



Agriculture, Families and Youth

Cultivating Knowledge, Strengthening Families, Building Futures



Summer is finally here, and with it comes the warmth and sunshine we've all been waiting for! As you head outdoors to enjoy the season, it's important to take extra care of your health and safety. Stay well-hydrated, apply sunblock regularly, and protect yourself from ticks, mosquitoes, and other pests that can carry harmful diseases.

To make the most of the summer while staying safe, take time to learn about smart sun practices, the benefits of proper hydration, and effective ways to prevent insect bites by connecting with FCS agent Asya, ANR agent Daniel or 4-H agent Joe!

We are here to support and guide you all summer long!

Inside the Issue

- Water Safety
- MoneyWise Newsletter

- Healthy Choices Newsletter

- 4H Camp Information
- Youth Health Bulletin
- Entomology Club/ Kentucky Keepers

- Invasive Weeds
- Chicken Coop Gold

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606-298-7742



martin.ca.uky.edu



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Agriculture and Natural Resources
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MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

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Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities accommodated with prior notification.

June

2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 Heirloom Quilters	3 Pieceful Stitchers MCPL SUMMER READING KICK-OFF	4 Hometown Homemakers 4-H COUNCIL MEETING	5	6 SLEIGH CANCER Birdhouse Workshop	7
8	9 Heirloom Quilters	10 Pieceful Stitchers Teen Conference	11 Teen Conference	12 Teen Conference	13 Teen Conference	14
15	16 Heirloom Quilters	17 Pieceful Stitchers	18	19	20	21
22	23 Heirloom Quilters Renew Appalachia Day Camp	24 Pieceful Stitchers Renew Appalachia Day Camp	25 Renew Appalachia Day Camp	26 Door Hanger Workshop Renew Appalachia Day Camp	27 Laugh and Learn Playdate	28
29	30	AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ORGANIZATION				

Family & Consumer Science

SWIMWEAR COLOR: DO's AND DON'Ts

DO:

Choose bright, neon, high-contrast colors



DON'T:

Choose colors that blend or reflect surrounding shades



Water safety is especially important in the summer when pools, lakes, and beaches are popular spots for fun. Drowning can happen quickly and silently, making constant supervision essential, especially for children. One often overlooked factor is swimsuit color—bright, contrasting colors like neon orange, pink, or yellow are easier to see in water, while dark or light blue suits can blend in, making it harder to spot someone in distress. Choosing visible swimwear can help improve safety and response time in an emergency!

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MONEYWISE

VALUING PEOPLE. VALUING MONEY.

JUNE 2025

Nichole Huff, Ph.D., CFLE | Assistant Extension Professor Family Finance and Resource Management | nichole.huff@uky.edu

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: PROTECTING YOUR ONLINE PRIVACY

What if you used your phone at a coffee shop to check your bank account, but the Wi-Fi wasn't secure, and your bank account number and password were stolen? What if you filed your income taxes and the IRS reported they had already sent out your refund check (to someone else)? These are examples of what could happen if you don't secure your personal devices.

Digital devices provide us with information and services that make daily tasks easier. Our homes are filled with devices connected to the internet: mobile phones, tablets, computers, smartwatches, security cameras, baby monitors, thermostats, smart TVs, and smart home voice assistants. Consumers should be wary, however, as these devices have the capability to collect personal information and share it, limited only by their privacy agreements.

YOUR DATA AND HOW IT IS USED

Companies may collect data including your location, contacts, calls, messages, browsing history, fitness data, payments, and more. They might track the apps you use or the files you view or download. Some may track facial recognition or audio conversations. Some of this information might seem harmless, but other information may have personal and financial implications, such as if your bank account username and password are stolen.



PROTECTING YOURSELF

The U.S. Department of Defense has a resource for learning about threats and how to protect yourself against them. It gives tips you can use to increase your protection, including step-by-step instructions for privacy considerations on popular online services, apps, and devices.

