

MCCRACKEN AG NEWS



HELL-SUN
Summer

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 new 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 June everyone! It is hard to believe that May flew by so fast, I think it had something to do with all of the rain! None the less, school is out and summer is here!

The month of May was a very busy month, but all in all was a success. I had the opportunity to end the school year with the Paducah Tilghman Opportunities Group and St. Mary 5th grade by being able to plant flowers for them to take home (as pictured above). I also got to work with the 3rd grade at Hendron-Lone Oak Elementary on doing their egg incubation and life cycle program (as pictured above).

Now that warmer weather is here and with it being relatively wet, the number of soil samples and diseased plant reports coming in the door are quite a few! I have been trying to catch up on those daily. As we go deeper into the summer I fully expect there to be more questions about plants, weeds, yards, trees, etc. so if there is anything you are curious about, feel free to reach out and I will be happy to help in any way that I can!

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Ag & Natural Resources Events and News for Everyone



UK 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

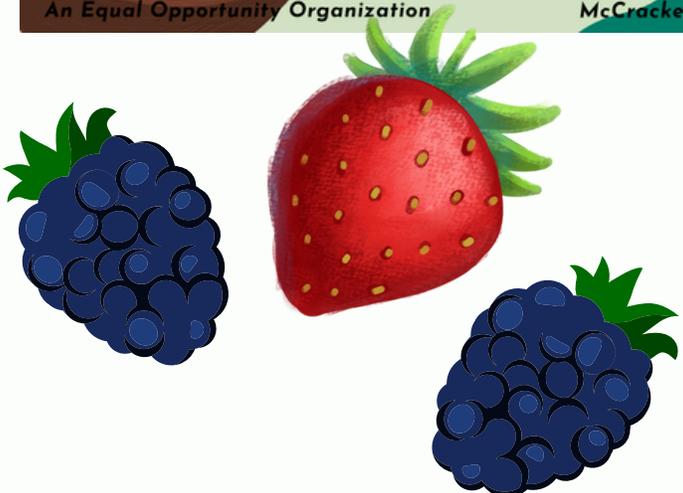
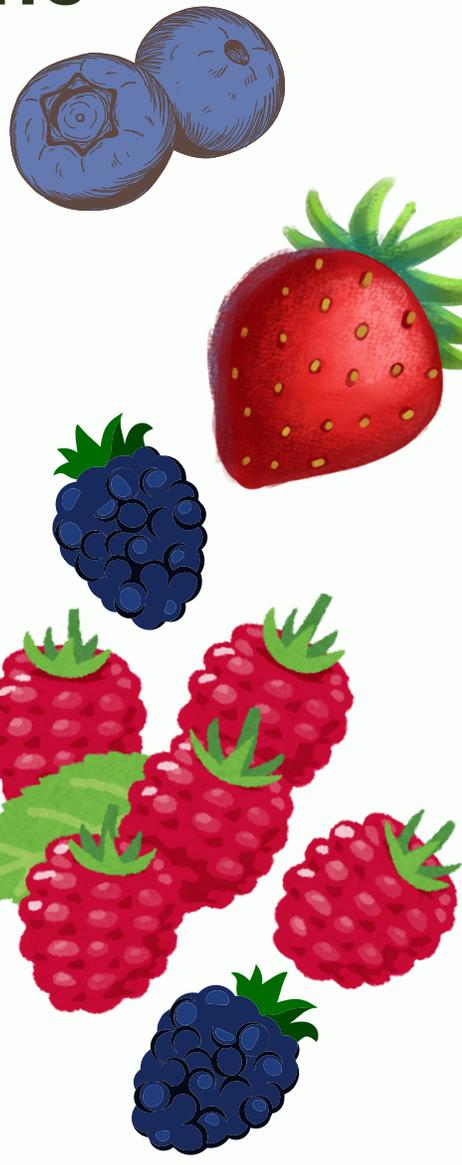
Entry pickup and prize money collection on July 27th from 2-4pm at Floral Hall

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 know 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.**

Livestock Events and News

Beef Cow Slaughter on Pace for Ten Year Low

By: Kenny Burdine, University of Kentucky

Date: 6/2/2025

Changes in beef cow inventory are driven by two factors – how many new bred heifers enter the herd each year and how many cows exit the herd through culling and death loss. As is always the case when calf prices are high, a lot of discussion has been focused on heifer retention thus far in 2025. Heifers as a percentage of on-feed inventory has been decreasing, but not at a rate that suggests widespread retention. I would expect heifer retention to increase for the rest of 2025 if calf prices stay high and weather cooperates. However, it is important to remember that there is a time lag between heifer retention and the associated impact on the size of the cow herd. A heifer calf born in the spring of 2025 would likely not have her first calf until spring of 2027 and would not wean that first calf until that fall. The point here being that heifer retention in the second half of 2025 most likely impacts the size of the cow herd in 2027, not 2026.

