

Hort From The Hilltop



Cooperative Extension Service
Harrison County Office
668 New Lair Road
Cynthiana, KY 41031
859-234-5510

December 2024 Horticulture Newsletter

Hello
Horticulturalists!



Jessie Hopkins

Jessica Hopkins
Horticulture Extension Agent
jessica.hopkins2@uky.edu

I don't know about you, but it feels like I blinked and it is already December! The holiday's will soon be in full swing and you can join in on that by joining our fresh wreath workshop. It's on a Friday evening, and don't delay in signing up, because these spots go FAST! Other classes and programs are advertised as well, so be sure to check those out. In addition, for all our fruit, vegetable, and cut flower growers, be sure to check on the info and the links about the Fruit and Vegetable Conference coming up in January, in Lexington!



Martin-Gatton
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment
University of Kentucky.

HARRISON COUNTY EXTENSION

Holiday

FRESH WREATH WORKSHOP

Friday, December 13th
Harrison County Extension Office

\$15 class fee

Offered:
10:00 a.m.
&
5:30 p.m.

REGISTRATION REQUIRED
Call 859-234-5510
to sign up for a time slot

Limited spots available

**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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Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.

Happy Houseplants



**Thursday, January 23
10:00 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.**

Learn about how to choose the right houseplant for you, basic plant care, propagation techniques, and how to make your houseplants happy!



2025 KENTUCKY FRUIT & VEGETABLE CONFERENCE

Jan. 6th-7th, 2025

Pre-conference events Jan. 5th

Marriott Lexington Griffin Gate
Lexington, Kentucky

Registration is open now. Online or mail-in early bird registration (received before Friday, December 20, 2024) will be \$80. Late registration (received after Friday, December 20, 2024) and on-site registration will be \$100. Registration fees are non-refundable. Lunch tickets are included with registration. Visit kyhortcouncil.org for more information and links to register.

Apple Sage Pork Chops

Wash hands with soap and warm water; **scrubbing** for at least 20 seconds. **Gently clean** all produce under cool running water. **Mix** flour, sage, garlic, thyme, and salt together in a small bowl. **Sprinkle** 1 1/2 tablespoons of the mixture over both sides of the pork chops. Remember to **wash** hands after handling raw meat. **Heat** oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. **Sear** pork chops for 2 to 3 minutes on each side. Pan will smoke a little. **Remove** pork chops from the pan and set aside. **Reduce** heat to medium. To the same skillet, **add** onion and **cook** for 2 minutes, or until soft. **Add** apples, and **continue cooking** until tender, about 2 minutes. **Add** apple juice, brown sugar, and remaining spice mixture and stir to dissolve. **Return** pork chops to the skillet by nestling them in the pan. **Bring** the liquid to a boil, **reduce** heat to low, and **simmer** for 5 minutes or until the pork is cooked through and reaches 145 degrees F on a food thermometer. **Refrigerate** leftovers within 2 hours.

Yield: 4 servings. **Nutrition Analysis:** 310 calories, 10g total fat, 1.5g saturated fat, 50mg cholesterol, 660mg sodium, 35g total carbohydrate, 3g fiber, 25g total sugars, 7g added sugars, 23g protein, 6% DV vitamin D, 2% DV calcium, 6% DV iron, 15% DV potassium.

- 1 tablespoon flour
- 1 teaspoon dried sage
- 2 tablespoons garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon ground thyme
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 4 boneless center cut pork chops
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 1/2 large onion, thinly sliced
- 2 thinly sliced red apples
- 1 cup unsweetened apple juice
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar (optional)

Spice it Up!



Holiday Plant Care and Safety



The holidays have arrived, and people will soon be decking the halls and decorating their homes, including adding garland, wreaths, poinsettias and other festive décor to ignite the spirit. Here are some tips and guidance on how to keep your holiday décor long-lasting and safe.

Care and Safety of Poinsettias

Take clues about preserving poinsettias in our homes from the place of their origin. They are tropical plants and love warm, humid environment. Did you know that they can get exposure to the cold just by carrying them from the shop where you purchased them to the car and to your home? Before you venture out with that beautiful and colorful bundle in your arms, make sure you cover it by wrapping it or putting it in a paper bag to protect them during transportation from a shop to a happy home.

Once at home, make sure you remove the decorative wrapping from the container and free drainage holes. Placing poinsettias into a decorative pot is an option, but just make sure you add about an inch or two of small stones at the bottom since these decorative pots do not have holes. The excess water gathered at the bottom will increase much needed humidity. Poinsettias need to be watered regularly and evenly. Water when the top of the soil is dry to the touch. Overwatering or letting plants root sit in the water will “drown” the plant, leading to root rot.

Poinsettias do not like drafty and cold areas in the house, so close to a glass sliding door or near a cold window are not the best places for them. They prefer temperatures from 60 to 70 degrees, away from the hot registers.

If you want the poinsettia to re-bloom, it is a bit involved. It is possible, but it is cumbersome. After Christmas, the plant should be cut back. Once you cut it back, what’s important is that it gets plenty of light – at least 13 or 14 hours of direct light. That can be from incandescent lights, LEDs or fluorescent lights, but you must make sure the days are not too short. That’s how you keep the plant vegetative so it will keep growing without producing flowers. In September of the following year, you’ll want to begin exposing the plant to shorter days, and then the plant will start to initiate flowers again. At that point, it is very important that the plant does not get exposed to light at night. Even five days of inappropriate light will either prevent or trigger the blooming.

A common question about poinsettia is if it’s poisonous to humans or to pets. This plant is not poisonous, not from the standpoint of whether it actually produces poison. It is not edible though. If a human or pet would consume poinsettia leaves or other parts of the plant, they probably will have a little bit of an upset digestive tract. Most vets will treat it as a poisoning even though the pet is not really poisoned in the strict sense of the word poison. And from that standpoint, the poinsettia is a fairly safe plant to have in the home.

Preserving the Lifespan of Wreaths and Garland

There is nothing better than freshly cut evergreen branches for a wreath on your door or a garland around the windows or fireplace. The smell is sure to put you in the holiday spirit. To keep the fresh smell all season long, you need to consider a few rules. First and foremost, use fresh cut branches, regardless of the evergreen. If you are into a really strong, fragrant aroma, try opting for branches from a fir. To prevent needle loss and the mess that goes with it, keep your garlands and wreaths away from drafty areas, hot registers or anything that will contribute to the needles drying out. Pay attention to decorative light choices. Use low-heat lights – usually LED, micro or mini lights work well.



Article by: *Mira Danilovich, WVU Extension Consumer Horticulture Specialist and Associate Professor, and Sven Verlinden, Director of Plant and Soil Sciences and Associate Professor, WVU Davis College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Design*

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

The Extension Office will be closed
December 25 through January 1st



Sign up to receive the Horticulture Newsletter via Email

Currently, the only way to receive the Horticulture Newsletter is to have one mailed to your home. We are now going to offer the option to receive the newsletter via email instead of through the mail. If you would like to receive the Horticulture Newsletter via email, please go to <https://tinyurl.com/mttaj43u> or scan the QR code below and fill out a quick survey.



Community Corner

Spanish Resources

MCTC

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HC EXTENSION

Check out what's happening in our community!
Use your smart phone camera to scan the QR codes to be directed to the organization's separate website.



Stay Up to Date on events by following the Harrison County Cooperative Extension Horticulture Facebook page!