



Cooperative Extension Service
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March Gardening Tasks

It is said that March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb, but there have been years where it comes in like a lamb and goes out like a lion. However it comes in, gardeners know that once March arrives, gardening chores begin in a big way and don't slow down until fall. Creating a task list can help gardeners stay organized, making managing their responsibilities and priorities easier. Here are some tasks to consider adding to your March list:

OUTDOOR SEED PLANTING:

- **Cool Season Seeds:** In central Kentucky, around the 3rd week of March, beet, carrot, collard, kale, mustard, pea, spinach, radish, turnip, green onion, and early potato seed pieces can be directly in soil in an outdoor prepared bed or garden.

TRANSPLANTS:

- **Cool Season Plants:** If you started other cool season seeds like cabbage and kohlrabi indoors earlier in February or March, you can transplant to the garden around the 2nd or 3rd week of March in central Kentucky.
- Gradually harden off vegetable seedlings grown indoors for 1 to 2 weeks before planting them outdoors. Remember to increase their time outside by a few additional hours each day and then work up to 24 hours a day for a couple of days to help toughen them up.
- Also, at this time you can plant cool-season herbs like dill and parsley, and rhubarb crowns in the home vegetable garden.
- **Warm Season Seeds:** If you want to start seeds for garden transplants to plant after the danger of frost, begin pots or trays of tomatoes, eggplant, and peppers seeds indoors around the 2nd or third week of March 25 for central Kentucky.

PRE-EMERGENT HERBICIDES:

Get a jump on weed control by apply pre-emergent herbicides. For crabgrass control in central Kentucky pre-emergent herbicide usually should be applied around mid-March. A helpful way to determine when to apply the product is to observe the blooming forsythia shrubs. When they start to bloom, it means the soil is warming up enough to allow crabgrass and other weed seeds to germinate soon. For complete information on using pre-emergence herbicides for the Kentucky lawn, visit this link: <https://publications.ca.uky.edu/sites/publications.ca.uky.edu/files/AGR272.pdf>

SOIL TESTING: If you did not do it in the fall of 2024, now is the time to take a soil sample and bring it to the Scott County Extension office for recommendations Put link for how to take a soil tst. Soil Testing & Sharpen Garden Tools IAlso if you garden tools need it , now is the time to clean and sharpen your gardening tools, as Clean and sharpened garden tools are a necessity in the garden. For How to Take a Soil Test, see next page.



How to Take a Soil Sample

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Knowing your soil's pH and nutrient content is important to successful plant growth, finances, and the environment.

Most crops, including lawns, should be sampled every 2 to 3 years at about the same time as in previous years. Soil under intensive cultivation may require annual testing.

Use a garden spade or trowel if a soil probe or auger is unavailable, and collect multiple soil cores from different areas of the area (lawn, garden, or field) in a zigzag pattern, digging down according to Table A for soil depths. Thoroughly mix these cores in a clean container (DO NOT USE A GALVANIZED CONTAINER OR BUCKET) to create a composite sample for each area. Mix well and take out 2 CUPS (1 PINT) OF SOIL for your sample. Place the composite soil sample in a clean container or bag and label it with your name, phone number, and the location samples taken. (i.e., lawn, vegetable garden, perennial garden, etc.), and the date.

Remember: Do not bring in wet samples. If necessary, sample wet soil by spreading it on a sheet of newspaper and allowing it to dry at room temperature before bringing it to the office.

If you live in Scott County, please bring samples to **Scott County Cooperative Extension, 1130 Cincinnati Road, Georgetown, KY 40324. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**

– Phone 502 863 0984. Soil Test Results usually take 5 to 10 business days to process; however, spring and fall are high-volume times, which may take longer results.

Where?	How Deep?	When to Sample/When to Fertilize?
Lawns and turf areas	2" to 4"	Fertilize in fall
Trees and shrubs at the drip line	6" to 12"	Fertilize in late fall (November/December), early winter or early spring
Annual flowers	6" to 8"	*Do not sample close to foundations, sidewalks, or graveled areas/granular dry fertilizer can be added to the flower garden when tilled in spring, or existing plants can be side-dressed.
Perennial flowers	6" to 12"	
Fruit Tree at the drip line of the tree	12" to 18"	February
Bush and vine fruits	8" to 12"	February
Home vegetable gardens	4" to 8"	Sample soil in October or November/fertilize in early spring before planting and side dress as needed later in the season
For Agricultural Crops and Pastures	6" to 8"	Spring or Fall

Soil Tests are provided FREE of charge by Scott Co. Cooperative Extension District Board for residents of Scott County.