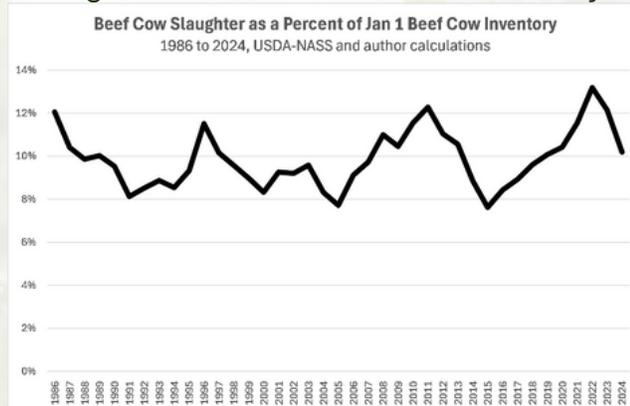
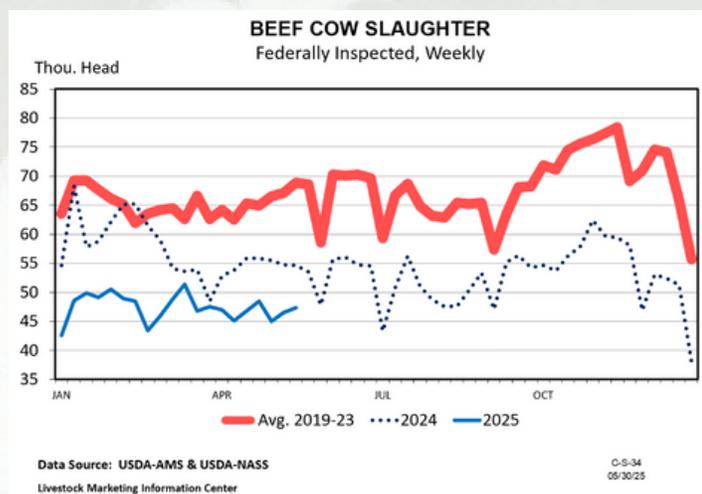
While there is some delay between heifer retention and cow herd expansion, the impact of cow culling patterns is seen much faster. This is an important point right now because cow slaughter was down by more than 17% through mid-May. If that trend continues through the rest of the year, beef cow slaughter would be at the lowest levels we have seen since 2015. Despite very strong cull cow prices, cattle producers appear to be keeping cows a bit longer in hopes of getting another high-value calf.

For additional perspective, I like to consider beef cow slaughter as a percentage of January 1, beef cow inventory. This is tracked in the figure below from 1986 to 2024 and estimates the percentage of the beef cowherd that was culled each year. During this time, the beef cow slaughter rate averaged just under 10%, but ranged from 7.6% in 2015 to 13.2% in 2022. The high cull rates from 2021 to 2023 also partially explain the lower rates today as the cowherd likely got younger during that time.

If the current pace continued for the remainder of 2025, beef cow slaughter would come in at about 8.5% of January 1 beef cow inventory. Holding everything else constant, this is a number that would tend to suggest the cow herd would grow. This will be somewhat offset by limited heifer inventory coming into 2025 and it was because of that limited heifer inventory that I had been expecting beef cow numbers to remain steady or slightly decrease this year. There is still potential for the pattern to change, but the pace of beef cow slaughter through mid-May does suggest that a slight increase in beef cow inventory is possible for 2026.

June Forage Tips:

- Continue hay harvests. Minimize storage losses by storing hay under cover.
- Clip pastures for weeds and seedheads as needed.
- Start to slow grazing rotations allowing for a longer recovery period.
- Use portable fencing to decrease paddock size and increase paddock number.
- Do NOT graze below the minimum desired residual height.
- If present, johnsongrass can provide high quality summer forage when grazed or cut at a vegetative stage.
- Crabgrass, a warm-season annual grass, can provide high quality summer grazing. If desired, remember crabgrass needs some annual soil disturbance to keep coming back.
- Begin grazing native warm-season grasses. Start at 18-20" and stop at 8-10".



