

Weed It and Reap

FRANKLIN COUNTY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION NOVEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER



How to Grow a Thanksgiving Garden: Fresh Produce for Your Holiday Table

Source: Gene Fox and Karan Tucker, NC State and Angela Mason Foster, Master Gardener

Thanksgiving is a celebration of abundance, often centered around a table filled with seasonal produce. While most people rely on the grocery store for their Thanksgiving feast, growing your own Thanksgiving garden can add a deeply personal and rewarding touch to the holiday. Not only does it provide fresh, homegrown ingredients for your meal, but it also allows you to reflect on the agricultural roots of the celebration. With careful planning, you can harvest a variety of vegetables, herbs, and fruits in time for the Thanksgiving season. Here's how to get started on creating your Thanksgiving garden.

Planning Your Thanksgiving Garden

A Thanksgiving garden focuses on cool-season crops that are harvested in the fall. The key is planning well ahead, as many of these vegetables take several months to grow from seed to harvest. Depending on your region's growing zone, you may start planting as early as late summer or even late spring

(Continued on pg. 2)

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for some crops. Be sure to check your local frost dates and choose varieties that will thrive in your climate.



Some traditional Thanksgiving vegetables and herbs that are perfect for a fall garden include:

Pumpkins and winter squash are quintessential Thanksgiving ingredients, whether you're making pumpkin pie or a savory roasted squash dish. These crops need a long growing season (80–120 days), so they should be planted in late spring or early summer. Varieties like butternut squash and sugar pumpkins are ideal for the holiday table. After harvesting, they store well, which makes them perfect for preparing in the weeks leading up to Thanksgiving.

Another classic Thanksgiving staple, sweet potatoes thrive in warm weather but are harvested in the fall after the leaves begin to yellow. They require a long growing season, so they should be planted after the last frost in spring and harvested just before the first frost in fall. Once harvested, sweet potatoes should be cured for a few weeks to enhance their sweetness.

Brussels sprouts are a cold-hardy vegetable

that benefits from frost, which sweetens the sprouts. Start these plants in mid-summer so they are ready to harvest in the fall. They are slow-growing and require a long season, but their ability to withstand cooler temperatures makes them an excellent choice for a Thanksgiving garden.

Root vegetables like carrots and beets are easy to grow and store well, making them a practical choice for Thanksgiving. Both can be planted in late summer for a fall harvest. Choose varieties with a shorter growing period (60–80 days) to ensure they are ready by the holiday. Both vegetables can be roasted, used in salads, or incorporated into other side dishes for the Thanksgiving meal.

Cabbage is another cold-hardy vegetable that can be harvested in late fall. Start cabbage seeds in midsummer for a fall harvest. You can use cabbage in coleslaws, soups, or braised dishes for your Thanksgiving feast.

Many classic Thanksgiving dishes call for flavorful herbs such as sage, thyme, rosemary, and parsley. These herbs can be grown in pots or directly in the garden. Perennial herbs like thyme and rosemary are hardy and can be harvested well into the fall, while annuals like parsley and sage can be started in the spring or summer and harvested just before the first frost.

Leafy greens such as kale, spinach, and Swiss chard grow well in cooler temperatures. They can be planted in early fall and harvested continuously throughout the season. These greens make excellent additions to salads or can be sautéed for a warm, nutrient-dense side dish.

Preparing and Maintaining Your Garden

Soil Preparation

To ensure a successful Thanksgiving garden, start by preparing the soil. Most vegetables prefer well-drained soil rich in organic matter, so consider adding compost or well-rotted manure to your garden beds before planting. This improves the soil structure and provides essential nutrients for plant growth.

Watering and Mulching

Consistent watering is critical for your Thanksgiving garden, especially during the late summer and early fall when plants are maturing. A layer of mulch around your plants can help retain moisture, reduce weeds, and protect root crops from temperature fluctuations. Mulching is particularly important for cold-sensitive crops like carrots and beets, as it provides insulation from early frosts.

Protection from Frost

As temperatures drop in the fall, it's important to protect your plants from frost. Row covers or cold frames can extend your growing season, allowing you to harvest tender crops like herbs and greens well into November. Root vegetables and hardy greens can often survive light frosts, but take care to monitor the weather and harvest crops like Brussels sprouts and cabbage before hard freezes damage them.

