

Ag & Natural Resources Newsletter

 Cooperative
Extension Service

Fall/Winter 2024




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Owsley County Extension Service
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Upcoming Events

Commercial Pesticide Trainings for Commercial CEU's
Monday, November 18, 2024 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p. m.
Friday, November 22, 2024 9:00 a.m. -3:30 p.m.

Farmers Market Popup
Owsley County Farmers Market
Monday, November 18, 2024 - 2:00 -5:00




Public Meeting Discussing the Large Animal Vet. Shortage
Wolf County Extension Office.
Monday, November 25, 2024 11:00 a.m.

Mountain Cattleman Association Fall Meeting
Tuesday, November 26, 2024 5:30 p.m.
RCARS in Jackson

Understanding Carbon Credits for Woodland Owners
Tuesday, December 3, 2024 5:30-6:30
Breathitt County Extension Office.

Owsley Beef Producers Fall Meeting
Understanding Hay Sample Results - Dr. Jimmy Henning
Wednesday, Dec 11, 2024 6:00 p.m.
Owsley County Extension Office

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Disabilities
accommodated
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Greenhouse & High Tunnel Sanitation Can Prevent Future Vegetable Diseases

Greenhouses and high tunnels allow growers to extend the vegetable growing season. However, many vegetable pathogens can overwinter in these structures. These organisms can survive for months or years on dead plant material or in soil, causing infections in subsequent years. Elimination of disease-causing organisms reduces the need for fungicides and can improve the effectiveness of disease management practices. Following these sanitation practices both in autumn and throughout the growing season can reduce disease pressure in both commercial and residential plantings.

Sanitation Practices

- Remove all plants and debris, including fallen fruit, once harvest is complete (Figure 1).
- All diseased plant material should be burned, buried, or taken off-site. Do not compost diseased plant material.
- Remove weeds, including roots, which may serve as alternative hosts for pathogens.
- Remove landscape fabric or mulch to remove disease-causing organisms.
- Clean and sanitize trellises, tools, benches, and equipment. Additional information on methods for cleaning and sanitizing review the following publications.
- [Cleaning & Disinfecting Hand Tools & Planting Supplies \(PPFS-GEN-17\)](#)
- [Cleaning & Sanitizing Commercial Greenhouse Surfaces \(PPFS-GH-07\)](#)
- Deep-till soil (high tunnels) to bury residual pathogens.
- When possible, rotate to crops in other plant families to reduce pathogen build-up.
- Solarize soil in high tunnels during spring or summer to kill soil-borne pathogens.



tomato can overwinter in plant debris. (Photo: Kenny Seebold, UK)

Figure 1: Bacterial spot on



Firewood

Christopher Reeves, Forestry

Firewood can be extremely helpful for heating homes with efficient wood burning stoves or complementing an outdoor adventure with a bonfire. Small woodlands could be a source of personal use firewood as well as a commercial venture (if there is enough land). This fact-sheet covers some important information that landowners should consider before venturing onto their land to harvest firewood.

How much do I need?

Firewood is generally measured in cords. One cord is a tightly stacked pile of wood that is eight feet long, four feet wide, and four feet tall. In general, a home will need about 3.5 cords of firewood to survive the winter. A typical woodland can produce about one third of a cord per acre per year if managed sustainably. This means that in order to get that 3.5 cords for every winter, landowners will need a minimum of 10 acres of land. This is an extremely middle of the road estimate since the amount of wood will depend on the heat generated from the wood burned and the type of stove. Wood that is denser can burn hotter and longer than less dense wood. Hickory and Osage-orange can burn hotter than southern yellow pine and basswood. Do not pay attention to “hardwood” or “softwood” labels when selecting wood. Certain hardwoods are dense (hickory) while others are light (birch). The same is true for softwoods.



This firewood stack is approximately 1.5 cords.

Getting the Wood

Most firewood operations can select from trees that have fallen because of natural causes or salvaging from

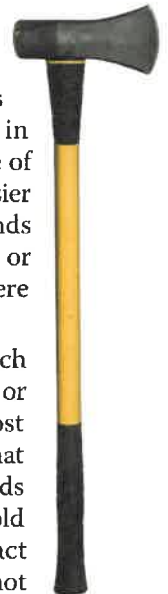
logging debris remaining after timber harvests. Trees to be cut down for firewood should be selected from those posing the highest risk to life and property and those with low vigor or poor quality. Woodland owners with potential aspirations for future income from timber harvests should not cut down trees that might have substantially more value as other products, such as veneer or lumber. Firewood can also be collected from other people’s property as long as permission is granted. Most national or state forests allow low level firewood harvesting on their lands with a proper permit.

From Trees to Firewood

The best tool to start turning trees or logs into firewood is a chainsaw. Proper training and safety equipment is a must before operating a chainsaw. Any landowner that is uncomfortable with using a chainsaw should not use it. Trees should be felled and de-limbed before cutting the logs into smaller rounds that are firewood size in length for further processing. Err on the side of producing smaller rounds because they are easier to transport and will dry faster. These rounds can then be transported by a tractor, ATV, or loader back to a central processing area where the splitting takes place.

