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Brett Wolff, Editor
Christy Cassady, Editor/Designer

Key UK CCD leader retiring this week

By Brett Wolff, Senior Extension Specialist, UK Agricultural Economics

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Coming up

February 15-17 - Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association (OEFFA) Conference, Newark, OH. For details, visit <https://conference.oeffa.org>.

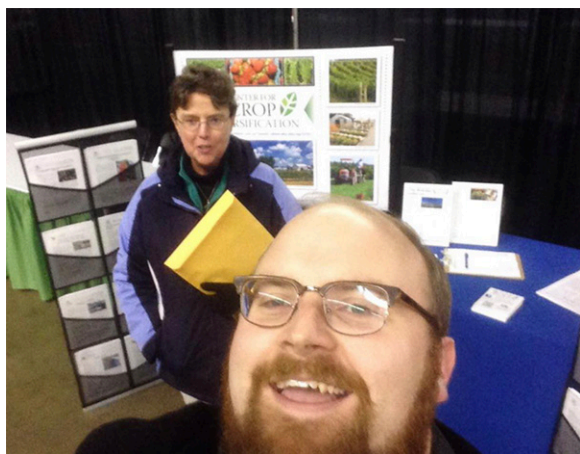
February 15-17 - PickTN Conference, Franklin, TN. For more information, visit <https://www.picktnconference.com>.

February 16-17 - Eastern Kentucky Farmer Conference, Morehead Conference Center, Morehead. For more information, see **Page 5**.

February 20-22 - Kentucky Turf & Landscape Management Short Course, Elizabethtown, KY. For details, see **Page 6**.

February 29-March 1 - Indiana Small Farm Conference, Danville, IN. For details, [click here](#).

Christy Cassady will retire February 2nd, 2024. Christy has been a leader in the Center for Crop Diversification for over 20 years and has made considerable contributions to the University, and the producers and agriculture outreach professionals across the state, region and country. The 2020 winner of the UK-CAFE Lisa Collins Outstanding Staff award, Christy grew up in Owensboro where she graduated from Daviess County High School. Over the years she earned degrees in Plant and Soil Sciences, and Agriculture with an individualized major (journalism focus) from UK, a degree in journalism from WKU, and a Master's in Journalism from Indiana University.



Brett and Christy at a conference trade show.

Before coming to UK, Christy was a journalist and sports copy editor for the Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer before working as a sports copy editor, sportswriter, and assistant sports editor at the Lexington Herald-Leader. While working on her degrees, she also

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Cooperative Extension Service

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Disabilities accommodated with prior notification.

Continued from Page 1

worked at Red Barn Nursery in Nicholasville. She started work in the UK Horticulture Department as a student in 1996, and as an extension associate in 1999. Christy was essential to establishing the Center for Crop Diversification as the regional organization it is today, and she has been here since its inception as the New Crop Opportunities Center in 2000. The NCOC, initially funded by a USDA Special Research grant, supported horticulture and specialty grains crops research projects and began developing fact sheets on a variety of crops and marketing channels, as well as other resources, including crop budgets. After the initial funding ended in 2013, the Center was renamed to its current moniker, known to most as the CCD.

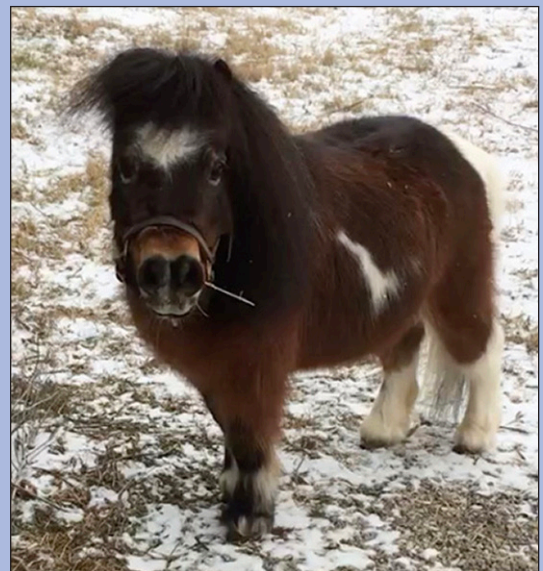
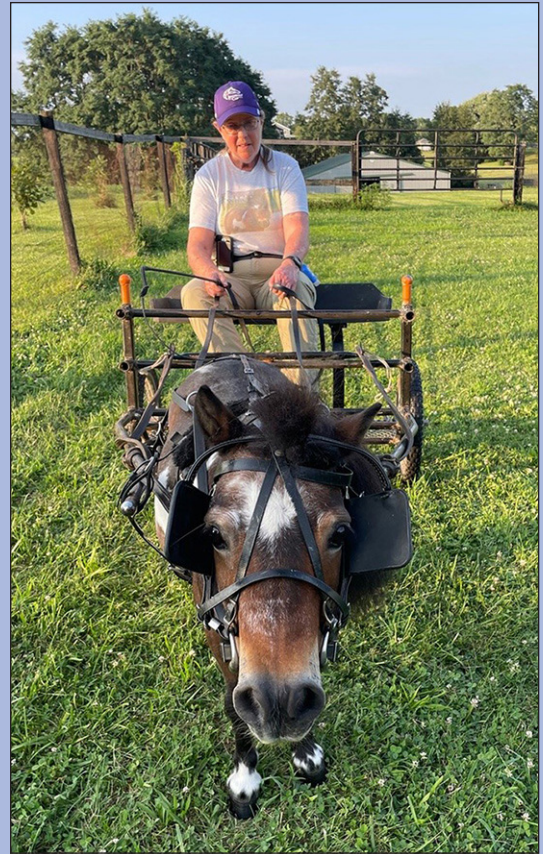
Christy has been a friend, mentor, and colleague to me since I started here in 2015 and I will miss her kindness, dry humor, and considerable skill and experience. The Center is what we are today in large part because of what Christy has contributed and I asked her to write a few thoughts to share with you. I hope you will reach out to congratulate Christy on her incredible and dynamic career and wish her well as she spends her time with her mini horse, Winston and pursuing creative writing in retirement.

