

MCCRACKEN AG NEWS



McCracken County's Agriculture and Natural Resources Update

Cooperative Extension
University of Kentucky
McCracken County
2025 New Holt Rd
Paducah, KY 42001
270-554-9520



Meet the ANR Agent

Hello everybody! In case we haven't met, my name is Gracey Moffitt and I am the Ag agent here in McCracken County. I am very blessed to have been chosen to take on this position and I am so excited to see what all the future holds! If you haven't taken it yet, please take my Program Interest Survey! The results from this survey will help me to plan programs. You can find the link on our website.

Gracey Moffitt

Agent Update

Happy July everyone! Summer is in full swing with all of that heat! I hope you all have been able to stay afloat with all of this rain we've had.

June was a lot busier than I originally expected it to be, but all in all it has been good. I taught 4 sessions at **Hendron Lone Oak Elementary** for their **Summer Camp Program**. Each week the students learned and did more hands-on activities related to agriculture (as pictured above). The **Western Rivers Jr. Livestock Expo** was another great hit this year as students across Western KY had the opportunity to judge and show various livestock while practicing their public speaking skills (as pictured above). I had the opportunity to attend this year's **KACAA Professional Development Conference for Ag Agents** in Hopkinsville. I attended various in-service trainings for agents, attended the administrative session with the head staff of the ag department at the university, had the opportunity to go on various tours exploring the diverse commercial horticulture industry in Christian County, and attended our banquet where I received an award with a group of agents from the area for our Winter Ag Conference program that we host annually (as pictured above). We are also being recognized nationally for this award in crop production!

Everyone

Page
2

Livestock

Page
3-4

Row Crops and Forages

Page
5-6

Other Upcoming Events and Recipe

Page
7-8

Ag & Natural Resources Events and News for Everyone

Cooperative Extension Service

THE ANNUAL MCCRACKEN COUNTY FAIR

FRUITS FLOWERS
VEGETABLES PLANTS
HONEY AND MORE

NGC HORTICULTURE SPECIALTY FLOWER SHOW

Entries accepted July 22nd at Floral Hall from 7:30-10:30am

Entry pickup and prize money collection on July 27th from 2-4pm at Floral Hall

FLORAL HALL
CARSON PARK FAIRGROUNDS, 300 JOE CLIFTON DRIVE
PADUCAH, KY

THE FULL LIST OF ENTRY CLASSES AND RULES ARE LISTED AT THIS LINK WHEN YOU SCAN THE QR CODE

An Equal Opportunity Organization McCracken County Cooperative Extension

Have you seen my new Facebook page? I now have an official McCracken County ANR Facebook page! This page will be an extension of my newsletter by being able to share what I am doing during the week, upcoming events, news, and more! You can find it at **McCracken County Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources.**

Heat Exhaustion	Heat Stroke
<p>ACT FAST</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move to a cooler area • Loosen clothing • Sip cool water • Seek medical help if symptoms don't improve 	<p>ACT FAST</p> <p>CALL 911</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move person to a cooler area • Loosen clothing and remove extra layers • Cool with water or ice
<p>Dizziness</p> <p>Thirst</p> <p>Heavy Sweating</p> <p>Nausea</p> <p>Weakness</p>	<p>Confusion</p> <p>Dizziness</p> <p>Becomes Unconscious</p>
<p><i>Heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke.</i></p> <p><i>Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not given.</i></p>	
<p>Stay Cool, Stay Hydrated, Stay Informed!</p>	

Please remember to take care of yourself in this heat. Heat stress can get bad rather quickly. Pay attention to your body. Stay hydrated and try to stay cool - your life and health is more important than whatever task is at hand. **STAY SAFE!**

Livestock Events and News

Cowherd Expansion is Not the Only Way to Capitalize on a Strong Calf Market

By: Kenny Burdine, University of Kentucky

Date: 6/30/2025

Much has been written recently about the strength of the current cattle market. With beef cow inventory at a 60+ year low and demand being very strong, cow-calf operations are clearly in the driver's seat. Calf values are more than double what they were three years ago, which speaks to considerable opportunity for cow-calf operators to invest in their cowherds. Expansion is often the first opportunity that comes to mind in a strong calf market and there is likely merit in expansion, if doing so is consistent with the goals of the operation. However, some producers may not be interested in growing the size of their cowherds due to land and / or management constraints or other reasons. This article will briefly walk through other opportunities that are worth consideration.