Split wood without the bark will dry much faster than storing unsplit rounds. A large four or five pound axe will work well for splitting most wood. The best tool is called a splitting maul that is a combination sledgehammer and axe. Rounds should be placed on a platform (usually an old stump) high enough to get maximum impact from a single swing. The platform should not be the ground to avoid hitting feet, rocks, or material that can damage the tool blade such as metal or concrete. A mechanized hydraulic splitter will remove all the physical labor but may be a big expense to justify unless a lot of wood needs to be split.

Eye protection should always be worn when processing firewood using any method.



A splitting maul is a combination axe and sledgehammer and is the ideal tool for manually splitting firewood.



Produced in partnership with the Kentucky Division of Forestry.

Seasoning and Storage

Seasoning is the most important factor in getting good firewood. It's a fancy word for drying. Firewood needs to be seasoned a minimum of six months but one year is preferred. That means next year's firewood must be collected while using this year's. Firewood must be dried because energy will be wasted when burning the wood because the fire will spend most of its energy evaporating water out of the wood. Drying or storage stacks should be placed at least 30 feet from any structure to avoid being a fire hazard. The stack should also be four to six inches off the ground to allow for full air circulation, avoid moisture on the ground, and not attract wood destroying insects. Firewood should not be stacked in an area in perpetual shade because sunlight increases drying speed.



This drying rack is ideal because it is four inches off the ground, away from other structures, and not completely exposed to rain but still open to allow for sunlight and airflow to reach the wood although there is a lot of shade.

Transporting, Selling, and Buying Firewood

Because of the threat of invasive insects and diseases, people should not transport firewood very far from where it was cut. Numerous tree killing insects, such as the emerald ash borer, have increased their spread because of people taking firewood with them to far flung camping sites. This also holds true for landowners selling firewood to other people. Remind buyers to burn the wood nearby and not contribute to the spread of deadly insects and diseases. While firewood may show no readily visible signs of bugs, holes, fungus, or other signs of infestation that does not mean they are not there. Insect eggs and fungi spores are extremely small and difficult to detect. Even if all the wood is burned, there's still a chance an insect, egg, or spore has escaped into the new ecosystem. Don't take the chance!



Firewood should not be transported far from its original location even if the bark is removed to limit the spread of invasive insects and diseases.

For Commercial Firewood Operations:

Please review these factsheets for further information: Forestry Emerald Ash Borer Shipping and Hauling Hardwood Firewood [FORFS17-15] and Emerald Ash Borer Procedures for Ash Lumber, Firewood, Logs, and Sawmill Residuals [FORFS17-14].

For More Information

Kentucky Division of Forestry:
<http://forestry.ky.gov>

University of Kentucky
Department of Forestry: <http://ukforestry.org>

DontMoveFireWood.org

References

- Klase, W. and K. Tiles. 2012. Harvesting firewood from your woods. University of Wisconsin-Extension. GWQ060 1-09-2012. 20 p.
- Marcouiller, D. and S. Anderson. Firewood: how to obtain, measure, season, and burn. Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service. F-0440. 7 p.
- Marcouiller, D. and S. Anderson. Managing your woodlot for firewood. Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service. F-9439. 4 p.

Timely Tips For Beef Producers

Dr. Les Anderson, Beef Extension Professor, University of Kentucky

Spring-calving cow herd

- If you need to replace cows, consider buying bred heifers in some of the Kentucky Certified Replacement Heifer sales that are being held across the state this month.
- Extend grazing for as long as possible to decrease the amount of stored feed needed. The drought is making this difficult for most of the state in 2024.
- Evaluate body condition of cows. Sort thin (less than body condition score 5) cows away from the cow herd and feed to improve their condition. Two and three-year olds may need extra attention now. These cattle can use the extra feed/nutrients.
- Dry cows in good condition can utilize crop residues and lower quality hay now (but don't let them lose any more body condition). Save higher quality feed until calving time. Keep a good mineral supplement with vitamin A available.
- Contact your herd veterinarian to determine pregnancy in your cows if you have not already done so. Pregnancy can also be determined using blood sampling. Several diagnostic labs will analyze blood samples for pregnancy and a chute-side test is on the market. Culling decisions should be made prior to winter feeding for best use of feed resources. Consider open, poor-producing, and aged cows as candidates for culling.
- A post weaning feeding period will allow you to put rapid, economical gains on weaned calves, keep them through the fall "runs" and allow you to participate in Kentucky CPH-45 sales. Consider this health and marketing program which is designed for producers which are doing a good job of producing high quality feeder calves.
- Replacement heifers require attention during the winter, too. Weaned heifer calves should gain at an adequate rate to attain their "target" breeding weight (2/3 of their mature weight) by May 1.

