KVGA Newsletter

March 2023

Vol. 4. No. 1



As the spring season approaches, it's an exciting time for growers as they prepare for the upcoming growing season. I want to thank those who attended the Annual Fruit and Vegetable Conference in Bowling Green this past January. With over 500 participants, the event was a great success, with many engaging sessions that covered a diverse range of topics. If you missed the conference or would like to revisit some of the content, please visit the KY Hort Council website for more information.

This year's mild winter is an advantage for growers, helping to lower heating costs and reduce the cost of natural gas as demand is lower in the US and Europe. Nevertheless, pests and pathogens continue to pose a significant challenge to many growers, with some issues recurring year after year while others may vary seasonally.

As you begin your preparations for the growing season, we would like to draw your attention to two emerging issues that Kentucky vegetable growers should be aware of: Tomato Brown Rugose Fruit Virus (ToBRFV) and the spotted lanternfly.

ToBRFV was first discovered in 2014 in Jordan and Israel and has since spread globally. This virus infects tomato, pepper, and eggplant, and it is primarily found in greenhouse-grown crops, although it has been found in some tomato fields in California, Florida, and a few other states in the US. ToBRFV is seedborne and mechanically transmitted, much like Tobacco Mosaic Virus, and can persist for a long time in plant debris and on all surfaces in greenhouses or high tunnels. Given that greenhouse crops are tended by workers much more frequently than open fields, ToBRFV is much more prevalent in protected agriculture. Hence, strict sanitation measures in the structure and seed testing and sanitization before planting are crucial. ToBRFV impacts larger fruited tomato varieties more severely than smaller fruited types, and it's important to remain vigilant about its spread. Check out this resource for more information.

Along with ToBRFV, growers should also be aware of the spotted lanternfly, which was recently found in Letcher Co,

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Kentucky, in a shipment of farm equipment from Pennsylvania. Although it's not yet considered established since there was only one life stage present, there's a good chance it will be seen this year. The spotted lanternfly is an invasive species that feeds on a wide range of crops, including grapes, hops, and fruit trees, causing significant damage that's difficult to control once it's established.

To prevent the spread of the spotted lanternfly, growers should watch out for egg masses, which are laid on flat surfaces, such as trees, outdoor furniture, and equipment. If you spot an egg mass, it's crucial to scrape it off and destroy it. Check out this resource for more information.

As you prepare for the upcoming growing season, it's crucial to remain vigilant about potential threats to your crops. By taking necessary precautions such as practicing strict sanitation measures, seed testing, and monitoring for pests and pathogens, you can help ensure a successful growing season. If you have any questions or would like to discuss issues you're facing on the farm, please don't hesitate to contact your local extension agent or email me any time. I'll be happy to help point you in the right direction or suggest further measures you can take to ensure 2023 is a successful season.

Shubin Saha, DPM, PhD

President, Kentucky Vegetable Growers Association

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Dr. Shawn Wright, UK Department of Horticulture (Jackson)

USDA AMS LAMP Grants

The USDA announced that it is now accepting applications for this year's <u>Local Agriculture Market Program (LAMP)</u>, with a total of \$133 million available in competitive grant funds to expand and strengthen local and regional food systems and increase availability of locally grown ag products.

The <u>Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP)</u> supports producer-to-consumer markets such as farmers markets, roadside stands, agritourism activities, community-supported agriculture programs (CSA), and online sales.

The <u>Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP)</u> grants support local and regional food businesses that engage as intermediaries in indirect producer to consumer marketing.

This year, there is a new option in FMPP and LFPP: Turnkey Marketing and Promotion grants using a simplified application for a set of common FMLFPP activities.

The <u>Regional Food System Partnerships</u> (RFSP) grant program supports public-private partnerships that focus on increasing the availability of locally and regionally produced agricultural products and alleviating unnecessary administrative and technical barriers.

For application information, eligibility, and deadlines, visit the links below. The RFA (Request for Application) outlines the program priorities, eligibility and other important information about the grant programs. There is also a 2023 LAMP Stakeholder Toolkit available to help potential applicants.