Genetics – Some producers may choose to use the current increase in cow-calf revenues to improve the genetics of their herds. Investment in genetics often has long-run implications, resulting in more valuable calves to sell over multiple years. Sires certainly come to mind, but the current calf market combined with the strong cull cow prices may provide an opportunity to cull a bit harder and also purchase some higher quality females.

Facilities – Working facilities are crucial resources for cow-calf operations for numerous reasons. Value-added opportunities such as health protocols, post-weaning programs, castration, implants, etc. are made much easier with quality working facilities. The same is true for receiving, sorting and loading of cattle. If facilities have historically been a constraint, the current market may be providing an opportunity to make improvements and position the operation to sell higher value calves in the future.

Grazing systems – Winter feeding days are typically the most expensive days for cow-calf operations as stored feed (hay) is being fed. Improved grazing systems (interior fencing, additional water sources, portable mineral feeders, etc.) allow for more efficient use of existing forage during the grazing season. This has the potential to increase the number of grazing days and reduce the number of hay feeding days. In most cases, this results in lower costs per cow per year and puts an operation in a better position when calf prices fall.

Debt service / financial management – Strong markets also provide an opportunity to make financial moves that set an operation up for the long run. Increased revenues may allow an operation to pay down some debt and thereby lower their cost structure going forward. Similarly, it may provide an opportunity to build some working capital and lower dependence on operating loans. In both cases, future interest expenses are reduced, which has implications for profitability.

To be clear, the purpose of this article was not to discourage expansion. There are likely operations that need to do just that. But I also live in an area where land constraints are real and know that expansion is not always feasible. Plus, I have seen situations where operations expanded during strong markets and wished they had not done so a few years later. The main point is that the current calf market provides a significant opportunity for a cow-calf operation to position itself for the long-run, and that will look different for each one of them.

Cattle Market Notes Weekly

Josh Maples



James Mitchell



Kenny Burdine



Row Crops & Forages

Events and News

Forecasting Corn Disease Risk for Kentucky

Date: 6/17/2025

Source: Kiersten Wise, Plant Pathology Extension Specialist

Corn growth stages in Kentucky vary widely, with some corn in western Kentucky likely to tassel this week, while in other parts of Kentucky, corn is still in the early vegetative stages. The challenges to the 2025 planting season will make foliar disease monitoring and management decisions more important going through the summer.

Frequent rainfall across the state has led to some detections of anthracnose leaf blight (caused by *Colletotrichum graminicola*), and some low levels of gray leaf spot (caused by *Cercospora zeae-maydis*) in the lower canopy of corn that is close to tasseling. Other diseases observed recently include Diplodia leaf streak (caused by *Stenocarpella* sp.) and Holcus leaf spot (caused by the bacteria *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *syringae*). To date, no concerning levels of disease have been observed, but it is important to scout frequently, monitor University resources, and be prepared to act if conditions warrant foliar disease management. **In most cases, applying a foliar fungicide once at tasseling/silking (VT/R1) is the most effective way to prevent yield loss from foliar diseases and offers the greatest potential for a positive return on investment (ROI).**

Importance of Scouting

Before applying fungicides, remember to scout fields first and check hybrid resistance ratings prior to fungicide application. Hybrids that are moderately resistant or resistant to foliar diseases like gray leaf spot are less likely to demonstrate an economic response to fungicide application.