Harvesting in Time for Thanksgiving

When planning your garden, be mindful of each crop's time to maturity so that you can harvest everything just in time for Thanksgiving. Some crops, like sweet potatoes and pumpkins, should be harvested in October and stored in a cool, dry place until the holiday. Root vegetables and leafy greens can often be left in the ground and harvested just days before the meal, providing you with the freshest ingredients possible.

Suggested Reading List

For those interested in growing their own food or creating a Thanksgiving garden, these books offer valuable insights and tips:

1. **“The Complete Guide to Preserving Your Own Seeds for Your Garden: Everything You Need to Know Explained Simply”** by Katie A. Murphy (2011) This guide helps gardeners learn how to save seeds from their own crops, ensuring a sustainable garden year after year.
2. **“Vegetable Gardening for Beginners: A Simple Guide to Growing Vegetables at Home”** by Jill McSheehy (2020) This book offers an easy-to-follow approach for those new to vegetable gardening, with tips for growing a productive garden.
3. **“The Four Season Farm Gardener’s Cookbook”** by Eliot Coleman and Barbara Damrosch (2013) A combination gardening guide and cookbook, this resource provides advice on growing a year-round garden and includes recipes to help you make the most of your harvest.

By growing your own Thanksgiving garden, you can bring fresh, homegrown produce to your holiday table, celebrating the harvest season in a deeply meaningful way. With careful planning and some gardening know-how, you'll be able to enjoy the fruits (and vegetables) of your labor in time for Thanksgiving.



Welcome to the Team!

November 13, 2025

4:30-6:00pm

Join the Franklin County Extension Office in welcoming our new Horticulture Extension Agent!



Kentucky Extension
Master Gardener

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION



University of
Kentucky
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment



Tyler Ray

My name is Tyler Ray, and I'm the new Franklin County Extension Agent for **Horticulture**. I have been a lifelong horticulturist and resident of Franklin County. I have diverse work experience from caring for greenhouses, orchards, and vineyards to caring for livestock and conducting applied forage research. I attended Morehead State University earning a bachelor's degree in agronomy and general agriculture. I am currently pursuing a master's degree in integrated plant and soil science from the University of Kentucky.

For the past three years I have served as the Extension Agent for Agriculture and Natural Resources in Boyle County. In this role I provided research-based education and technical assistance and collaborated with community partners. Outside of work, I enjoy spending time with my fiancée Lauren, our dog Cash, gardening and caring for house plants. I am excited for the opportunity to serve my home community!

**Excited for the
journey ahead –
welcome
aboard, Tyler!**

Franklin County
Cooperative Extension
101 Lakeview Court
Frankfort, KY 40601



Franklin County Conservation District
103 Lakeview Court
Frankfort, KY 40601
Phone: (502) 352-2701

UK Cooperative
Extension Service
Franklin County
101 Lakeview Court
Frankfort, KY 40601-8750
502-695-9035
franklin.ca.uky.edu

FREE SOIL SAMPLE COUPON

Sponsored By:

Franklin County Conservation District

January 1- April 30, 2025, the Franklin County Conservation District is sponsoring 10 FREE soil tests.

Bring this coupon in with your soil sample(s) and receive FREE BASIC SOIL TESTING.

Redeemable only at the FRANKLIN COUNTY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE located at 101 Lakeview Court, Frankfort KY. (502) 695-9035 <https://franklin.ca.uky.edu>

For information on how to take a soil sample:
www.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/agr/agr16/agr16.pdf

LIMIT 10 (ten) FREE SAMPLES per PERSON

**Coupon available for Franklin County or Frankfort Residents or Farms located in Franklin County.
NO COMMERCIAL SAMPLES WITH THIS OFFER**