Remember that the <u>KY Center for Ag & Rural Development (KCARD)</u> has an agribusiness grant facilitation program that can help you talk through project ideas and review your draft application. Contact KCARD directly at <u>kcard@kcard.info</u> or 859-550-3972.

USDA		Request for
Funding	Webpage	Application
Program		(RFA)
FMPP	www.ams.usda.gov/fmpp	FMPP RFA
LFPP	www.ams.usda.gov/lfpp	LFPP RFA
RFSP	www.ams.usda.gov/rfsp	RFSP RFA

2023 KY Fruit & Vegetable Conference Highlights

What a great conference! We had nearly 600 attendees over the 2.5 days in Bowling Green. Nearly 100 speakers and panelists provided valuable production and marketing information over a large variety of topics in 16 different educational tracks. Plus, the two pre-conference sessions — the Farmers Market Short Course and the Bringing the Farm to School Grower Training — as well as the AgVets and Urban & Small Farms Meet & Greets were a huge success. KVGA paid members received an email with links to the presentations and Conference resources.

A huge thank you to our vendors and sponsors — their generous donations covered the cost of the two lunches. Please be sure to thank them as you encounter and make purchases from the sponsoring businesses this season.

Save the date for 2024! Due to the New Year's holiday, we will again move the meeting to a slightly later date. Watch the event partners' social media channels for more information and updates.

If you have suggestions for improvement, ideas for speaker topics, vendors who should be recruited to attend or other comments about the conference, please pass that information along to any KVGA Board member or send an email to info@kyvga.org.









THANK YOU TO OUR 2023 KY FRUIT & VEGETABLE CONFERENCE SPONSORS





























Agriculture Workforce Management Association















UK Tomato Grafting Workshop

Tomato grafting can help reduce soil-borne diseases and increase yields, so the technique is of great interest and value to Kentucky growers.

If you haven't tried grafting yet, UK Vegetable Extension Specialist, Dr. Rachel Rudolph is hosting a tomato grafting workshops in Western Kentucky this month.

Space is limited so register soon!

Muhlenberg Co Cooperative Extension Office (Central City, KY) — March 14 at 10:00 am CST. Scan the qr code on the flyer or register online: <u>bit.ly/3YdCTDQ</u>.

Please contact Kathryn Pettigrew at <u>Kathryn.Pettigrew@uky.edu</u> with any questions about the event.



BY MARCH 10

[limited to 40 participants]

visit bit.ly/3YdCTDQ

email kathryn.pettigrew@uky.edu

Keep up with UK Extension on Social Media

KY Fruit & Veg Extension Social Media

Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/KYFruitVegExtension or @KYFruitVegExtension

Twitter - @KYFruit VegExtn

Instagram - @KY Fruit Veg Extension

YouTube - https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRET-uFub4pdX0M6-YMaEBw

Vegetable Alert Listserv for Commercial Growers

Subscribe at: https://uky.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV cCtU7usSqWbyZq6

Nicole Gauthier Social Media

Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/KYFruitandVegExtension or @KYPlantDisease

Twitter – @KYPlantDisease

YouTube - https://www.youtube.com/c/NicoleGauthier

Rachel Rudolph Social Media

Instagram – @UKY veg crops

YouTube - https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6JyU2Fdo3Yvml4y7LF0M4A

Fruit Scout Website

The IPM Scouting Guide publications for fruit crops were converted into mobile compatible websites beginning in 2017. Now accessing this information is even easier with the creation of the Fruit Scout Website (https://fruitscout.ca.uky.edu). This new website provides access to the information found on the Apple, Bramble, Grape, Peach, and Strawberry Scout websites all in one place. The Fruit Scout Website is available for grower, agent, and homeowner use and can be accessed from any phone, tablet, iPad, or computer. The website provides users the opportunity to first select a crop based scouting guide (Figure 1). Next, the home page for each crop (Figure 2) allows visitors to select a problem area. Finally, users select from a menu of various diseases, pests, or problems to obtain more information and view images (Figure 3).