The following are a few key dos and don'ts:

DO Be sure your home Wi-Fi is set up securely. The network name that is broadcast should not identify you or your family (for example Smith_Family_Home or 2_Dobermans). Set up strong encryption - get assistance if needed. Make sure your router's firmware is up to date.

DO Check to see if any of your usernames have been compromised. Visit <https://haveibeenpwned.com/> to see if your username and password have been leaked. If so, immediately change your password for all accounts associated with it.

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CONTROL WHAT PERSONAL INFORMATION YOU SHARE SO YOU DON'T BECOME A VICTIM OF LOOSE ONLINE SECURITY.



DO Use a different and complex password for each of your accounts. A strong password is 10 or more characters containing a combination of upper-case letters, lower-case letters, numbers, and symbols. It is easy to use the same password over and over so you can remember it, but if it is stolen, it can expose all your accounts where you used it.

DO Enable two-factor authentication for logging in when available. This requires a third form of identification from your phone or other device. If your username and password are stolen, the thief won't be able to access your account without this other piece of information.

DON'T Don't use email or text messages to send confidential information. These services are not secure. Also, don't accept messages or open attachments from people you don't know. This is one of the preferred ways for hackers get your information.

DO Secure your social media accounts as much as they will permit.

DON'T Don't use public Wi-Fi networks, such as a restaurant, library or airport, to access anything personal or financial. If you must use them, use Virtual Private Network (VPN) software for online privacy. Some VPNs are free, and others charge a fee.

DO Secure your web browser. Review and adjust your browser's privacy settings to control what data is shared with websites and third parties. Disable features that share your location or browsing history if they are not necessary.

Control what personal information you share so you don't become a victim of loose online security. Using these recommendations to secure your phone, tablet, and computer can be the difference between minor inconvenience and a major financial setback that could take years to correct.

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United States Attorney's Office, Northern District of Georgia. (2025, January 30). Protecting Yourself While Using The Internet. <https://www.justice.gov/usao-ndga/protecting-yourself-while-using-internet>


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MAY / JUNE 2025

HEALTHY CHOICES

FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES

 Cooperative
Extension Service



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This work is supported by the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

Yogurt's hidden benefits: From digestion to heart health

National Dairy Month is in June each year. This is the month that highlights the value of dairy. Despite the wholesome paybacks, a lot of us do not eat enough dairy products. Yogurt is a food most people can put in their food plan. Here are some of the benefits of eating yogurt:

- **Gives key nutrients:** Most types of yogurts are a great source of protein, riboflavin, vitamin B12, calcium, and phosphorus. It is also a good source of potassium, pantothenic acid, magnesium, and zinc.
- **Helps gut health:** Yogurt has special bacteria called probiotics that are good for your gut. They help to keep your digestion running smoothly and may help your immune system.
- **Builds strong bones:** Yogurt is packed with calcium and



vitamin D, which are vital for making your bones strong.

- **Good for your heart:** Eating yogurt often is linked to lower blood pressure and reduced risk of heart disease.

- **Easy to digest:** Yogurt is well tolerated by people with lactose intolerance. This is because the live active cultures in yogurt help to break down lactose. This makes it simpler to break down food compared to other dairy products.
- **Helps you feel full:** Yogurt can help you feel full and satisfied. This is helpful if you are trying to keep a healthy weight.
- **Easy to enjoy:** Yogurt comes in many flavors and types. Enjoy yogurt by itself, with fruit, or use it in smoothies.

Yogurt is a healthy food. Choose yogurts made with low-fat milk and less added sugar. Try adding yogurt to your meals and snacks.

Source: Adapted from Colorado State University Extension's Yogurt: Health and Probiotic Benefits

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BASIC BUDGET BITES

Finding the best buy on food

Finding the best deal on food is a skill, and one anyone can learn. You must know what to look for and where to find it. Learn how to find the best deal for your family.

The first step in being a smart shopper starts with the price tag. Each price tag that appears on the front edge of the grocery shelf shows a lot of helpful facts. It shows the size of the item, the retail price, and the unit price.

