



University of Kentucky  
College of Agriculture,  
Food and Environment  
Cooperative Extension Service

## Cooperative Extension Service

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**MAY 2023**



# HORTICULTURE NEWSLETTER

## *From the Ground Up*

### Inside this issue:

Word from the Agent

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## Clark / Powell Beekeepers Association

**Monday, May 8, 2023**

6:30 pm

Clark County Extension Service  
(1400 Fortune Drive; Winchester)

~ POT-LUCK MEAL ~



### *A Word from the Agent...*

Happy May everyone! I hope everyone is doing great and enjoying what spring has had to offer so far! The month of May brings a lot of excitement. For starters, it's tomato planting time!! Well, at least it is for those of us who waited till the average planting time. I saw tomato plants for sale in early April, therefore some of you may be "ahead of the game". So, tomatoes and green beans and tons of warm season crops can be planted this month.

Next, the WCC Farmer's Market opens this month! May 13<sup>th</sup> is the first day you can stop by Depot Street to get some of your favorite local goods.

Whatever excitement the month of May holds for you, I hope it's good to you. Don't hesitate to reach out with questions. I'm always happy to help, and hopefully we'll see you around!

**Carrie Spry**

Clark County Extension Agent  
for Horticulture

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LEXINGTON, KY 40546

Disabilities  
accommodated  
with prior notification.

# Managing the Notorious Squash Bug

By Ric Bessin, Entomology Extension Specialist

I get more questions about having to manage squash bug, a key pest of squash, gourds and pumpkins in Kentucky, than possibly any other insect pest of vegetables. While many of the questions occur in mid-summer when high populations of large nymphs are attacking the plants, control needs to begin early in order to be effective.

## Damage & Biology

These inch-long sucking bugs damage cucurbit plants by removal large amounts of plant sap. With transplants and small plants that have small, restricted root systems, squash bugs can remove sap to the extent that the plants wilt and may even die. Later in the summer on larger plants, squash bugs remove the sap from leaves and stems and can cause leaf yellowing and necrosis. More importantly, squash bugs transmit the bacterium causing yellow vine decline in cucurbits.



**Figure 1.** Squash bug can cause wilting of young transplants (Photo: Ric Bessin, UK)

Squash bug will become active in the next few weeks. Control for this insect pest relies on frequent crop scouting and treatment of the young nymphs just after egg hatch.

Squash bug is commonly found on the undersides of leaves where they lay eggs. With plasticulture fields, squash bugs can also feed at the base of the plants beneath the plastic. The protection they get under the plastic may make control with foliar sprays more difficult.

During the coming weeks, squash bug will lay eggs on the undersides of leaves. Upon hatching, squash bug nymphs resemble aphids with black legs. As they get older, they take on a grayish appearance as they develop a waxy coat. Generally, the younger nymphs are more susceptible to sprays than the larger nymphs. In addition, treatments targeting the young nymphs will benefit from better spray coverage as the plant canopy is less dense.



**Figure 2.** Eggs and hatching nymphs on the leaf underside. The young nymphs are the target of early-season sprays (By Ric Bessin, UK).

## Management

Most complaints about squash bug occur later in the season when plants are large, spray coverage is more difficult to achieve, and the nymphs produced by the overwintering generation are beginning to cause noticeable damage. Unfortunately, this is too late to *begin* squash bug control.

Control needs to begin early in the season when the adults begin to arrive. The reason for this is threefold: (1) their numbers are lower so there are fewer to control; (2) the plants are smaller so it is easier to get complete coverage with sprays, and (3) young nymphs are easier to control than large nymphs. As they transmit the bacterium that causes yellow vine decline, infection of the young plants needs to be avoided.

Because squash bugs persistently transmit the bacterium causing yellow vine decline, control of the disease is through early and effective control of the adult squash bug. Many growers are using at-planting systemic insecticides for control of cucumber beetles; these treatments can also control squash bug for 2 to 3 weeks after transplanting.

As these treatments begin to lose their effectiveness, growers need to monitor for squash bugs and extend the control with foliar insecticides, see [Vegetable Production Guide for Commercial Growers \(ID-36\)](#) for a list of effective options.



**Figure 3.** Squash bug adults are sometimes miss identified as stink bugs. (Photo: Ric Bessin, UK).



# VEGETABLE GARDENING SERIES

**FREE!**

*Limited Space!*

## May 4, 11, and 18

6:30 pm - Clark County Extension Service

### **May 4 Introduction**

Basic concepts for growing vegetables.

Cover the specifics on basic crops for cool and warm season vegetables.

**FREE VEGETABLE PLANTS!**

### **May 11 Maintenance**

Maintenance aspect of vegetable garden plots.

Topics include: watering, pest/weed management, and fertilizing

**DOOR PRIZES!**

### **May 18 Harvesting & Storage**

Cover many details about harvesting vegetables. Clark County Extension FCS Agent, Shonda Johnston, will share information about storage of fresh vegetables.