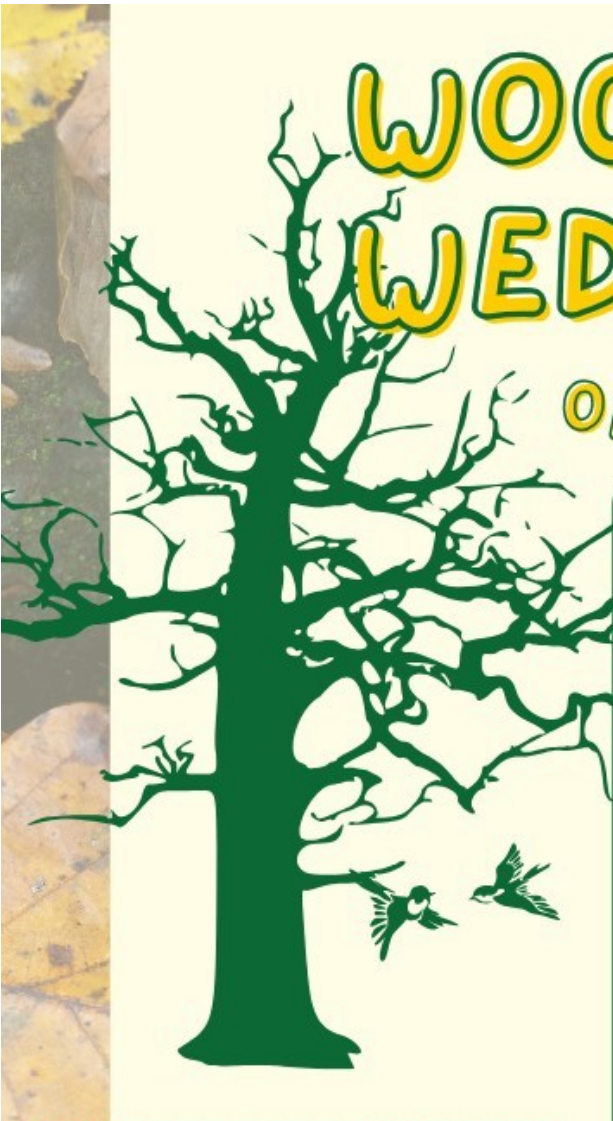
NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

	Sample Number Office Use Only	Date Submitted		Sample Number Office Use Only	Date Submitted
1			6		
2			7		
3			8		
4			9		
5			10		

Staff _____



WOODLAND WEDNESDAYS

ON THOROBRED TRAIL

Join KSU Forestry and Natural Resources each month for a special woodland topic and to work on trail restoration efforts.

...

FALL 2025 DATES

9AM - 12PM

September 10: Fall Bird Walk - Frankfort Audubon
October 15: Invasive Plants 101
November 19: Fall Tree Walk
December 10: Woodpecker Box Build

...

Meet at the Thorobred Trail trailhead. Wear closed-toe shoes and weather appropriate clothing. Weather cancellations will not be rescheduled.

...

SIGN UP HERE!

by scanning the QR code or contact Anna Claire Rogers at anna.rogers@ksu.edu to sign up or for more details.




KENTUCKY STATE UNIVERSITY
Cooperative Extension Program



Be sure to check out the weekly gardening webinars hosted by the University of Kentucky Horticulture Agents.

<https://kentuckyhortnews.com/horticulture-webinar-wednesdays/>

Liberty Hall Historic Site

Calling all volunteers - Mark your calendars!!

Join us on Saturday, November 22nd to help us clean up remaining trash in the back of Liberty Hall Garden from the historic 2025 April flood. We will be working in our wooded floodplain bordering the river, so be prepared for some steep terrain and obstacles like logs and vines.

Please wear appropriate clothing and shoes for working outside. We will have some extra gloves but bring your own if you have them. We will meet in the back of the garden at the end of Main St.

We are grateful to our friends at the [City of Frankfort Public Works](#) Division of Solid Waste for helping us get the trash to the dump after we remove it from the floodplain.

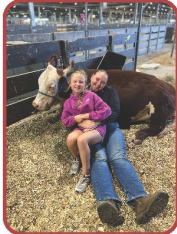


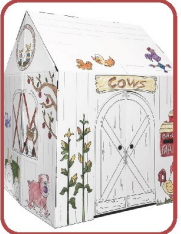
Kids Day

AT THE FRANKLIN COUNTY FARMERS MARKET
SPONSORED BY
ROCK SOLID ROOFING KY &
MEFFORD FAMILY FARMS- BLUEGRASS MEADOWS BEEF

NOVEMBER 8TH

OPEN FROM 8:30AM-NOON
404 WILKINSON BLVD, FRANKFORT



KIDS GET \$2 FOR FREE TO BUY PRODUCE OR PLANTS THANKS TO THIS MONTH'S SPONSOR



ROOFING • SIDING • GUTTERS
ROCK SOLID ROOFING KY
502-871-2175



FARMERS MARKET
 FRESH. LOCAL. LIVELY.



Bluegrass Meadows Beef

Be sure to follow our Facebook page
for all the up-to-date
information and articles.