Because of the variation in corn growth stages and detections of important diseases in other states, farmers may be tempted to alter their planned fungicide application timings. Multiple foliar fungicide application timings are promoted in corn, but research at the University of Kentucky and in other states has shown that a fungicide application at tasseling/silking (VT/R1) is most effective at preventing yield loss due to foliar diseases and also provides the greatest chance of seeing a positive return on investment. Research has demonstrated that early foliar fungicide applications that occur at V4-V6 are less likely to provide an economic gain. Another common fungicide application timing in Kentucky is the pre-tassel stage, typically between V10 and V14. Research from the University of Kentucky shows that this timing can provide disease control for gray leaf spot and southern rust comparable to a VT/R1 application in some years. However, if disease onset occurs later in the season, a second application may be required at R2 or R3. This can double fungicide input costs and reduce the chances of achieving a positive ROI.

Scouting over the next few weeks and just prior to tasseling can help determine if fungicide applications are needed. Although disease levels will continue to build over the course of the season, University research indicates that foliar fungicides applied at tasseling or early silking (VT-R1) provide optimal foliar disease control for diseases like gray leaf spot and tar spot compared to applications that occur earlier or later in the season. For southern rust, a fungicide application may be needed through milk (R3). Always check with your county agent for updates on the diseases present in your specific county and help determining if management is warranted.

In short, weather has been very conducive for foliar diseases, especially gray leaf spot. Our risk for diseases like tar spot decreases substantially now that temperatures are increasing. Southern rust is still confined to the Gulf states for now. A fungicide application at VT/R1 is still the best timing for protection against all of these diseases, if farmers are interested in spraying. If you are interested in the full article, you can find it at Kentucky Pest News.

Row Crops & Forages

UK Corn, Soybean & Tobacco Field Day

July 22, 2025

Registration begins: 7:00 CT
8:00 am-12:00 pm CT

**UKREC FARM,
300 EXTENSION FARM RD.,
PRINCETON, KY 42445**

TOPICS include:

AGRONOMICS AND ECONOMICS

- Economic Update
- Round Bale Economic Discussions
- Weed Science Update 2025
- Corn Needs for Nitrogen and Sulfur Following Cover Crops
- Foliar Fertilizer Rarely Increase Yield in Soybean Across the U.S

IPM

- Corn Disease Concerns for 2025
- Familiar and New Soybean Diseases to Look Out for in 2025
- Emerging Mollusk Pests & Insect Threats in Field Crops in Kentucky

SOILS

- NRCS Soil Health Updates
- Agr-1 Update: Corn N Rate Recommendations
- The Current Status of Sulfur Fertility for Row Crop Production

TOBACCO

- Red Leaf Burley Demonstration and UKREC Tobacco Research Update
- UT Tobacco Research Update
- Optimizing Plant Populations for Burley Tobacco
- Assessing Quadris Effectiveness in Target Spot Populations



Grain and Forage
Center of Excellence

Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment



Interested in receiving the Kentucky Field Crops Newsletter?

Use the barcode to sign up. If you have any issues or would like access to it, contact me and I would be happy to help you get set up.



FREE SOIL SAMPLES FOR MCCRACKEN COUNTY RESIDENTS

Did you know that as a McCracken County resident that you can get up to 5 soil samples sent to the lab for FREE each year? We offer multiple soil sampling packages for yards, pasture, row crops, gardens, wildlife plots, etc. If you're interested in more information, come to the office or call 270-