Save Time. Save Money. Save the Environment.

Don't Over-Fertilize

Kentucky soils are so naturally rich in phosphorus, adding more to lawns increases the risk of polluting our waterways.

Do your part.

- Determine nutrient needs with a soil test.
- Carefully apply and use only what you need.
- Fertilize your bluegrass/tall fescue only in the fall to improve drought tolerance and reduce weed growth and mowing frequency.

Your county Extension office can provide more information on soil testing and other simple steps toward sustainable lawn care.



Fall is ideal for fertilizing cool-season grasses, landscape trees, and shrubs. Plants need nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium, among other nutrients, for growth and development. The most common fertilizer blends for homeowners are marketed as "complete fertilizers." because they contain nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), and potassium (K). These blends are often available in a formula like 10-10-10 (N-P-K). Still, they probably contain more phosphorus and potassium than your lawn needs because most Kentucky soils have plenty of phosphorus and potassium. In fact, many are so naturally rich in phosphorus, adding more increases the risk of polluting our waterways.

Too Much of a Good Thing. Excess or improperly applied fertilizer is carried by stormwater Run-off to creeks, streams, lakes, and rivers and contributes to nutrient pollution. Excess phosphorus promotes rapid and over-abundant algae growth in freshwater. Too much algae disrupts ecosystems, harms wildlife, negatively impacts water recreation, and may contain toxins that sicken people and pets.

Timing is Everything. The best time to fertilize cool-season turfgrass and woody plants is in the fall and early winter. It should occur after woody plants are dormant and before the soil freezes. Remember, don't over-fertilize! Improperly applied fertilizer (too much, wrong type, wrong timing) wastes time and money and harms the environment.

Do your part:

- Conduct a soil test to determine what nutrients your lawn requires.
- Apply only what you need. Excess fertilizer will not make your lawn healthier.
- Carefully apply fertilizer. Keep it off paved surfaces and away from drains and water sources.
- Fertilize cool-season grasses only in the fall, such as bluegrass and tall fescue.

Contact Sharon Flynt, Agent for Horticulture, Scott County Cooperative Extension office at sflynt@uky.edu to learn more about soil testing and how to sustainably improve your lawn or garden.





Martin-Gatton
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment

MAY 3

FREE!



9am to Noon

Garden Expo

Growing Together

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

SCOTT CO. COOPERATIVE EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEERS
Scott County Cooperative Extension Horticulture Program

**Soil,
Herbs,
Paint Your Own Pot,
Vendors,
Plant Starts for Sale!
DOOR PRIZES!**



NEW LOCATION THIS YEAR!

**Georgetown's NEW Downtown Pavilion
behind the old Georgetown City Hall**



100 N Court St, Georgetown, KY

**Cooperative
Extension Service**

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

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Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification

Celebrating National AG Week

March 24- 28

For more information on farm safety and disaster preparedness visit the following sites:



anr.ca.uky.edu/extensionhelps and/or
agrability.ca.uky.edu/resources-health-and-safety



Pick up your FREE Portable First Aid Kit at the Scott County Cooperative Extension Service Office located at:
1130 Cincinnati Rd. Georgetown, KY 40324

These first aid kits are the perfect size for a glovebox of a car, tractor, or a drawer at home!

Quantities are limited and are given out on a first come, first served basis while supplies last.

First aid kits have been provided by the Scott County Cooperative Extension Service

Right Tool for the Job

Gardening is a great way to relax the mind, but it can be very physically demanding, leaving you achy and sore. But don't give up a good habit just yet! With the use of ergonomic gardening tools, you can enjoy a pain-free gardening experience.

These tools can help prevent common gardening injuries like tendonitis, carpal tunnel syndrome, and back pain. By distributing force evenly across your hand and arm, they minimize the impact on specific areas. This is especially beneficial if you spend extended periods gardening.

When shopping for the best ergonomic garden tools, look for the following features:

- Cushioned handles for added comfort and shock absorption
- Adjustable handles for customization
- Lightweight materials for easy maneuverability

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Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities
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with prior notification.

Preventing Injury in the Yard and Garden



Safety Tips for Getting Back Into the Garden This Year

Whether you're a weekend gardener or spend time in the dirt daily, you have probably experienced working too hard and feeling sore. Soreness can stem from exerting a new or weak muscle, and it subsides after a few days. However, pain that lingers can occur from overexertion or performing an activity incorrectly. These types of injuries can be serious, such as rotator cuff injuries, or they can be repetitive strain injuries (RSIs), which occur in muscles, tendons, and nerves in the hands, wrists, shoulders, elbows, knees, and lower back. These injuries are caused by doing the same movement for an extended period and can lead to pain or weakness.

