



**April 2022**

Brett Wolff, Editor  
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# The Food Connection welcomes Potter Wright

*By Jordan Strickler, UK Agricultural Communications*

The Food Connection recently named Dr. Ashton Potter Wright as its new director. Part of the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, The Food Connection serves farmers, food producers, students and consumers through creative strategies to support a vibrant, healthy and sustainable local food economy.

“I am excited to help leverage The Food Connection’s experience and lessons learned partnering with UK Dining to strengthen farm impact purchasing at institutions around the commonwealth,” Potter Wright said. “My work building the Bluegrass Farm to Table program has challenged me to work creatively and collaboratively with a wide range of partners toward the important goal of building a more vibrant local food economy in Kentucky. I intend to bring this same spirit of creativity and collaboration to The Food Connection. I am confident that the relationships I’ve cultivated with farmers, buyers and local food systems stakeholders will prove helpful in making strategic connections to maximize the impact of The Food Connection.”

Prior to taking the new director position, Potter Wright was director of Local Food and Agricultural Development for the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government, where she was successful in advancing the city’s food and farm economy.

In 2020, The Food Connection won a national economic development award from the University Economic Development Association for their efforts around local food, specifically their work on local food metrics. The local procurement metrics The Food Con-

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**Coming up**

**May 5** - Organic Association of Kentucky (OAK) Farmer Field Day, University of Kentucky Organic Farming Unit, Lexington, 1-4 p.m. Eastern Time. Cost-effective Measures for Improving Produce Quality and Extending Shelf-life. For details and to register, visit [oak-ky.org/farmer-field-days-2022](http://oak-ky.org/farmer-field-days-2022).

**May 10** - Crop Insurance Webinar, Step By Step Cost Estimator Tool Walk-through. 12:30 p.m. EDT. Step by step walk-through of a crop insurance price estimator from the USDA Risk Management Agency. To register, [click here](#).

**May 16** - Fertigation for High Tunnels and Small Plots webinar. From Grow Appalachia. 7-8:30 p.m. EDT. Free. For details and to register, [click here](#).





Photo by Steve Patton, UK Agricultural Communications

Dr. Ashton Potter Wright, Director of The Food Connection, part of the UK College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, spoke at the Local Food Systems Summit in March.

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nection developed to support and monitor the UK Dining partnership with Aramark have made UK a national leader in farm-to-institution initiatives, as well as a formal leader of a national initiative in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to develop harmonized local food metrics.

“I think that The Food Connection is uniquely positioned to be a hub for best practices,” Potter Wright said. “I am excited to lead The Food Connection during this next chapter and am committed to working collaboratively with UK and community partners to build a more resilient and equitable food system in Kentucky.”

To learn more about The Food Connection, visit <https://foodconnection.ca.uky.edu>.

## KCARD offers Active Grants page for up-to-date funding details

*From the Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development*

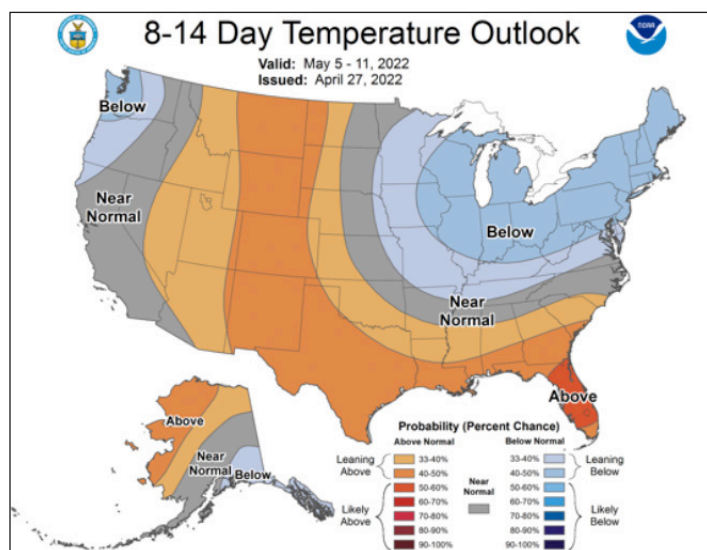
The Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development (KCARD) has created an Active Grants page on its website to help you stay up to date on active grants. Check it out for information on due dates, eligibility, and what projects can be funded. You can access the page at <https://www.kcard.info/active-grants>.