@FranklinCountyKyCooperativeExtension

FALL



SCHEDULE

REGULAR SEASON MARKETS

404 WILKINSON BLVD.

8:30AM- 12 NOON

November 1st

November 8th Kids Day

November 15th

November 22nd

DECEMBER 13 HOLIDAY MARKET

AND KIDS DAY

10AM- 1 PM AT (HOPEFULLY) 203 HOLMES ST.

www.franklincountyfarmersmarket.org

FALL



SCHEDULE



**WWW.
FCMARKET.
LOCALFOOD
MARKETPLACE
.COM**

PRE-ORDER ONLINE

PICK UP 9:30-10:00 THURSDAYS

PICK UP 8:30-NOON SATURDAYS

404 WILKINSON BLVD.

THURSDAY PICKUP

ORDERING OPENS MONDAY @ NOON

AND CLOSSES TUESDAY @ 5PM

10/30, 11/6, 11/13, 11/20

SATURDAY PICKUP

ORDERING OPENS MONDAY @ NOON

AND CLOSSES THURSDAY @ 5PM

11/1, 11/8, 11/15, 11/22

DECEMBER 13 HOLIDAY MARKET

PREORDER OPENS NOON 12/8 CLOSSES 12/11 @5PM

10AM- 1 PM AT (HOPEFULLY) 203 HOLMES ST.



2025 HABITAT MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM

This two-day event will bring together professionals, researchers and land managers to share projects and expert talks on habitat restoration and natural areas management.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
SOUTHEASTERN GRASSLANDS INSTITUTE

REGISTER:



Date:
December 2nd & 3rd



Time:
9AM - 4PM



Location:
Harold R. Benson Research
and Demonstration Farm

CEU's Available!



HABITAT
MANAGEMENT
SYMPOSIUM



kaee
Kentucky Association for
Environmental Education



KENTUCKY STATE
UNIVERSITY
Land Grant Program



Franklin County Conservation District

BACKYARD CONSERVATION PROGRAM
Urban Cost Share Program

July 1, 2025 to June 1, 2026

Raised Garden Beds, Rain Barrels, Compost Bins,
Pollinator Gardens, Beehives and Bat Houses

- First come, first serve.
- Franklin County Residents only
- One application per household
- 50% cost share up to \$500 maximum

**Must have approval before you
begin project**



Franklin County Conservation District
103 Lakeview Court
Frankfort, KY 40601
502-352-2701

fccd103@gmail.com

URGENT

CONSTRUCTION BEGINS 10/20

Please reach out to the front office staff if you have any questions or would like to cancel your meetings.

The lower level restrooms will be closed until completion and then they will close the main floor restrooms.

Sorry for the inconvenience caused.

ON THE RESTROOMS



KENTUCKY
Fruit & Vegetable Conference **2026**

BOWLING GREEN, KY | JANUARY 11-13
SLOAN CONVENTION CENTER

REGISTER TODAY

<https://kentuckyhorticulturercouncil.ticketopia.com/2026kyfallattendee>

Kentucky Horticulture Council, Kentucky Department of Agriculture, Martin-Gatton College of Horticulture, Food and Environment, University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University



2026 KHC Research Grant Program

1-year (\$5,000) grants for participating Kentucky institutions for research projects that deliver measurable impacts on KY's commercial farm operations & horticulture industry

More info here:
<https://kyhortcouncil.org/2025-26-khc-research-grant-program/>

FIND A CSA SHARE

2025 KY PROUD FALL CSA WEEK

Search for CSAs Near You

Visit the Kentucky Proud CSA Directory to explore Kentucky farms offering CSA:
<https://www.kyproud.com/campaigns/community-supported-agriculture>



Choose Your Share Type & Size

Once you find a farm, review its CSA offerings and check to see what share types and sizes they offer.

Select a Payment Method & Pickup

At signup, members typically pay in full or in installments and can usually choose from several convenient pickup options like on-farm, community sites, farmers markets, or home delivery.

FALL CSA SHARE TYPES

The icons below represent examples of CSA share types offered by Kentucky farms. Explore the [Kentucky Proud CSA Directory](#) to see what's available near you this fall.



PRODUCE



EGGS



FLOWERS



MICROGREENS



MEAT



MUSHROOM



VALUE-ADDED



DAIRY



FULL-DIET



GOT A HIGH TUNNEL? WANT A BETTER GREENHOUSE? JOIN OUR 2026 COHORT!