- **Retail Price** is the price you pay for each item.
- **Unit Price** is used to compare the price of the same unit (pound, ounce, quart) between two items. Look for the lowest price per unit. You can use the

32 OZ LF YOGURT	
UNIT PRICE	RETAIL PRICE
\$0.05 per oz	\$1.62
	

6 OZ LF YOGURT	
UNIT PRICE	RETAIL PRICE
\$0.12 per oz	\$0.72
	

unit price to compare brands and sizes. Then, you can figure out which one costs less.

Source: NEP/PEM



SMART TIPS

Using Greek yogurt in recipes

You can use Greek yogurt in both sweet and savory dishes. It is thicker and creamier than regular yogurt. This makes it a good choice in recipes instead of items like sour cream, mayonnaise, heavy cream, cream cheese, and buttermilk. These items are often higher in fat and calories. Check out the Loaded Beef Stroganoff recipe on page 3 using Greek yogurt to replace sour cream.

COOKING WITH KIDS

Whole-Grain Strawberry Pancakes

- Cooking spray
- 1 1/2 cups whole-wheat flour
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3 eggs
- 1 6-ounce container low-fat vanilla yogurt
- 3/4 cup water
- 3 tablespoons canola oil
- 1 3/4 cups strawberries, diced
- 1 6-ounce container strawberry low-fat yogurt

1. Heat griddle to 375 degrees F or heat a 12-inch skillet over medium heat. Spray with cooking spray before heating.
2. In a large bowl, mix flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt; set aside.
3. In a separate medium bowl, beat eggs, vanilla yogurt, water, and oil with a wire whisk until well blended.
4. Pour egg mixture all at once into flour mixture; stir just until moistened.
5. For each pancake, pour slightly less than a 1/4 cup of batter from a cup or pitcher onto the hot griddle. Cook pancakes for 1 to 2 minutes or until bubbly on top, puffed, and dry around edges. Turn and cook the other side 1 to 2 minutes or until golden brown.
6. Mix strawberries and strawberry yogurt together in a small bowl. Top each serving (2 pancakes) with approximately 1/2 a cup of the fruit and yogurt mixture.

Servings: 7

Serving size: 2 pancakes

Recipe cost: \$3.76

Cost per serving: \$0.54

Nutrition Facts per serving: 250 calories; 9g total fat; 1.5 saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 80mg cholesterol; 380mg sodium; 36g total carbohydrate; 4g fiber; 13g sugar; 5g added sugar; 8g protein; 6% Daily Value vitamin D; 10% Daily value calcium; 10% Daily Value iron; 6% Daily Value potassium

Source: NEP/PEM

PARENT CORNER

Stealthy healthy tips for parents

Do your children want to push peas around the plate instead of eating them? Then you might have thought about sneaking a few veggies into their foods. While this can help children eat more vegetables, it should not be your only game plan. If you are always hiding vegetables, how will they get to know and enjoy them?

You don't need to hide veggies on a routine basis. But, if you have a picky eater, hiding them a little can be a

helpful way to get more produce into their food. When it comes to getting children to happily eat veggies, the more choices the better. So go ahead and fold mushrooms into meatloaf and shred carrots into spaghetti sauce. Top pizza with onions and peppers, sprinkle tomatoes and avocados on tacos, or fold butternut squash into mac and cheese.

Source: Adapted from <https://www.eatright.org/food/planning/meals-and-snacks/get-fruits-and-veggies-to-the-plate>



RECIPE

Loaded Beef Stroganoff

- 12 ounces egg noodles (choose whole-wheat if available)
- 1 pound lean ground beef
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 tablespoons garlic powder
- 8 ounces sliced white mushrooms
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 32 ounces (or 4 cups) low-sodium beef broth
- 1 can (14.5 ounces) no-salt-added peas, drained
- 1 can (14.5 ounces) no-salt-added sliced carrots, drained
- 1 1/2 cups plain nonfat Greek yogurt or light sour cream
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- Parmesan cheese (optional)