554-9520

Upcoming Office Events

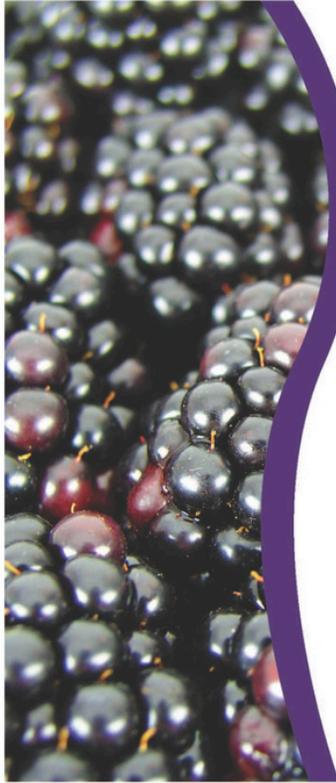
	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	WEEK 5
MON		7:	14: District Board Meeting 11-12 (RSVP) Better Than Ever: Dotted Ceramic Platter (RSVP, prices vary by size) 1-3:30	21:	28:
TUE	1: Game Day 9-12 Adult Sewing 9-11 Love Shack Farms Tour 5-6	8: Adult Sewing 9-11	15: Bags of Love 9:30-1:30	22: Adult Sewing 9-11 Floral Show at McCracken County Fair (entries from 7:30-10:30, call for more info)	29: Adult Sewing 9-11 Beef and Forage Production Field Day 4:30-7 (RSVP, at Heath Livestock)
WED	2: Chair Yoga 10-11 (\$3)	9: Chair Yoga 10-11 (\$3) Tech Class: Social Media 101 10-11 Rooted Woman Herbs 1:30-2:30	16: Scrapbooking 9-3 Chair Yoga 10-11 (\$3) 4-H Fair Entries Drop Off 8-4:30	23: Chair Yoga 10-11 (\$3)	30: Chair Yoga 10-11 (\$3)
THURS	3: Needlework Circle 10-12 Crochet Alley & Knit Row 1-3	10:	17: Game Day 9-12 Needlework Circle 10-12 Crochet Alley & Knit Row 1-3 4-H Fair Entries Drop Off 8-6:30	24:	31:
FRI	4: 	11:	18: Rooted Woman Herbs 5:30-6:30	25:	

Event Calendar for July 2025

If you have questions or would like to RSVP, call the office at 270-554-9520.

The full calendar with event descriptions is located on our website. <https://mccracken.ca.uky.edu>

Recipe of the Month



Blackberry Peach Crumble

2 cups fresh blackberries
2 cups peeled and sliced fresh peaches or 1 (16 ounce) bag frozen peach slices, thawed
1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
2 tablespoons cornstarch
1/3 cup, plus **1/2 cup** packed brown sugar

1/2 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 cup chopped blanched almonds, (optional)
1/4 teaspoon salt
6 tablespoons butter, cut into pieces

Combine blackberries, peaches, lemon peel, cornstarch and 1/3 cup brown sugar in a large bowl.

Pour ingredients into a lightly greased 8 inch baking dish.

Mix together flour, almonds, salt, and remaining 1/2 cup brown sugar. With pastry blender or two knives, cut in the butter until the mixture resembles coarse meal.

Sprinkle flour mixture over fruit.

Bake in a pre-heated 400° F oven for 30 minutes.

Cool 10 minutes prior to serving.

Yield: 8, 1/2 cup servings

Nutritional Analysis: 270 calories, 14 g fat, 25 mg cholesterol, 135 mg sodium, 35 g carbohydrate, 2 g protein, 3 g fiber. Without almonds: 220 calories, 9 g fat, 25 mg cholesterol, 135 mg sodium, 35 g carbohydrate, 2 g protein, 3 g fiber.

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



Kentucky Blackberries

SEASON: June to September

NUTRITION FACTS: A one-half cup serving of raw berries contains 35 calories, has zero fat, and is a good source of potassium, vitamin C, and fiber.

SELECTION: Look for plump fruit that is uniform in color and appears fresh. Berries should be free of stems or leaves. Avoid fruit that is moldy, crushed, bruised, or contains extra moisture.

STORAGE: Store unwashed and covered berries in the refrigerator. Use within two days.

PREPARATION: Handle all berries gently. Wash berries by covering them with water and gently lifting the berries out. Remove any stems and drain on a single layer of paper

towels. Blackberries are delicious cooked, which intensifies the flavor, or eaten fresh as a snack or in a salad.

PRESERVING: Berries may be preserved by canning or freezing, or made into jellies or jam. For more information, contact your local County Extension Office.

BLACKBERRIES

Kentucky Proud Project

County Extension Agents for Family and Consumer Sciences
University of Kentucky, Nutrition
and Food Science students
June 2010

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.ca.uky.edu/fcs.

COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION
SERVICE



Source: www.fruitandveggiesmatter.gov