**DOOR PRIZES!**



College of Agriculture,  
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To register, call the Clark County Extension Service at 859-744-4682 or email [cynthia.carr@uky.edu](mailto:cynthia.carr@uky.edu)

Classes will be taught by Carrie Spry,  
Clark County Extension Agent for Horticulture

# SOW - A Planting Companion

by: Carrie Spry

Clark County Extension Agent for Horticulture

I am so excited!! One of the things that most of vegetable gardeners neglect to do is thorough record keeping. I start off the season with the best of intentions, but it just doesn't happen. The following year I find myself trying to remember when I planted what, which varieties I grew of things, and how well they performed. Keeping up with a paper journal was just impractical for me, I would either lose it, turn it into a muddy mess if I took it to the garden with me, or I would forget to write in it after I finished my garden chores. I've also never found a free app that wasn't riddled with ads or just didn't seem to fit the need. That was until now!! Kentucky gardeners have a new tool available in Apple and Google Play app stores to assist with planting, sowing and harvesting decisions for their home garden.

**SOW—A Planting Companion** is a free app based on University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension's publication ID-128 [Home Vegetable Gardening in Kentucky](#). The app also incorporates information for Alabama and North Carolina and other areas in U.S. Department of Agriculture Plant Hardiness Zones 6a-9a. Kentucky is primarily in zone 6b, with a few areas in 6a or 7a. After downloading the app, enter your state and county to get customized plant information based on your hardiness zone. You can always change the information later in the settings menu.

The app has three main sections: 1) My Garden, 2) Journal and 3) Library. The library currently has information and photos of about 36 popular home

garden vegetables. You may sort the vegetables alphabetically, by harvest date or by planting date. Clicking on a vegetable in the library will open information about that vegetable, including estimated days to harvest, expected yield, plant spacing, planting depth, soil pH range and average number of plants per person you need to include for a good harvest.

You can add vegetables to the My Garden section. You can develop more than one garden, for example, a spring garden, a summer garden and a fall garden, and keep them separate. My Garden helps you keep track of planting dates, seed or transplant planting method, the specific cultivar or variety you planted and when you should be able to harvest it. You can even plan ahead and enter a planting date for the future and the app will give you the option to add this date to your phone's calendar as a reminder.

After you harvest a crop, use the Journal section to record yield, harvest date or any other notes you may need to help plan next year's garden.

The app can also link you to your local Cooperative Extension office, where you'll find staff information and ways to contact extension agents with questions. Download the app through Apple, Google, or search for it in your mobile device app store.

*For more information about gardening or other horticulture topics, contact the Clark County Cooperative Extension Service at 859-744-4682.*



**Gus'**

**QUICK  
TIPS**

**for**

**MAY**

- 1 Mulch landscape beds for weed control and moisture retention. Make sure to keep mulch away from tree trunks and the bases of shrubs. Just say NO to mulch volcanoes on your trees!
- 2 Use liquid products for lawn weed control, if desired. Most granular weed control products contain fertilizer which should not be applied to lawns this time of year.
- 3 Pick off all last year's bagworms from your evergreens before the eggs hatch. Continue to monitor evergreens for new bagworms. Carbaryl is effective as a control if you catch the larvae while small. Do not wait for the large "bags" to appear, as control will be difficult on older insects.
- 4 Plant and seed vegetable gardens. Most warm season vegetables can be planted early this month and heat-lovers like peppers, squash, and sweet potatoes can go in later in the month.
- 5 Plant some flowers! We should be frost free and good to go, so replace pansies and other cool season plants with appropriate summer choices.
- 6 Move house plants outdoors late this month. Make sure you place them in a shady spot or they are likely to sunburn.
- 7 Prune evergreens now through August.



**Winchester / Clark County Farmers' Market**

**Opening Day!**

**Saturday, May 13**

**8:00 am to 12:00 noon**

**Depot Street**

For questions and information email:

[wccfarmersmarket@gmail.com](mailto:wccfarmersmarket@gmail.com)



# SPRING IS HERE



**NOW IS THE TIME TO GO VISIT:**  
**CLARK COUNTY FFA GREENHOUSE**  
 2745 Boonesboro Rd

**Hours:**

Monday- Friday ..... 8:30 am - 5:00 pm  
 Saturday ..... 8:30 am - 1:00 pm  
 (All plants are grown by GRC Students)

- FLOWERS
- POTTED PLANTS
- HANGING BASKETS
- PLANTERS
- TOMATO OR PEPPER PLANTS
- HERBS

**Clark County Fair**  
**June 24–July 1**  
*More details will be  
 upcoming!*  
**SAVE THE DATE**

## Recipe

**LET'S GET**  
*cooking!*





### Lean Green Lettuce Tacos

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