, check the website or email Shelley Spiggle at shelley.spiggle@kysu.edu.

Beef Cattle Fourth Wednesday Workshop
This workshop will be held on July 22. The topic is to be determined. For more information as the date approaches, check Facebook or email Shelley Spiggle at shelley.spiggle@kysu.edu.

4-H

Through August 2020, 4-H Activities and Summer Programs at the Rosenwald Center for 4-H Youth Development is suspending all day camps for the spring and summer of 2020. 4-H Activities and Summer Day Camp opportunities will be offered online, and youth can subscribe to receive free educational kits and hands-on activities at home. Find more information here.
GET ACTIVE

Regular physical activity is good for everyone's health. Physical activity consists of anything that gets your body moving. Aim for at least 2.5 hours of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week. And at least two days a week, do activities that strengthen your muscles. If you haven’t been active before, start slowly. Once you get the hang of it, add a little more activity each time.

To get all the health benefits of physical activity, do a combination of aerobic and muscle-strengthening activities.

- Aerobic activities make you breathe harder and cause your heart to beat faster. An example of this is walking or running.
- Muscle-strengthening activities make your muscles stronger. Examples include lifting weights, using resistance bands, and doing push-ups.

Physical activity increases your chances of living longer. Below are additional functions of physical activity:

- Controls your blood pressure, blood sugar, and weight
- Lowers your “bad” cholesterol and raises your “good” cholesterol
- Prevents heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and some types of cancer
- Boosts your mood
- Helps you sleep better
- Makes your bones, muscles, and joints healthier
- Lowers your chances of becoming depressed
- Lowers your risk of falls and reduce arthritis pain
- Helps you feel better about yourself

GET STARTED

If you have not been active before, start out slowly and add new activities little by little. Choose activities that you enjoy. Play games like tennis or basketball, take a yoga or martial arts class, or just dance around in your living room. Go for a brisk walk around the neighborhood, ride a bike, or do push-ups during commercial breaks in TV shows.

BUILD MUSCLES

Do muscle-strengthening activities at least two days a week. Try some of these activities:

- Heavy gardening, like digging or shoveling
- Doing push-ups on the floor or against the wall
- Lifting small weights— you can even use bottled water or cans of food as weights

CHALLENGE YOURSELF

Any amount of physical activity is better than none. But getting more activity can increase the health benefits. Add more activity to your routine by:

- Being active for longer each time. If you are walking three days a week for 30 minutes, try adding an additional 10 minutes each day.
- Being active more often. If you are riding your bike to work two days a week, try making it four days a week.

From the newsletter of:
Jessica Marquez
Community Resource Development Extension Assistant
Source
MINDFUL EATING

Does this sound familiar?

You’re at your computer, facing a wall of e-mails. After composing a reply, you hit “send” and reach for the ham and cheese sandwich on your desk. After a few bites, you set the sandwich down, grab a handful of chips, and open the next message. Before you know it, you’ve finished lunch.

A small yet growing body of research suggests that a slower, more thoughtful way of eating could help with weight problems and maybe steer some people away from processed food and other less healthy choices.

Mindfulness refers to the practice of being aware and in the moment. All too often, our thoughts wander. Perhaps we are preoccupied with what happened an hour ago, worried about what might happen tomorrow, or stressed over what we need to do next week. Mindfulness encourages us to notice these preoccupations, then gently bring ourselves back to the now.

Mindfulness can help you fully enjoy a meal and the experience of eating—with moderation and restraint. Some studies suggest that mindfulness-based practices help improve eating habits. For those who binge-eat or eat for comfort or out of stress, mindful eating may even aid with weight loss.

Here are some tips for more mindful eating from Harvard Health Publishing. Not all of these tips may feel right for you—try a few and see how they work.

- Reflect: Before you begin eating, take a moment to reflect upon how you feel. Are you rushed? Stressed? Sad? Bored? Hungry? What are your wants, and what are your needs? Differentiate between the two. After you have taken this moment to reflect, then you can choose if you want to eat, what you want to eat, and how you want to eat.

- Sit down: Don’t eat on the go. Have a seat. You’re less likely to appreciate your food when you are multitasking. It’s also difficult to keep track of how much you are eating when you snack on the go.

- Turn off the TV (and everything else with a screen): These distractions make us less aware of what and how much we are eating.