Cattle Market Notes Weekly

Josh Maples



James Mitchell



Kenny Burdine



Row Crops & Forages

Events and News

Managing Slugs in Field Crops: Why Insecticides Fail & Molluscicides Work

Date: 6/3/2025

By: Shreeya Adhikari, MSU Entomology Grad Student (summer intern), and Raul T. Villanueva, Entomology Extension Specialist

Figure 1. Slug damage to soybean seedlings when apical meristems are eaten (yellow arrows), cotyledons are consumed (red arrows), and defoliation occurs (blue arrow) (Photo: Raul T. Villanueva, UK)

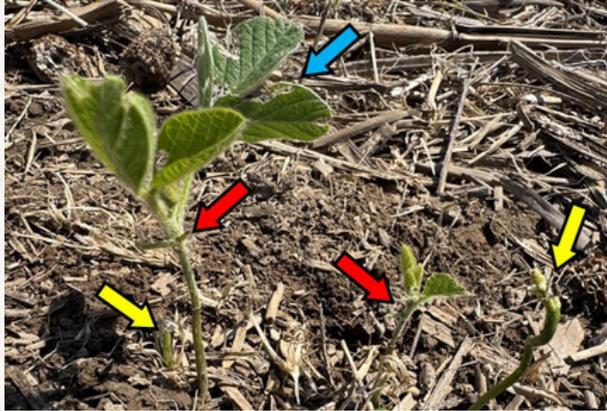


Figure 2. Slug damage to corn results in shallow and irregular feeding marks or holes in leaves. Severe damage can result in ragged or split leaves. (Photo: Raul T. Villanueva, UK).



Problems

Slugs are an increasing problematic pest in field crops. Slugs attack soybean and corn seedlings shortly after emergence. In soybean, they can cause severe defoliation, stand reduction, and when the apical meristem of a seedling is eaten, the plant is killed (Figure 1). In corn, the apical meristem is well hidden, so seedling death occurs less frequently compared with soybeans. However, slugs can still destroy or cause stunting of emerging corn seedlings by feeding on the growing tissue (Figure 2).

Insects versus slugs: differences and implications for their control

Many growers inquire about the potential use of insecticides to manage slugs, especially during wet and cloudy springs when slug pressure is high. However, insecticides are generally ineffective against slugs. This is because slugs are not insects; they are mollusks, while common crop pests like cutworms and aphids are insects. This difference is critical when selecting effective control products.

Insects have a hard exoskeleton, jointed appendages, and a nervous system that responds to insecticides targeting specific neural pathways, such as sodium channels or acetylcholine receptors. Slugs, on the other hand, are soft-bodied organisms and use mucus for movement and moisture retention. They have very different physiological structures from insects, particularly in their nervous and respiratory systems.

Because of these biological differences, insecticides, such as pyrethroids or neonicotinoids, are generally ineffective against slugs. These compounds either fail to reach the target site within the slug's body or the slug lacks the neural receptors that these insecticides are designed to disrupt.

However, molluscicides, such as metaldehyde, are designed specifically to target slug physiology. Metaldehyde causes slugs to overproduce mucus, leading to dehydration, loss of mobility, and eventually death. Conversely, metaldehyde has little to no effect on insects because insects do not rely on mucus production or similar water-regulating mechanisms. Their exoskeleton protects them from desiccation, and their metabolic pathways are not affected by metaldehyde in the same way. This mode of action is unique to mollusks, which is why metaldehyde is effective on slugs and snails but not insect pests ([Slug Control | Pacific Northwest Pest Management Handbooks, n.d.](#)).

Work in progress

To better understand slug management strategies, ongoing research in the entomology laboratory at the UK-Research and Education Center in Princeton is evaluating the efficacy of a new seed treatment (which may be effective against slugs), an insecticide tested overseas (which showed some negative effects on slugs), and molluscicides. These studies aim to provide valuable insights for farmers seeking alternative, sustainable, and affordable solutions for slug control.

Row Crops & Forages

DRONE PILOT CERTIFICATION WORKSHOP

AN INTENSIVE WORKSHOP TO PREPARE CANDIDATES FOR THE FAA'S PART 107 DRONE PILOT CERTIFICATION EXAM

NEW DATE

June 30-July 1, 2025

Madisonville, KY

Class size is limited!