## Warmer than average start to May, wetter than average throughout

*By Joshua Knight, Sr. Extension Associate, Horticulture*

The NOAA’s Climate Prediction Center forecasts variable probabilities for temperature in May, with the first days in May calling for an above average chance of higher-than-normal temperatures. This forecast shifts with a cooler than average system affecting the entire Ohio River Valley and the northeastern U.S. Aside from the first days of the month, the overall picture for May predicts cooler than average conditions potentially pushing back the start date for our frost intolerant crops.

The picture for precipitation is much simpler: the NOAA is forecasting above average rates of precipitation for the region throughout the entire month of May. This, combined with the cooler than average temperatures could make it more difficult to get crops in the ground.





# Smigell retiring after 20 years helping Kentucky fruit growers

By Christy Cassady, Extension Specialist

Chris Smigell, an extension associate for fruit crops in the University of Kentucky Department of Horticulture since 2002, is retiring in May. Chris, who came to UK in 1991 to work on a master's degree in plant pathology, first worked at UK in 1995 on an apple IPM project with Drs. John Strang (Horticulture), John Hartman (Plant Pathology), and Ric Bessin (Entomology). He also worked for several years for Dana and Trudie Reed of Reed Valley Orchard in Paris, KY in the mid-1990s, where he "learned about the practical aspects of trees and small fruits."



Chris returned to his native Michigan for a while before coming back to UK in his extension associate's role in 2002. What has been his favorite part

of his job during the past 20 years? "Driving all over the state, meeting growers at their homes (farms) and helping them grow fruit," Chris said. "They have been so welcoming and so grateful. And very often I learned something from them - about farming, or rural living, many aspects of life in America.

"I will miss the growers and many of our extension agents, associates, and specialists. Thanks to all of you!"

Chris' future plans include doing some part-time work with tobacco specialists at the University of Kentucky Spindletop Farm, and he has signed up as a Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Auxiliary member. He said he plans to use the latter role "to continue to be involved with people and help veterans, and continue to serve."

Please join the Center for Crop Diversification in wishing Chris all the best in his future endeavors. He can be reached at [csmigell@uky.edu](mailto:csmigell@uky.edu).

## Green Industry Summer Summit to feature tour, educational options

The 2022 Kentucky Green Industry Conference Summer Summit will be held June 22<sup>nd</sup> through 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Holiday Inn Express-Hurstbourne in Louisville. The event will include a bus tour and an evening at Yew Dell Botanical Gardens on Wednesday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, and educational sessions on Thursday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>. The bus tour will include stops at Churchill Downs, Waterfront Botanical Gardens, and Kentucky Kingdom before heading to Yew Dell in Crestwood.

Educational sessions include two tracks, Pest

Management and Plants/Design. Registration begins at 7:30 a.m. EDT each day of the summit. The tour bus will depart at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, and the educational sessions will run from 8:30 a.m. to 4:10 p.m. on Thursday.

Pesticide, arboriculture, and landscape architecture CEU credits will be available. To see the complete schedule, [click here](#).

Pre-registration is required. For more information, please visit [www.knla.org](http://www.knla.org) or email [info@knla.org](mailto:info@knla.org).

## Thanks for reading!

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*Christy Cassady*

Christy Cassady, Extension Specialist

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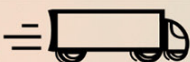
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The logo for the Kentucky Horticulture Council, featuring a green leaf and the text 'Kentucky Horticulture Council'.





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LOGISTICS & DISTRIBUTION JUNE 16TH 11:30 AM  
MARKETING JUNE 23RD 11:30 AM  
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