- Serve out your portions: Resist eating straight from the bag or the box. Not only is it easier to overeat when you can’t see how much you’ve had, but it is also harder to fully appreciate your food when it is hidden from view.

- Pick the smaller plate: You might crave less if you see less. Smaller plates will help you with your portion control.

- Give gratitude: Before you start to eat, pause and take a moment to acknowledge the labor that went into providing your meal, be it thanks to the farmers, the factory workers, the animals, Mother Earth, the chefs, or even your companions at the table.

- Chew 30 times: Try to get 30 chews out of each bite. (Thirty is a rough guide, as it might be difficult to get even 10 chews out of a mouthful of oatmeal!) Take time to enjoy the flavors and textures in your mouth before you swallow. This may also help prevent overeating by giving your gut time to send messages to the brain to say you’re full.

- Put down your utensil: Often, we are already preparing the next morsel with our fork and knife while we are still on our previous bite. Try putting down your utensils after each bite.

- Resign from the Clean Plate Club: Many of us were brought up to finish everything on our plate and were not allowed to leave the table until we did. It’s okay to cancel your membership to the Clean Plate Club. Consider packing the leftovers to go, or just leaving the last few bites.

From the newsletter of:
Kathleen Raffaele
Senior SNAP Education Assistant
THE PRACTICALITY OF EDIBLE LANDSCAPING

I was raised on a working farm. My dad could grow anything, and as a diversified crop and livestock farm, we practically did. One thing that wasn’t emphasized a great deal, however, was landscaping. We had huge maple and elm trees encapsulating our old farmhouse, and the largest blue spruce I’ve ever seen still to this day was the cornerstone of the front yard. I later found out it had been one of three mail order saplings my dad had planted shortly after moving into the house in which I grew up and in which I reside today.

These trees, as magnificent as they were, all served practical purposes. The aesthetics were secondary. The deciduous trees provided an abundance of shade in a time when central air conditioning was a luxury most farm families, including ours, did not enjoy. Evergreen trees served as windbreaks in a time that central Kentucky winters still produced multiple snowstorms and, well, let’s just say circa 1910, homes were not built with an abundance of insulation.

My dad’s philosophy was based on practicality. The things that required effort and input to grow should pay for themselves in some way. So trees helped keep the home more physically comfortable. Commercial crops paid the bills and vegetable crops rounded out the mix by putting food on the table. My mom elicited the help of my sister and me to can countless jars of tomatoes, green beans, pickles and squash. We froze bushel after bushel of sweet corn and even processed our own chicken and pork.

Missing were the landscape shrubs and many of the perennial flowering plants that make up elaborate landscape beds of most houses today. We did have some heirloom lilies and iris, but these for the most part were self-sufficient, requiring little work to maintain. A few annual flowers placed in two stone planters on the front porch and in an old cast iron kettle marking the access point to the septic tank finished out our landscaping. Even the latter served a practical purpose: to mark the tank lid for expedient access when old lateral lines backed up.

Years later, when I was a professional landscaper, I never forgot the practicality of the principles instilled by my parents. For many of my clients, money was not a concern. Expensive topiary or pom-pom trees, large otto luyken laurels or specialty cultivars of roses, things never imagined for my house growing up, were common inclusions for the custom homes and commercial businesses I serviced.

At the time—we are talking mid 2000s—in the United States, segregating vegetables from flowers and shrubs was pretty much a hard-and-fast rule. I’m a devout rule follower in most situations; this was not one to which I adhered. I purposely included blackberry bushes in island bed designs to add that edible component to my landscapes.

It seemed fitting to include the practicality of being able to harvest something from the aesthetic beds that took countless hours to maintain. Nestled among various shrubs, lilirope (monkeygrass), and daylilies, the seasonal white blooms, red woody canes, and juicy ebony berries provided a unique complement to run of the mill island beds. In-
clude a few rusty implement parts and a creek rock border for accent and you have a little bit of the country in the city.

Other times, areas within the traditional border around a house were left free of shrubs to allow for the annual planting of tomatoes and peppers. Taking up no additional area and easily cleaned up at the end of the growing season, this made for convenient, small-scale gardening for families with limited equipment, time and space.

For the more ambitious gardener who still wanted a manicured yard, garden boxes were installed. These elevated beds are ideally suited for intensive gardening practices. This is the technique where one seeks high yields with dense plantings of selectively placed species, resulting in little bare ground exposed.