Fall-calving herd

- Continue to watch fall-calving cows. Catch up on processing of calves including identification, castration, and vaccinations.
- Cows that have calved need to go to the best pastures now! Help them maintain body condition prior to breeding in December.
- Move cows to accumulated pasture or increase feed now. If at all possible, try to get animals vaccinated 60 days or longer before the breeding season.
- Start the breeding season in late November or early December for calving to begin in September. If you are using AI and/or estrus synchronization, get your supplies together now and schedule your technician.
- Make final selection of replacement heifers now.
- Don't forget to contact your herd veterinarian to schedule a breeding soundness exam (BSE) for your bulls. All herd sires need a BSE at least 30 days before the onset of the breeding season. A BSE can be useful insurance that your bull has the physical ability to breed cows. Even though BSE's aren't perfect, they are the best tool we have to identify infertile bulls.

General

- Have your hay supply analyzed for nutritive quality and estimate the amount of

supplementation needed. Consider purchasing feed now.

- Take soil tests and make fertility adjustments (phosphate, potash, and lime) to your pastures.
- This is a good time to freeze-brand bred yearling heifers and additions to the breeding herd.
- Graze alfalfa this month after a “freeze-down” (24 degrees for a few hours).
- Don’t waste your feed resources. Avoid excessive mud in the feeding area. Hay feeding areas can be constructed by putting rock on geotextile fabric. Feed those large round bales in hay “rings” to avoid waste. Concrete feeding pads could be in your long-range plans.
- Consider bale grazing to decrease damage to your pastures and to more evenly distribute nutrients across your pastures.

- **Beef Cattle Management Webinar Series Resumes**

- *Dr. Darrh Bullock, University of Kentucky, Extension Professor*

- The Beef Cattle Management Webinar Series, formerly known as Reaching Out While Locked In (ROWLI), will resume November 12th and continue the second Tuesday of each month until April 8th. We have an exciting agenda that includes many of the UK Specialists, as well as some nationally recognized experts. The schedule for the series is:

- November 12, 2024 – **Shooting the Bull: Answering all your Beef Related Questions!** – Updates and Roundtable discussion with UK Specialists

- December 10, 2024 – **Winter Feeding Strategies to Extend Short Hay Supplies** – Lawton Stewart, Professor, University of Georgia

- January 14, 2025 – **Important Traits for Bull Selection in Kentucky** – Matt Spangler, Professor, University of Nebraska

- February 11, 2025 – **Marketing Opportunities for the Spring** – Kenny Burdine, Professor, and Kevin Laurent, Extension Specialist, University of Kentucky

- March 11, 2025 – **Preparing for a Successful Spring Breeding Season** – Les Anderson, Extension Professor, University of Kentucky

- April 8, 2025 – **Health Update and Internal Parasite Field Study Results** – Michelle Arnold, Extension Veterinarian, and Jeff Lehmkuhler, Extension Professor, University of Kentucky

- If you have registered in the past, you do not need to re-register! If you have never received a Zoom invitation for the series, then please register: send an email to dbullock@uky.edu with the subject of Beef Webinar Series and your name and county in the message. The Zoom invitation will come via email the morning of each presentation. You will continue to get invitations until you send me a request to be removed from the list.

Make Your Poinsettia Plant Bloom Again

You can make that festive holiday spirit last all year. Coaxing your poinsettia to bloom again is a fun project when you tie it in with holidays during the calendar year.

Christmas—Select plants with tightly clustered, yellow buds. Protect them from hot or cold drafts, water when dry, and put them in a room with bright natural light.

New Years—Use an all-purpose house-plant fertilizer. Keep plants in a sunny window, water regularly, fertilize monthly. Plants will stay colorful for many weeks.

St. Patrick's Day—Remove faded flowers and bracts and dried leaves from the plants. Add more soil, preferably a commercially available sterile mix.

Memorial Day—Your plant should be approaching 3 ft. tall. Trim off 2 to 6 inches of the branches to promote side branching. Repot to a larger container. Move the plant outside; first to indirect, then direct light.

4th of July—Trim the plant again. Make sure it has full sunlight. Slightly increase the amount of fertilizer.

Labor Day—Your plant may have grown to 5 ft. or more. It can be pruned to a height of 18-24 inches. Move it indoors but make sure it has 6 hours of direct sunlight from a curtain-free window. Continue regular water and fertilizer.

First Day of Autumn—Starting on or near September 21, give your plant 14 hours of uninterrupted darkness and 10 hours of bright sun each day. For example, put the plant in a light-free closet or under a box at 6 p.m. each afternoon and return it to a sunny window at 8 a.m. the next morning. Keep watering and fertilizing it. Rotate it each day to give all sides even light.

Halloween—Discontinue the day/night treatment. Keep the plant in a sunny area. Reduce fertilizer applications.

Christmas—Enjoy your “new” poinsettia!





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