Course: \$400
Exam: \$175



KATS.CA.UKY.EDU

Register <https://June2025DronePilotCertificationWorkshop.eventbrite.com>

Lunch provided both days

All study materials included



MORE INFORMATION

Contact: Lori Rogers
lori.rogers@uky.edu
270-365-7541 Ext 21317



Grain and Forage
Center of Excellence

Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment

SAVE THE DATE

July 22, 2025

Corn, Soybean & Tobacco Field Day

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

8:00 am-12:00pm CT

Registration begins: 7:00 CT

The UK Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment has put together a strong program that will include talks on agronomics, research updates, economics, soils, and integrated pest management.

For additional information contact: Colette.Laurent@uky.edu

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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University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating.



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 7 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
MON	2: Canning Workshop 9-3	9: Amazing Quilt by Pat Arnott Pt.2 10-3 (RSVP) 4-H Project Day: Sketching 10-12 and 2-4 (RSVP, 10-12 and 2-4) District Board Meeting 11-12 (RSVP)	16: 4-H Cozy & Creative, Design Your Space 9-2 (RSVP, ages 9-18)	23: 4-H Project Day: Acrylic Paint Class 10-12 or 2-4 (RSVP, ages 9-12 and 13-18)
TUE	3: Game Day 9-12 Adult Sewing 9-11 Floral Arranging 5-6	10: Adult Sewing 9-11	17: Bags of Love 9:30-1:30 Laugh and Learn 11-12 (Library) Jr. STEM Club 2-4 (RSVP)	24: Adult Sewing 9-11
WED	4: Choice Chat 9-9:45 McCracken County Civic Beautification Board Meeting 10-11 Chair Yoga 10-11 (\$3) 4-H Forensic Files 2-4 (RSVP)	11: Choice Chat 9-9:45 Chair Yoga 10-11 (\$3) Tech Class: Learn the Basics of Google Docs 10-11	18: Scrapbooking 9-3 Chair Yoga 10-11 (\$3) 4-H Forensic Files 2-4 (RSVP)	25: Chair Yoga 10-11 (\$3) 4-H Forensic Files 2-4 (RSVP)
THURS	5: Needlework Circle 10-12 Horticulture Walking Club 11-12 Crochet Alley & Knit Row 1-3 Jr. STEM Club 2-4 (RSVP)	12: Horticulture Walking Club 11-12 4-H Project Day: Clay Sculptures 12-4 (RSVP)	19: 	26: Horticulture Walking Club 11-12
FRI	6: Amazing Quilt by Pat Arnott Pt.1 10-3 (RSVP, \$25)	13: Arts & Crafts Day: Watercolor Tulips 9:30-12 (RSVP, \$25)	20: How a Bill Becomes a Law 10-12 (RSVP) 4-H Project Day: Oil Pastels 9-11 (RSVP) 4-H Project Day: Clay Sculptures 1-3 (RSVP)	27: Cloverbuds Air Dry Clay 10-12 (RSVP, ages 5-8)

Event Calendar for June 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



Very Berry Salsa

4 cups apples, finely diced
1 cup blueberries
1 cup strawberries, diced

1 cup raspberries, halved
1 cup blackberries, halved

1 tablespoon fruit preserves
½ tablespoon sugar
½ tablespoon brown sugar

In a large bowl, **combine** apples and berries. In a small bowl, **mix** together preserves and sugars until well blended. **Pour** preserve mixture over fruit and **toss** to coat. **Cover** and **chill** in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes.

Yield: 32, 2 ounce servings

Nutritional Analysis: 20 calories, 0 g fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 0 mg sodium, 5 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 4 g sugar, 0 g protein



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

Kentucky Brambleberries

SEASON: June-August

NUTRITION FACTS: All brambleberries are a valuable addition to the diet. They provide fiber and are a good source of potassium and vitamin C. One cup of raw berries contains 70 calories and no fat.

SELECTION: Look for plump fruit, uniform in color and appearing fresh. Berries should be free of stems or leaves. Avoid moldy, crushed or bruised fruit. Do not use berries that have moisture leaks staining the carton.

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

PREPARATION: Handle all berries gently. Raspberries are more delicate and perishable than

other brambleberries. 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.

PRESERVING: Berries may be preserved by canning or freezing or used for making jellies or jam.

KENTUCKY BRAMBLEBERRIES

Kentucky Proud Project

County Extension Agents for Family and Consumer Sciences
University of Kentucky, Dietetics and Human Nutrition students

June 2013

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Source: www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov