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TO PRUNE OR NOT TO PRUNE

To prune or not to prune, is it the season? To determine when to prune landscape shrubs and trees at certain times of the year can be confusing. However, pruning at the proper time can ensure healthy, productive, attractive plants. Pruning at the wrong time of the year can, at the minimum, cause you to miss spring blooms and at the very worst, cause damage, disease or even death of your plant. Below are guidelines for pruning a variety plants.

Deciduous Shrubs-Lovely spring blooms after a dreary cold winter can revive the home landscape and give promise of warmer, beautiful days ahead. Spring-flowering (March, April, May) shrubs, such as forsythia and lilac, bloom on previous season growth, so the best time to prune spring-flowering shrubs is immediately after blooming. Timing the pruning after blooming for these shrubs allows for enjoyment of the spring flower display and gives the plant adequate time to produce new flowering buds for next year.

However, if you have a flowering shrub that has been neglected or is overgrown, it may be time to do a "rejuvenation" pruning and the best time to do this is in late winter (mid-February) to early spring (late March/early April), before the shrub starts leafing out. Keep in mind this will most likely reduce, if not eliminate, this some blooms. Nevertheless, you should be rewarded with a strong, healthy and revitalized shrub for a few years to come.

When to prune those summer-flowering shrubs? (bloom in late May through June-July). These shrubs, such as Bigleaf hydrangea, butterfly bush and Japanese spirea bloom on the current year's growth. Therefore, prune them in mid-February to early April, which gives them enough time to produce flower buds for summer blooms. For those deciduous shrubs that you have in your landscape for attractive bark, fruit or leaf color, prune them at the same time you would your summer-flowering shrubs; in late winter-early spring.

Evergreen Shrubs-Prune evergreen shrubs, such as juniper and yew, in late March or early April before new growth begins. Light pruning may also be done in late June. Avoid pruning evergreen shrubs in the fall, as any new growth that takes place during the fall will be more susceptible to winter injury.

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Deciduous Trees-The best time to prune deciduous trees is late winter or early spring (February, March, and early April) before they begin to leaf out. Some trees, such as maples, map leak sap when pruned in late winter or early spring. However, the leaky sap doesn't harm the trees. The trees won't bleed to death and the flow of sap will gradually slow and stop.

To prevent the spread of oak wilt, avoid pruning oaks from April 1 to July 1. Pruning oaks during this period may attract sap beetles carrying the oak wilt fungus to the pruning cuts and transmit the disease to healthy trees. An excellent time to prune oaks is February and March.

If possible, avoid pruning deciduous trees in the spring as they are leafing out. At this time, the tree's energy reserves are low and the bark "slips" or tears easily. Another poor time to prune is during leaf drop in the fall.

Evergreen Trees-An excellent time to prune spruce and fir is late winter when they are still dormant. Spruce and fir possess side or lateral buds. The pruning cut should be just above a side bud or branch. Pines are pruned in early June to early July when the new growth is in the "candle" stage. Pinching or snapping off one-half to two-thirds of the candle reduces the pine's annual growth.

Unwanted lower branches on all evergreen trees can be removed in late winter.

Fruit Trees-The best time to prune fruit trees is late February to early April. Fruit trees pruned in fall or early winter are susceptible to winter injury.

The absolute worst time to prune any trees or shrubs is in late summer. Pruning in August or early September can encourage a late flush of growth. This new growth may not go dormant sufficiently before the arrival of cold weather and making the plant more susceptible to winter injury.

Pruning Tools and Tips

The tools to use depend on the type and size of branch your are cutting. In all cases, be sure to sterilize tools before cutting, in between moving to difference tree/shrubs, and after. Tools should be cleaned with a 10% bleach solution or disinfectant. This will prevent the spread of disease. Also, make sure the blades of your tools are sharp to insure tidy cuts.

- **For small branches and twigs, use hand pruners.**



Hand Pruners

- **For large branches about 1" + in diameter, use loppers. These provide good leverage.**



Loppers

- **For branches approximately 3" or more in diameter, use a folding saw or similar.**



Saw



GET READY FOR EARLY SPRING PLANTING



Cold Season Vegetable Seeds to Grow



Cool Season Vegetable Seeds available beginning in early March, 2024, at the Scott County Public Library

Earliest Planting dates for seeds planted in outside garden (direct sow) for central Kentucky

Seeds*	Earliest Safe Planting Date for our central region of the state	Direct Sow Seed Outdoors in Prepared Garden Soil
Peas	March 1	✓
Snow Peas	March 1	✓
Spinach	March 1	✓
Radishes	March 10	✓
Beets	March 15	✓
Carrots	March 20	✓
Chard	March 20	✓
Kale	March 20	✓
Onion (seed)	March 20	✓
Parsley	March 20	✓
Cabbage	March 25	✓
Leaf lettuce	March 25	✓
Bibb-type Lettuce	March 25	✓
Head type Lettuce	March 25	✓

***all are direct sow seeds**

Free Seed Locations

The cool season seeds giveaway will be located at:

Scott County Public Library -

104 Bradford Lane, Georgetown

The varieties of seed for giveaway are listed at the left. These cool season seeds are best planted right now (see planting dates) into your garden. Cool-season crops are those vegetables that can withstand cold temperatures, and need the cooler temperature to germinate, grow, set fruit, and mature. Your spring garden will contain cool-season crops that are planted and harvested from late winter to late spring. Many of the cool season crops can be planted directly in the garden soil, called direct sow. All of the seeds we have available are direct sow. Spring cool season plants grow best with relatively cool air temperatures (50° to 65°F). These crops produce their vegetative growth during spring's short, cool days and light frost will not injure them. If they are planted too late in the spring, summer heat reduces their quality by forcing some to flower and form seeds (bolt), while others to develop bitter, off flavors.