Many times, people may spend more time on their patio or deck than they do in the yard. Others may live in apartments that either don’t have yards or the yards are contractually maintained and tenants are prohibited from planting in them. These dwellings sometimes do have balconies or even accessible rooftop areas. In these instances, container gardening becomes the outlet for all of one’s outdoor plant choices. Larger pots can house small trees and an assortment of shrubs depending upon the amount of space available. These can provide the feel of a personalized landscaped area.

Of course, in keeping with the topic of edible landscapes, everything from edible flowers, herbs and vegetable plants can be placed in smaller pots or buckets. Hanging baskets or even specialized containers with side and bottom cut outs can be integrated into the area. Look for future issues of this newsletter to feature many of these container gardening options.

Wooden trellises and cage structures can be included to provide a degree of rustic architectural charm and provide the practical solution of encouraging vertical growth, thus maximizing productivity within small scare footage areas. Integrated into the overall design to complement other landscape beds that also can contain herb gardens and berry bushes, garden boxes do not detract from the pristine appearance of backyard.
I encourage you to be creative with container plantings. Mix your edibles with your favorite flowers. Herbs such as the rosemary in a bucket planter make great filler and provide a dense green backdrop even when flowering plants such as million bells become stressed and some of their foliage browns needs to be removed.

Don’t forget that flowers are an essential ingredient in establishing a healthy garden because they attract beneficial insects and birds. Naturally controlling pests and getting your edibles pollinated are sustainable strategies. Pollen and nectar are food for insects and seed heads provide food for birds. Symbiosis, in this instance plants and animals helping one another, is a practical benefit of your effort to grow some of your own food.

Let’s face it: During this time of COVID-19, more people than anytime in recent history are undertaking the challenge to become a backyard or balcony farmer. One of the cornerstones of edible landscaping is that gardens can be bountiful as well as beautiful. Integrating vegetables and herbs with flowers, trees and shrubs to create an eclectic landscape can be rewarding in more ways than one. With planning and execution, it should prove to be a practical investment of time, labor and resources.

From the newsletter of:
Mason Crawford
Cooperative Extension Associate Community Outreach Coordinator
STAFF SPOTLIGHTS

MEET NILIMA MISHRA
EXTENSION ASSOCIATE FOR DIETETICS & HUMAN NUTRITION
• Responsibilities: Develop nutrition education fact sheets, curriculum, nutrition education at senior centers & community settings, extension projects, teach nutrition classes at KYSU, collaborate with other universities for extension work & organizational development.
• Current & Future Projects:
  ◦ Senior adult nutrition curriculum
  ◦ 4-H nutrition curriculum for youth
  ◦ Small Farm initiative
  ◦ Disaster preparedness
  ◦ Developing fact sheets on nutrition & health related topics
  ◦ CoNEXTension
• Stakeholders: Youth, Senior Adults, Students @ KYSU, & KYSU employees.
• Partners: 4-H, SNAP-ED team, Extension staff, Central State Ohio University, & West Virginia State University.
• Fun Fact: She is a medical doctor from India, is trained in Indian classical dance forms, & she loves to sing.
• Email: nilima.mishra@kysu.edu

MEET TURQUOISE BROWN-PATTERSON
NUTRITION PROGRAM ASSISTANT & EFNEP COORDINATOR
• Responsibilities: Nutrition education for adults & youth, Coordinator for summer feeding program & coordinator for EFNEP program.
• Current & Future Projects:
  ◦ Nutrition education camps
  ◦ Summer feeding program
  ◦ Food demonstrations
  ◦ EFNEP program
• Stakeholders: Franklin Co. Schools, Franklin Farmers Market, KYSU & UK.
• Partners: UK, Franklin Public Schools, Department of Education & Frankfort Independent School System.
• Fun fact: She's crafty, loves to sew & plays the violin.
• Email: turquoise.patterson@kysu.edu

View more Staff Spotlights on our Facebook page, where Land Grant Program staffers are highlighted each week as part of #FeatureFriday.
STAFF SPOTLIGHTS