1. Wash hands with warm water and soap, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds.
2. Wash fresh produce under cool running water. Cut to prepare for the recipe.
3. Cook egg noodles according

- to package directions while preparing the other steps. Drain.
4. On the stove, preheat a large pot on medium heat. Add the ground beef, onion, and garlic powder.
5. Wash hands after handling raw meat.
6. Cook the ground beef mixture, stirring often until the onion is tender and the beef reaches an internal temperature of 165 degrees F as measured by a meat thermometer.
7. Add the mushrooms. Cook until they are tender (about 5 to 8 minutes).
8. Stir in the flour and cook for 2 minutes.
9. Stir in the beef broth, peas, and carrots. Bring to a simmer and cook for about 5 minutes, until the mixture thickens. Remove from heat.
10. Once the mixture stops simmering, stir in the Greek yogurt, salt, and

black pepper. Add cooked egg noodles and combine. If mixture is too thick, add milk or beef stock until it's the desired consistency.

11. Serve immediately. Sprinkle with parmesan cheese when serving, if desired.

12. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Notes: To reheat leftovers, add a little beef broth or milk before warming.

Servings: 10

Serving size: 2 cups

Recipe cost: \$13.87

Cost per serving: \$1.39

Nutrition Facts per serving: 270 calories; 4.5g total fat; 1.5g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 30mg cholesterol; 610mg sodium; 38g total carbohydrate; 3g dietary fiber; 6g total sugars; 0g added sugars; 22g protein; 0% Daily Value of vitamin D; 6% Daily Value of calcium; 15% Daily Value of iron; 10% Daily Value of potassium.

Source: NEP/PEM

FOOD FACTS

Counting the teaspoons: Managing added sugars for better health

Americans for the most part get about 15% of their calories from added sugars. This adds up to around 360 calories a day. Added sugars are "empty calories." This means they are often in foods that give mostly calories.

One way to cut down on the added sugars is to switch from drinks with sugar like soda to water and drinks without sugar sweeteners. You can also try to eat fewer desserts.

Added sugars are sugars not found naturally in foods that have been added during processing. Most added sugars come from soda, desserts, fruit drinks, and candy. Foods that have naturally occurring sugars are milk, fruits, and vegetables.



Try to limit added sugars. Higher added sugar use may be linked to high triglycerides, low HDL cholesterol, and high LDL cholesterol. This can raise the risk of getting heart disease.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans suggests people aged 2 and older limit added sugars to less than 10% of their total daily calories. If someone eats 2,000 calories a day, that's 200 calories or 50 grams of added sugar. Children younger than 2 should avoid food and drinks with added sugars.

Source: Adapted from <https://nutrition.ucdavis.edu/outreach/nutr-health-info-sheets/consumer-added-sugars>

LOCAL EVENTS

NAME County

Local events

If you are interested in nutrition classes, contact your Extension office.

Martin County Cooperative Extension Office

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Asya Jarrell

Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences

VISIT US ONLINE AT
EXTENSION.CA.UKY.EDU/COUNTY



4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



 Cooperative
Extension Service



4-H

**Âges
9-14**

Camp

July 29-Aug 1

Activities :

- High Ropes and Zipline
 - Crafts & Fun Foods
 - Fishing and Canoeing
 - Swimming
 - Basketball/Volleyball
- and more

JM Feltner Camp

380 J.M. Feltner Road
London, KY 40744

Registration Link

Posted on our FB Page



More Information : 606-298-7742

martin.ca.uky.edu/4h-youth-development

An Equal Opportunity Organization



Nestled in the scenic foothills near the Daniel Boone National Forest, J.M. Feltner Memorial 4-H Camp in London, Kentucky, offers a transformative summer experience for youth aged 9-18. Serving 34 counties, the camp provides a safe and supportive environment where campers can explore new activities, build lasting friendships, and develop essential life skills.