MARCH CLASSES

Growing Your Own:
Tips for Growing Cool Season Vegetables

MARCH 7 AT 5:30 PM

AT THE SCOTT COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
PLEASE REGISTER AT THE LIBRARY TO SAVE YOUR SPOT,
OR SIGN UP ON

<http://tinyurl.com/coolseasonveggies>

HORTICULTURE WEBINAR WEDNESDAY IS BACK FOR ITS 5TH SEASON!

Growing Big Pumpkins zoom class only

March 20 at 12:30 p.m. ET

Attracting Hummingbirds to the Garden

zoom class only March 27 at 12:30 p.m. ET

Please register for one or both here:

<http://tinyurl.com/24MARHWW> **or**



Companion Planting - Truth or Myth

DO CERTAIN PLANTS HELP OTHER PLANTS GROW? COME FIND OUT.

Thursday, March 21 @ 6:00 pm
at the Scott Co. Cooperative Extension Office

Registration Here

or



ZOOM WEBINAR: INJURY PREVENTION IN THE GARDEN

with Special Guest
Gabriela Murza

Utah State Extension Assistant Professor
of Health and Wellness



LEARN ABOUT:

- Preventing common garden injuries
- Minimizing pain from repetitive movements
- Using proper posture
- Maximizing tool use
- Incorporating stretches

MARCH 21st, 2024
11AM-12:30PM EST

REGISTER HERE: <https://ukfcs.net/RegistrationGardening>

 **Cooperative
Extension Service**



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Agriculture and Natural Resources
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4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

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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.

Cooking with the Season

If you love asparagus, now is the time to start looking for it, either in your garden or the grocery store. Asparagus is a perennial crop that produces spears year after year for 10 to 15 years or longer if the plants are given adequate care. Garden asparagus usually starts sprouting here in Central Kentucky April or May, but with the milder winter we have had, you may want to start looking for it in late March to make sure you don't miss that tender goodness.



Asparagus Tomato Salad

1 pound of fresh asparagus, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces

1 small zucchini, halved and cut into ¼ inch slices

3 tablespoons olive oil

2 tablespoons red wine vinegar

1 garlic clove, minced

¼ teaspoon seasoned salt

¼ teaspoon honey mustard

1 cup cherry or grape tomatoes, halved

¼ cup sliced green onions

¼ cup shredded fresh mozzarella cheese

¼ cup minced fresh parsley

Place the asparagus and zucchini in a steamer basket. **Place** in a saucepan over 1 inch of boiling water. **Cover** and **steam** for 2 minutes.

Rinse in cold water. In large bowl, **whisk together** olive oil, red wine vinegar, garlic, seasoned salt and honey mustard. **Pour** over asparagus mixture; **toss** to coat. **Toss** in

tomatoes and green onions. **Sprinkle** with mozzarella cheese and parsley.

Yield: 6 servings

Nutritional Analysis:

110 calories, 7 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 5 mg cholesterol, 35 mg sodium, 5 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 3 g sugar, 4 g protein.



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

Kentucky Asparagus

SEASON: April through May

NUTRITION FACTS: Asparagus is a good source of vitamin A and folate. One-half cup of fresh, steamed asparagus has 22 calories, 2 grams of protein and 4 grams of carbohydrate.

SELECTION: Choose bright green stalks with tightly closed tips. The most tender stalks are apple green in color with purple-tinged tips.

STORAGE: Fresh asparagus will keep 1-2 weeks in the refrigerator. Refrigerate upright with cut ends in water or with cut ends wrapped in wet paper towels in a plastic bag.

Source: www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov

PREPARATION: One pound of asparagus will yield 4 one-half cup servings, about six spears per serving. Wash asparagus thoroughly in cool, running water. Eat asparagus raw or lightly boil, steam, stir-fry or grill. Overcooked asparagus will be mushy. Try seasoning it with herbs, butter or Parmesan cheese.

KENTUCKY ASPARAGUS

Kentucky Proud Project

County Extension Agents for Family and Consumer Sciences
University of Kentucky, Dietetics and Human
Nutrition students
March 2015

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of race, color, age, sex, religion, disability, or national origin. For more information, contact your county's Extension agent for Family and Consumer Sciences or visit www.uky.ag/fcs

COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION
SERVICE





Martin-Gatton
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment

2024 Garden Expo

Growing Together

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

SCOTT CO. COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
MASTER GARDENERS VOLUNTEERS



Lots of info and demos!

- **Soil**
- **Herbs**
- **Cooking**
- **Plant starts for sale!**
- **Vendors**
- **DOOR PRIZES!**

APRIL 27
Saturday
9 – Noon

@ Scott County Cooperative
Extension Bldg
1130 Cincinnati Rd
Georgetown

FREE!

Find us on Facebook
Scott County Master Gardener Association
<https://www.facebook.com/ScottCoMGA>
or
**Scott County Cooperative Extension Horticulture
Program**
<https://scott.ca.uky.edu/horticulture>

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Lexington, KY 40546



Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.