Please note: as of February 28, 2023, the following websites will become inaccessible and will be permanently replaced by the Fruit Scout Website (https://fruitscout.ca.uky.edu). Be sure to bookmark this website for easy access in the future.



Dr. Nicole Gauthier Extension Plant Pathologist ngauthier@uky.edu 859-218-0720

Apple Scout - http://applescout.ca.uky.edu/

Bramble Scout - https://bramblescout.ca.uky.edu/

Grape Scout - https://grapescout.ca.uky.edu/

Peach Scout - https://peachscout.ca.uky.edu/

Strawberry Scout - https://strawberryscout.ca.uky.edu/

Kim Leonberger, Plant Pathology Extension Associate Nicole Gauthier, Extension Plant Pathologist



Figure 1. Fruit Scout website home page. (Kim Leonberger, UKY)

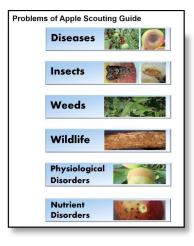
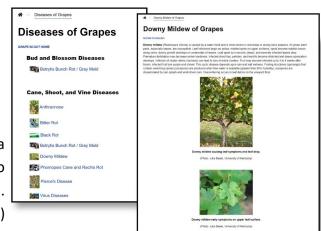


Figure 2. Visitors select a problem area within each crop group.

(Kim Leonberger, UKY)

Figure 3. Users can select a specific disease or pest to obtain more information.

(Kim Leonberger, UKY)





HIGH TUNNEL PRODUCTION BASICS FOR BEGINNING FARMERS

This is a two-part webinar series followed by an in-person training. Webinar 1 will be presented by UK Extension Specialists Rachel Rudolph and Jonathan Larson and will discuss structures, site selection, and production basics, and pest management in a high tunnel system. Webinar 2 will be presented by UK Extension Specialists Nicole Gauthier and Shawn Wright and will cover disease and weed management. Webinars are free; pre-registration is required and attendance at both webinars is required in order to attend one of the handson workshops (locations to be announced).

Registration here:

https://uky.az1.gualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV 55ByFf1llwoaCTs

BEGINNING FARMER
HIGH TUNNEL
PRODUCTION BASICS

WEBINAR 1: MARCH 23 12-1:30 P.M.

WEBINAR 2: MARCH 30 12-1:30 P.M.

CENTRAL KY
IN—PERSON
TRAINING:
APRIL 12
10 A.M. – 12 P.M.

EASTERN KY
IN-PERSON
TRAINING:
APRIL 25
5 P.M. - 7 P.M.



Market Ready Training

UK MarketReady Producer Training session are open for registration. This training is free to Kentucky producers interested in learning more about selling to restaurants, schools, grocery & retail outlets, wholesale, and/or other markets.

Monday March 20 11:30 am EST

Friday March 24 at 11:30 am EST

Register here: https://marketready.uky.edu/events





Digital Marketing Training

11:00 am—12:00 pm EST on March 31, 2023

This training is for producers seeking to develop skills in digital marketing. It will be hosted by UKY's MarketReady team with guest speakers Sarah Cornelissee from Penn State University and Amanda Kelly from Southeast Kentucky Economic Development.

Register here: https://marketready.uky.edu/events/digital-marketing

Regional Water Testing Labs Now Open in Kentucky

Kentucky State University (KSU) has opened regional water testing labs for growers interested in having their production and post-harvest ag water sources tested.

These new labs are located in Hodgenville (LaRue Co), Frankfort (Franklin Co), and Whitesburg (Letcher Co). Another lab in Bowling Green (Warren Co) will soon be added to the network.

Testing for *E. coli* in surface and ground water samples is free to Kentucky growers. Results are available in approximately 1 week.

For more information about scheduling a time to drop off samples, contact:

Kevin Gurtowski (kevin.gurtowski@kysu.edu)

or

John Thomas (john.thomas 1@kysu.edu)



Dr. Avinash Tope demonstrating laboratory testing procedures at his lab on KSU's campus in Frankfort.