Campers can select from a diverse range of classes and activities, such as:

- Water Sports: Swimming, canoeing.
- Outdoor Skills: Archery, riflery, and fishing.
- Sports: Basketball and Volleyball..
- Adventure: High and low ropes courses.
- Creative Arts: Photography/Media, Crafts and Fun Foods.
- Leadership: Team-building exercises.
- Mindfulness: Nature and Hammocking

These activities are designed to promote teamwork, self-confidence, and personal growth in a fun and engaging setting.

☀️ Why Attend 4-H Camp?

Attending J.M. Feltner Memorial 4-H Camp offers numerous benefits:

- Skill Development: Learn new skills in a supportive environment.
- Friendship: Make lasting connections with peers from across the state.
- Confidence: Build self-esteem through achievements and challenges.
- Fun: Enjoy a variety of activities that make learning enjoyable.

Whether you're interested in outdoor adventures, creative arts, or leadership training, there's something for everyone at 4-H Camp. It's an opportunity to step out of your comfort zone, discover new interests, and create unforgettable memories.

📅 2025 Camp Dates and Registration

- July 29-August 1
- Register online (link is on our Facebook pages) or in person at our office during business hours.



UK Citizen Scientist - Kentucky Keepers

Join us in monitoring invasive pests that threaten Kentucky's agriculture and Natural Resources! You can choose to trap the spongy moth (formerly the gypsy moth) or submit photos of sightings of several other species! Call 606-298-7742 for more information on this program.

SIGN UP HERE:



Spotted lanternfly lookalikes

While SLF is unique looking, there are some insects that resemble it!

Some moth species have similar looking under-wings. They will be fuzzy and lack the other designs SLF has.



Other insects may have spots or stripes but not quite the same mixture as the SLF.



Office of the
State Entomologist

Join our

CITIZEN SCIENCE PROGRAM!

Kentucky's Office of the State Entomologist monitors for new invasive pests that threaten Kentucky's agriculture and natural resources. We are seeking volunteers for our Citizen Science program to help monitor invasive species in Kentucky!



EARLY DETECTION OF INVASIVE PESTS IS KEY!

If you are interested in monitoring invasive pests and helping to protect Kentucky's agriculture and natural resources, please join our Citizen Science program!

APPLY TODAY!

Scan the QR code or visit the URL below.



SCAN ME

<https://ose-uky-edu.hub.arcgis.com/pages/citizen-scientist>

YOUTH

HEALTH BULLETIN



JUNE 2025

Download this and past issues
of the Adult, Youth, Parent, and
Family Caregiver Health Bulletins:
[http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/
content/health-bulletins](http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/content/health-bulletins)

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC

WHAT IS CANCER?



it's **not**
contagious
and it
is treatable.

You might have heard the word "cancer" before. Maybe you heard it when a person got sick or was going through treatment to get better. You may wonder what cancer is or how a person gets it. You might wonder how cancer is treated to help the person heal.

Cancer is not just one sickness. It is many related diseases that happen when cells in a person's body get messed up, grow, and divide very quickly. It makes many messed-up cells that grow really fast. These cells stick together and form a tumor, or a big clump, somewhere in the body. Over time, cancer cells can

Continued on the next page



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Continued from the previous page

move in the body, making tumors in new places. These tumors make it hard for the body to work correctly. Soon, they make a person feel sick.

You cannot catch cancer from someone — it is not contagious. Unlike some other sicknesses, cancer cannot pass from person to person. Germs do not cause cancer.

Doctors and scientists are still learning about why certain people get cancer, and others do not. We do know that cancer is not caused by getting hurt, like getting bumped, bruised, or cut. It is also not a punishment for being bad. However, some things, like smoking or getting lots of sunburns, can make it more likely for cancer to happen later in life. In any case, the sooner cancer is found, and treatment begins, the better the chance a person has of getting better.

Cancer can be treated in different ways. In some cases, taking vitamins and changing things like what the person eats or how they live can be enough to shrink cancer tumors. Others need surgery to cut out the tumor and let their body heal. Sometimes, treatment like chemotherapy or radiation is needed to kill cancer cells that cannot be reached or keep them from coming back.