Please review these tips to prevent injuries and minimize pain while gardening.

- 1. Adapt the garden.** Create a garden that promotes healthy posture, movement, and maintenance. Incorporate raised beds and vertical gardens to avoid hunching over and kneeling. Carefully place stepping stones, pottery, and other gardening hardscapes so you can work around them without twisting, over-reaching, or pulling.
- 2. Adapt the tools.** Use tools that are appropriate for the job, and that fit your abilities. Tools with ergonomic handles and attachments offer a comfortable grip and help maintain a straight wrist position. Rakes and shovels with height-appropriate handles help you maintain a straight back and avoid hunching over.
- 3. Adapt yourself.** Be prepared, and use safe movements. Wear comfortable, breathable clothing and closed-toed shoes with ankle support. Even if it's cloudy outside, wear sunscreen, a hat, and sunglasses if needed.
- 4. Hydrate and Keep Your Cool.** Drink water before, during, and after gardening. Start out hydrated, drink every 15-20 minutes while gardening, then drink after to replace what you may have lost through sweat. Keep your tools and other essentials (trash bags, water bottle, cell phone, snacks, etc.) in a bucket or cart nearby while you work. Work during cooler times of the day, and break tasks into shorter activities. If possible, avoid gardening for more than 1.5 hours at a time.
- 5. Alternate, Break and Stretch.** Change tasks every 20 minutes to use alternate muscles and intensities (e.g., change from standing to kneeling). Remember to take breaks to stretch your muscles and hydrate. Engage your leg muscles rather than your arms and back when lifting, carrying, setting items down, changing directions, and moving back and forth (e.g., raking and shoveling). When working low to the ground, kneel rather than crouching or squatting, and use a foam mat or knee pads. Kneel on one knee while keeping the other foot on the ground for support. This helps avoid hunching while keeping your back straight. Alternate legs every few minutes. Stretch before, during, and after gardening. Gardening is a physical activity, so treat it like any other exercise. Warm up your muscles first, then as you take breaks, stretch the used muscles. At the end, do whole-body stretches.

The more you practice safety in the garden, the more it becomes part of your routine and the less likely you will be to experience soreness and pain

Adapted by Sharon Flynt, from "Ask an Expert - Three Tips for Preventing Injury in the Yard and Garden" by Gabriela Murza, Utah State University Extension. Photo by Utah State University Extension

Lean Green Lettuce Tacos



8 large lettuce leaves	¾ pound extra lean ground beef	1 tablespoon finely chopped cilantro
1½ cup cooked brown rice	1 small zucchini, chopped	1 teaspoon lime juice
¾ cup fresh corn kernels	1 ounce packet low-sodium taco seasoning	1 tomato, chopped
1 cup canned black beans, drained and rinsed	4 ounces low sodium tomato sauce	1 small red onion, chopped
1 tablespoon olive oil		

Wash and dry lettuce leaves.

Prepare rice according to package directions. **Cut** corn off cob. **Drain** and **rinse** black beans. In a skillet, **heat** the oil to medium; **add** ground beef and begin to **cook**. When beef begins to brown, **add** zucchini, corn and black beans to skillet. Continue to **cook** until vegetables are tender and beef is done. Do not overcook. **Add** in taco seasoning and tomato sauce and heat through. **Add** cilantro and lime

juice to the cooked rice. **Place** equal amounts of rice mixture and taco mixture into lettuce leaves. **Top** each taco with chopped tomato and onion.

Yield: 8 servings

Nutritional Analysis: 180 calories, 4.5 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 20 mg cholesterol, 350 mg sodium, 23 g carbohydrate, 4 g fiber, 5 g sugars, 12 g protein.



Kentucky Lettuce

SEASON: Early to late spring.

NUTRITION FACTS: Lettuces have 5 to 15 calories per cup depending on variety. Lettuce provides vitamins A and C, calcium and iron.

SELECTION: Choose crisp, brightly colored lettuce with no blemishes, slime, browning or wilted leaves.

STORAGE: Store washed and dried lettuce in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for three to five days, depending on the variety.

PREPARATION: Wash well and dry before using. Add dressing just before serving to prevent wilting. Lettuce is almost always eaten raw in salads or on sandwiches. Lettuce can also be steamed or added to soups at the end of cooking.

KENTUCKY LETTUCE

Kentucky Proud Project

County Extension Agents for Family and Consumer Sciences

University of Kentucky, Dietetics and Human Nutrition students

April 2017

Source: www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov

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

<http://plateitup.ca.uky.edu>



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