CEA Pathways 2026

APPLY BY DEC 1 2025

- ✓ Improve your greenhouse profitability
- ✓ Develop a custom technology adoption plan
- ✓ Access to exclusive workshops and events
- ✓ Network with grower peers across Kentucky

Read about program expectations & eligibility at bit.ly/CEApathways
Apply at: bit.ly/CEApathwaysAPPLY

CONTACT:
arundathi.sharma@uky.edu
747-777-3542

UK Cooperative Extension Service



Franklin County Homemakers



CHILDREN'S HOLIDAY STORE

NOVEMBER 22, 2025 | AT 9AM-12PM

CHILDREN AGES 4-12 WILL SHOP PRIVATELY
WITH AN ELF TO PURCHASE HANDCRAFTED
ITEMS WITHIN THEIR BUDGET.

- ITEMS COST BETWEEN .25 CENTS AND \$5.00
- CASH ONLY - SMALL BILLS (\$1, \$5, \$10)

*Franklin County Cooperative Extension
101 Lakeview Court, Frankfort KY
502-695-9035*

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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CCHs	CEUs
<u>Requested</u> from the OISC:	<u>Approved</u> in Kentucky:
7 credits for cat. 3a, 3b, & 6	5 credits for cat. 3
4 credits for RT License	1 credit for cat. 10

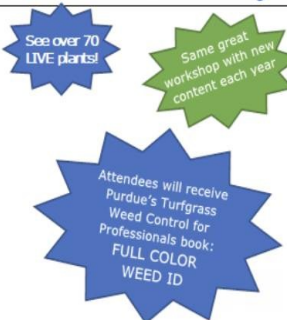
This one-day workshop is designed for beginners and more experienced professionals who want more information on herbicide use principles and a discussion of how to control common green industry weeds. This workshop offers training in weed identification, integrated weed management, selecting the right herbicides, enhancing weed control, and updates on the latest weed research findings.

This workshop is offered in KENTUCKY again this year!

November 25, 2025 Boone County Enrichment Center 1824 Patrick Drive Burlington, KY 41005		In Conjunction with 
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Agenda: *New content for 2025!*

8:00 – 8:30 am	Registration
8:30 – 9:30 am	2025 Herbicide Update
9:30 – 10:35 am	Picking a Non-Selective Herbicide
10:35 – 10:45 am	Break
10:45 – 11:45 am	Goosegrass Biology and Control
11:45 am – 1:00 pm	Lunch (on your own)
1:00 – 2:40 pm	Learning to ID Common Weeds (Hands-On)
2:40 – 2:50 pm	Break
2:50 – 3:40 pm	Bermudagrass Control
3:40 – 4:00 pm	Closing remarks, survey, CCH/CEU sheets



Hot Turkey Salad

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 can (10 ounces) low-sodium cream of chicken soup
- 1 cup fat-free mayonnaise
- 3 cups cooked and shredded wild turkey meat
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 cup fresh sliced mushrooms, or 1 (8 ounces) can no-salt-added mushrooms, drained
- 1 cup grated cheddar cheese
- 1 cup sliced almonds
- 12 toasted whole-wheat buns

To cook turkey breast, preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Add vegetable oil to a roasting pan. Place turkey breast in roasting pan. Season meat lightly with

garlic powder and black pepper. Cover with lid or aluminum foil. Cook at 325 degrees F until internal temperature is 165 degrees, about 1 1/2 to 3 1/2 hours for 4 to 8 pounds of meat. Let meat cool in pan for 15 minutes before shredding. Mix cream of chicken soup with mayonnaise. Add turkey, celery, mushrooms, cheese, and almonds. Stir until well mixed. Spray a 2-quart casserole dish with cooking spray. Spread turkey mixture in dish. Bake 30 to 40 minutes at 350 degrees F. Serve on toasted buns.

Yield: 12 servings

Adapted from: "Conservation Officer's Cooking T.I.P.s," The Indiana Conservation Law Enforcement Officers.

Nutrition Facts

12 servings per recipe
Serving size 1 sandwich (112g)

Amount per serving
Calories 160

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 7g	9%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 25mg	8%
Sodium 420mg	18%
Total Carbohydrate 11g	4%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Total Sugars 2g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 13g	

Vitamin D 0mcg 0%
Calcium 130mg 10%
Iron 1mg 6%
Potassium 204mg 4%
* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Tyler Ray
Tyler Ray

Cooperative Extension Service

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Community and Economic Development

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Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities accommodated with prior notification.