• **Chemotherapy** is a medicine that targets and kills cancer cells. Sometimes it can be a pill, but often it must be taken through an IV line. An IV line puts liquid medicine into the blood through a needle and tiny tube stuck through the skin.

• **Radiation therapy** uses high-energy waves, like X-rays, to go through the skin. They target and kill cancer cells. As the cancer cells are destroyed, they dissolve, and the tumor shrinks. Both chemotherapy and radiation therapy are very good at killing



a plate
of cookies
& a nice
note ought
to help!



cancer cells. Sometimes, though, while destroying cancer cells, they can also hurt healthy parts of the body. That makes the person feel worse. This is called a side effect. Cancer medicine can come with side effects like feeling very tired, having an upset stomach, skin rashes, or hair falling out. However, these problems don't last. When treatment ends, the side effects go away. The person's hair grows back, their skin clears, and they feel much better.

While getting cancer treatment, a person may need extra rest or to stay away from many people to stay away from other germs. After treatment is done, doctors will do tests to see if the cancer is gone. A person whose cancer is gone is called "in remission." Even after a person is in remission, they may still need to go to the doctor from time to time to make sure the cancer does not come back.

If someone you know is told they have cancer, it can seem scary. Talk to your parents or another trusted grown-up about your feelings and questions you have about their situation. You may be able to help the person by encouraging them with a card, taking their family a meal, or offering them prayer or good wishes.

REFERENCE:
<https://kidhealth.org/en/kids/cancer.html>

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Cartoon illustrations by: Chris Ware
Illustrations © University of Kentucky
School of Human Environmental Sciences



Agriculture & Natural Resources

Weeds Gone Wild: Fighting Back Against Invasive Forbs in a Wet Kentucky Spring

If your pastures, roadsides, or woodlots look more like a jungle than a farm this spring, you're not alone. Eastern Kentucky's extremely wet spring has created ideal conditions for invasive forbs and herbaceous weeds to explode across the landscape. These fast-spreading, non-native plants aren't just unsightly, they can choke out native species, reduce biodiversity, and cause long-term harm to ecosystems and agriculture alike.

Among the worst offenders this season are Canada thistle, poison hemlock, garlic mustard, and musk thistle—all of which have shown aggressive growth after the rainfall. Let's take a closer look at these common invaders and how to stop them.



Canada thistle is a spiny perennial that spreads both by seed and creeping roots. Its purple flower heads may be pretty, but they quickly form dense patches that smother native plants. For control, hand pulling can work on small infestations, but for widespread patches, a fall and spring foliar herbicide application (such as glyphosate or clopyralid) is often most effective.

Poison hemlock is not only invasive, but dangerously toxic to humans and livestock. This biennial forms low rosettes in its first year and tall, white-flowered stalks in its second. Mowing before flowering can help reduce its spread, but herbicide treatment in the rosette stage (using products like glyphosate or 2,4-D) is key. Always wear protective clothing when handling it.

Garlic mustard is another aggressive biennial, easily identified by its garlic-scented leaves and clusters of small white flowers. It thrives in shaded forests and disturbed soils. Small patches can be hand-pulled, but for larger infestations, foliar herbicides and prescribed burning are recommended.

Musk thistle, also known as nodding thistle, stands tall with drooping pink-purple flower heads. Like other thistles, it's unpalatable to livestock and forms dense, spiny patches. Control it by mowing before seed production or applying herbicides while in the rosette stage in early spring or late fall.

Wet weather can make herbicide applications tricky, so choose dry days with little wind and always follow label instructions. For many of these weeds, consistent follow-up over multiple seasons is crucial. Invasive weeds may have gained the upper hand this spring, but with the right tools and timing, landowners can take back control. For more information on herbicide options or help developing a site-specific weed management plan, contact your local extension office.

Let's work together to turn the tide against Kentucky's invasive forbs—before the next rain gives them an even bigger boost.