Surveys to help growers who participate in NAP

As participants in the NAP program, KY growers are required to provide price figures and yields from prior cropping years to their Farm Service Agency (FSA) office to calculate the assistance funding that they receive. If a grower does not have price figures, national wholesale prices are used, which can be substantially lower than those that Kentucky growers who market retail receive.

The Kentucky State FSA office will accept prices provided by UK Extension if a KY grower does not have historical price records. In order to acquire this data, the University of Kentucky, Kentucky State Horticultural Society, Kentucky Vegetable Growers Association, and Kentucky Horticulture Council are partnering to collect annual price records, which will be averaged. The averages will be provided to the state FSA office.

Please provide the average prices for which you marketed your fruit and vegetables for the 2022 season using the following links. The information that you supply will be presented only as group averages and your identity will remain confidential.

To take the surveys, scan the qr codes at right or visit:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/22FruitNAP (fruit pricing)

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/22VegNAP (veg pricing)

Delia Scott, Agriculture Extension Associate
Beginning Farmers – Fruit and Vegetable





2023 Southeastern U.S. Vegetable Crop Online Handbook

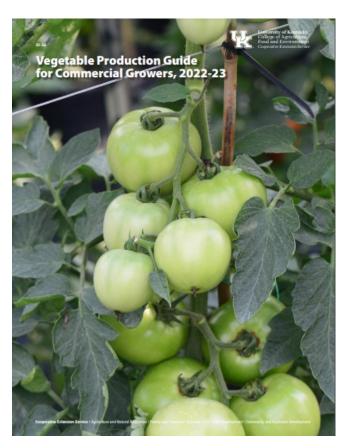
The Southeastern Vegetable Extension Workers Group recently released the 24th edition of the Southeastern US Vegetable Crop Handbook. This handbook represents a joint effort among Extension Specialists and Researchers from 14 land-grant universities in the US — including KY — who work in the area of vegetable production.

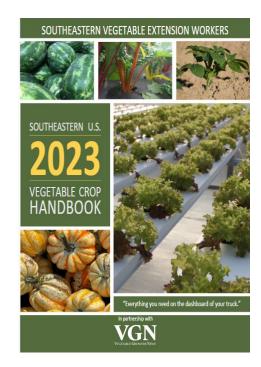
Contributing specialists and researchers represent a wide array of disciplines: agricultural engineering, entomology, olericulture (vegetable production), plant pathology, postharvest physiology, soil science, and weed science.

This handbook provides current information developed from research and Extension projects conducted throughout the southeastern US. Growers can get information on:

- General Production Recommendations
- Specific Crop Recommendations
- Soil Pests Detection and Control
- Calibrating Chemical Application Equipment
- Registered Fungicides, Insecticides, and Miticides for Vegetables
- Insect Control for Commercial Vegetables
- Disease Control for Commercial Vegetables
- Chemical Weed Control in Vegetable Crops

The handbook is geared towards larger scale conventional growers; however, it also includes information relevant to organic growers, such as cultural practices, variety selection, and information on primary pests and diseases.





To download a copy of the Handbook, visit https://
vegetablegrowersnews.com/2023-southeastvegetable-crop-handbook/

You will be required to provide your name, location, and email to receive a download link.

Vegetable Production Guide for Commercial Growers (aka ID-36)

For specific, hyper-local Kentucky-centric information, growers should reference UK's Vegetable Production Guide for Commercial Growers (2022-2023).

It is available online at http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/ID/ID36/ID36.pdf or you can contact your local county extension office for a printed copy.

Eastern Kentucky Farm Flood Damage Support Program

In December 2022, KVGA received a donation of \$25,000 from the KY Farm Bureau to fund a program supporting farms in Eastern KY impacted by the severe flooding last summer. Farm damage estimates from 138 producers in the affected region totaled \$3,160,349 in immediate losses and future losses of at least \$1,305,639, mainly in crop and infrastructure losses.

A primary concern was getting local growers back into production quickly to ensure continuity of commercial family farms and that growers would be able to continue to supply fresh produce in the local area, which consistently battles limited supplies of fresh, high-quality produce.