MEET TREVOR CLAIBORN
AREA SMALL FARM ASSISTANT

• Responsibilities: Assist limited-resource farmers in the county, public engagement & youth programing.
• Current & Future Projects:
  ◦ EPes Trip
  ◦ Small Farm Conference
  ◦ CYFAR
  ◦ Hunger Dialogue
  ◦ Federation of Southern Cooperatives
• Stakeholders: Community organizations, local schools, small-scale farmers, libraries & art centers.
• Fun fact: He likes to draw.
• Email: trevor.claiborn@kysu.edu

MEET DANNY ADAMS
SMALL FARM ASSISTANT

• Responsibilities: Works with beginning & existing farmers with agriculture production practices, coordinates use of vegetable & cattle handling equipment.
• Current & Future Projects:
  ◦ Assisting farmers with County Agriculture Investment Program (CAIP) for their applications and cost share projects.
  ◦ Taking KYSU & UK programs to the community.
• Stakeholders: Wayne county farmers & homeowners.
• Partners: KYSU & UK specialists, Farm Bureau Wayne Co, Cattlemen’s Wayne Co, Fruit & vegetable growers in Wayne Co.
• Fun fact: He has worked at KYSU as a small farm assistant for 28 years.
• Email: danny.adams@kysu.edu

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WHOLE-WHEAT PENNE PASTA IN ROASTED BEET SAUCE

Ingredients
Serves 2
• 3 medium-sized beets, cleaned and cut into a small dice
• 3 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
• 3 sprigs thyme
• 3 cloves garlic
• 1 Tbs. balsamic vinegar
• 2 Tbs. vermouth
• ½ cup freshly grated parmesan cheese, plus more for garnish (go for the low-fat option!)
• ½ cup chicken or vegetable stock
• ¼ cup cream or milk (choose no fat or skim!)
• 1 tsp. sugar (substitute ½ tsp of Stevia)
• ½ pound whole-grain penne pasta
• Coarse salt and freshly ground pepper
• 1 Tbs. poppy seeds
• Mint leaves, for garnish

Instructions
Preheat oven to 400.

On a rimmed baking sheet, toss the diced beets with 1 Tbs. oil, thyme sprigs, garlic and a good pinch of salt and pepper. Roast for 40 minutes. Check for doneness at the 30-minute mark.

Transfer beets to a food processor. Add balsamic vinegar, vermouth, half of the cheese and the 2 remaining Tbs. oil. Pulse until it’s as smooth as you can get it.

Transfer beet mixture to a small saucepan. Add the stock and cream and bring to a light simmer. Add the sugar, remaining cheese and another pinch of salt. Simmer on medium-low while you prepare the rest of the meal. Taste it. Oh, I know.

Toast the poppy seeds in a small skillet until fragrant, about 2 minutes.

Cook the penne until al dente. Drain and return to skillet. Pour the sauce over the pasta and toss to combine. Look. At. That. Color.

Give it one more taste. Season accordingly.

Serve pasta garnished with a good sprinkle of the poppy seeds and the mint leaves.

From the newsletter of:
Gidgett Sweazy
SNAP-ED Program Coordinator
Recipe Source
MINTY WATERMELON-CUCUMBER SALAD

Ingredients
Prep time: 20 minutes
- 8 cups cubed seedless watermelon
- 2 English cucumbers (or any type), halved lengthwise and sliced
- 6 green onions, chopped
- ¼ cup minced fresh mint
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper

Instructions
In a large bowl, combine watermelon, cucumbers, green onions and mint.
In a small bowl, whisk remaining ingredients.
Pour over salad and toss to coat.
Serve immediately or refrigerate, covered, up to 2 hours before serving.

Recipes Source

WATERMELON JUICE

Ingredients
2 cups watermelon, diced
1 cup water (or coconut water)
1 tablespoon granulated sugar, to taste
Lime juice (optional)

Instructions
Blend it: Add the diced watermelon and water to your blender and puree until smooth. Add more water if you prefer a smoother consistency. Alternately, if you like a more slushy-like texture, add in some ice.

Flavor it: Depending on the sweetness of your watermelon, you can sweeten with simple syrup or sugar. You can also give your drink a tart, refreshing squeeze of lime juice.

It tastes best immediately after making it, but any leftover watermelon juice can be stored in the refrigerator for up to three days. You can also freeze watermelon juice for up to one month, but be sure to store it in a freezer-safe container and leave at least an inch at the top of the container to allow for the juice to expand as it freezes.