Turning Chicken Coop Cleanup into Garden Gold

Backyard chickens aren't just great for fresh eggs—they're also miniature composting machines producing one of the most nutrient-rich fertilizers available. With this spring's planting season in full swing, it's the perfect time to talk about how to harness poultry manure to improve your garden's health and yield—safely and effectively.

Chicken manure is exceptionally high in nitrogen, making it a potent natural fertilizer when properly managed. But to get the most benefit, you'll need more than a shovel and good intentions. Building a manure handling system into your coop setup is key to maximizing collection, maintaining bird health, and making cleanup easier for you.



First, it all starts with the floor. Earthen floors may be "dirt cheap," but they're messy, unsanitary, and poor at collecting usable manure. Instead, go with sealed wooden floors, concrete, or perforated plastic flooring elevated above a droppings pit. These designs allow for easy cleanup and better nutrient preservation. A droppings pit—essentially a sheltered bin under the coop—protects manure from weather and reduces nitrogen loss, while also keeping birds clean and dry.

If a full pit system isn't feasible, try installing metal or plastic dropping boards under roosts to catch manure overnight. These boards are easy to scrape and reduce bedding waste.

Bedding choice is equally important. The deep litter system—layering bedding like wood shavings, straw, and peat moss—helps decompose waste while reducing odor and pathogen levels. This composting effect not only makes cleanup easier, but creates a rich, nutrient-dense litter that can be stored for future use.

When it's time to use the manure, plan ahead. Composted or aged manure can be applied to gardens about three weeks before planting. But for raw manure or compost used on edible crops, timing is critical: allow at least 90 days between application and harvest for most crops, and 120 days for root or leafy vegetables that touch the soil. This ensures harmful pathogens like *E. coli* are no longer a concern.

For best results, incorporate the manure into the soil the same day it's applied. Waiting just a few days can reduce nitrogen availability by over 30%. And if you're applying in fall, pair it with a cover crop to retain nutrients and prevent runoff.

So if your backyard hens are laying more than just breakfast, take advantage of their output. With a thoughtful setup, you can turn chicken droppings into garden gold—boosting soil health, reducing waste, and growing healthier vegetables for seasons to come.



Rice and Bean Salad



Putting People and
Worth to Work

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. This material was partially funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program — SNAP.

Nutrition facts

per serving:
350 calories; 18g total fat; 1.5g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 0mg cholesterol; 370mg sodium; 39g total carbohydrate; 7g dietary fiber; 4g total sugars; 0g added sugars; 10g protein; 0% Daily Value of vitamin D; 6% Daily Value of calcium; 15% Daily Value of iron; 18% Daily Value of potassium

Source:

Jeannie Noble, RD,
Extension Specialist for
Nutrition, University of
Kentucky Cooperative
Extension Service

Prep time: 10-15 minutes
Cook time: 20 minutes

Dressing

- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons Dijon mustard (or any type)
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup canola or vegetable oil

Salad

- 1 can (15 ounces) no-salt-added black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 can (15 ounces) low-sodium chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- 1 1/2 cups fresh, canned, or frozen corn
- 2 cups cooked brown rice
- 1/2 small red onion, diced
- 1/2 bunch cilantro or parsley, chopped
- 3 cups spinach, chopped
- 1/2 jalapeno, seeded and diced (optional)

1. Wash hands with warm water and soap, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds.
2. Rinse cilantro and jalapeno under cool running water and pat to dry.
3. In the bottom of a large bowl, whisk red wine vinegar, mustard, Italian seasoning, garlic powder, salt, and black pepper. Slowly add the vegetable oil while whisking vigorously until evenly combined.
4. Add black beans, chickpeas, corn, rice, red onion, cilantro, spinach, and jalapeno (if using). Gently toss until dressing evenly coats salad.
5. You can eat the salad immediately. For the best flavor, though, allow it to sit in the fridge for at least one hour.
6. Store leftovers in the refrigerator within two hours.

Makes 7 servings
Serving size: 1 1/2 cup
Cost per recipe: \$14.01
Cost per serving: \$2.00

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