One critical immediate need was identified: inoperable small-scale equipment including tillers, chainsaws, mowers, and similar equipment powered by small engines. In early September, the KY Horticulture Council (KHC) and KVGA launched a program – the EKY Farm Equipment Flood Damage Program to mitigate the impacts of flooding for local producers by coordinating pickup and repair of critical pieces of equipment and connecting with local high school Agriculture Education programs in other areas of Kentucky willing to perform equipment service and repair.

More than 60 growers have applied to the program from Breathitt, Clay, Knott, Letcher, Magoffin, Perry, and Pike counties, identifying over 120 pieces of equipment needing repair. Currently six schools are participating in the repair activities: Franklin Co. (Western Hills), Montgomery Co., North Laurel Co., Robertson Co, Rockcastle Co., and Spencer Co. Donations will be made to the FFA programs at the participating high schools to cover the cost of consumables like gasoline, filters, batteries, and oil, for example.

If you would like more information about the program or how to support growers through donations of equipment, supplies or funding, please email info@kyhortcouncil.org or info@kyvga.org.



Equipment drop-off in Spencer Co



Eastern Kentucky
Farm Equipment
Flood Damage Program

Repair/Refurbishment Program

The Food - Ag Flood Recovery Resources Ironn - Kentucky
Hortculture Council (Rich), Community Farm Allance
(CRA), Grow Applicable, the Organic Association of
Kentucky (CAD), the University of Kentucky Cooperative
Interesion Service, the Kentucky Caster for Ag and Brail
Development (CADS), Capstone Form, and many KY high
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WHAT IS ELIBBLE?

WHAT IS ELIBBLE?

WHAT IS ELIBBLE?

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Equipment pickup in Breathitt Co



Students in Montgomery Co who performed repairs on equipment from Letcher Co

Students at Western Hills High School (Franklin Co) assembling a donated tiller to replace a tiller that could not be repaired

KVGA Benefits of Membership

- ⇒ Combined membership/registration for the Annual KY Fruit & Vegetable Conference, with exclusive access to members-only content on the KVGA website
- ⇒ Networking Opportunities with Other Produce Growers
- ⇒ Free subscription to American Vegetable Grower magazine for One Year
- ⇒ Authorization to Use 24-C Local Needs Pesticide Registrations
- ⇒ Access to the Kentucky Ag Health Care Plan
- ⇒ Free American Income Life Accidental Death & Dismemberment Benefit

Do you have suggestions for other member benefits? Please send your ideas in an email to <u>info@kyvga.org</u> at any time.









2023 KVGA Membership

Did you miss the 2023 KY Fruit & Vegetable Conference? Or, just now finding out about KY Vegetable Growers Association?

You can renew your membership or join KVGA by mailing in the <u>application form</u>, which can be downloaded from the KVGA website.

For information about paying with a credit card, send an email to info@kyvga.org.

Membership is renewed on an annual basis.





Upcoming Industry Events

3/3 -3/4-KY Black Farmer Conference (Bowling Green)

3/9—Tomato Grafting Workshop (Lexington)

3/14—Tomato Grafting Workshop (Muhlenberg Co)

3/16—KSU Third Thursday Thing (Frankfort)

3/20-MarketReady Webinar

3/21—Developing a Farm Food Safety Plan—Pt 1 (OAK Webinar)

3/23- High Tunnel Basics for Beginners Webinar 1

3/24—MarketReady Webinar

3/28—Developing a Farm Food Safety Plan—Pt 2 (OAK Webinar)

3/29—KY Local Food Systems Summit (Lexington)

3/30- High Tunnel Basics for Beginners Webinar 2

3/31—Digital Marketing Training Webinar

4/12-High Tunnel Basics for Beginners In-Person (CKY)

4/13—Growing Under Cover on a Market Veg Farm (Crestwood)

4/25-High Tunnel Basics for Beginners In-Person (EKY)

Do you have a question about production, marketing or another veggie-



related topic? Send in your question and you may see it answered in a future newsletter!

Info@KyVGA.org

Save-the-Date

2024 Kentucky Fruit & Vegetable Conference

Jan. 2 — Pre-Conference Events

Jan. 3-4 — Educational Sessions & Trade Show