Farewell, and thank you

After nearly 24 years with the UK Center for Crop Diversification (originally the New Crop Opportunities Center), the time has come for me to retire. I am very much looking forward to spending more time with Winston, my 30-inch-tall American Miniature Horse. I had to put his work as a therapy horse visiting assisted living and memory care residents on hold in 2023, and I hope to get back to that soon. There are at least two books and a number of essays and articles I want to write, and I want to spend time drawing, hiking, and devoting time to several of my passions, including helping retired racehorses find good homes.

I hope over the years I've been able to help you find answers to your questions about various crops. I hope you have enjoyed these newsletters. I want to thank the many people at UK and beyond who have made the CCD and its numerous resources possible. I could not have done my job without their help. Thank you to Kentucky's hard-working extension community, to our ag agency partners, and to the growers who put food on our tables. I wish you all the best in your farming endeavors, and if you should happen upon Winston trotting by with me in tow, please wave us down. We'd love to say hello.

Christy Cassady



Photos by Jessie Hunting (top) and Christy Cassady.



Have a CSA? Don't miss this free promotion opportunity

*By Emily Spencer, Extension Associate,
UK Agricultural Economics*

We are excited to announce the fifth annual KY Proud Spring CSA Week, a state-wide promotion of community supported agriculture happening March 4th - 8th, 2024.

This week is dedicated to raising awareness for CSA signup opportunities and generating excitement around the upcoming CSA season. If you are a farmer offering a CSA this growing season, you can take advantage of this FREE marketing and promotion support for your CSA program.

Every 2024 KY Proud CSA week partner farm will benefit by:

- Being included in our partner farm handout under areas you serve so consumers can easily locate CSAs in their area.
- Receiving template promo graphics to personalize for signup promotion on your own social media channels.
- Being featured in recommendations to the [CSA in KY Facebook Page](#) members when looking for CSA shares.

Sign up to be a 2024 KY Proud CSA Week Partner Farm by Sunday, February 4th, [HERE](#).

2024 KY Proud CSA week is organized by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture and Kentucky Proud, Kentucky Horticulture Council, Organic Association of Kentucky, Center for Crop Diversification, and The Food Connection.

If you have any questions about this event, contact OAK's CSA Marketing and Outreach Coordinator, Dee Owens (dee@oak-ky.org).



NAP pricing surveys benefit Kentucky growers

By Delia Scott, UK
Extension Associate
for Beginning
Farmers

As participants in the NAP program, Kentucky growers are required to provide price figures and yields from prior cropping years to their FSA office to calculate the assistance funding that they receive. If a grower does not have price figures, national wholesale prices are used, which are substantially lower than those that Kentucky growers who market retail receive. The information that you supply will only be presented as group averages; your identity will remain confidential. For questions, please contact Delia Scott, delia.scott@uky.edu.

These are the direct links to the survey -

NAP Veg Survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NAPVEG2023>

(sweet corn, cherry tomatoes, slicing tomatoes, bell peppers, pumpkins, summer squash, pickling cukes, slicing cukes, broccoli, green beans)

NAP Fruit Survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NAPFruit2023>

(apples, apple cider, peaches, nectarines, pears, plums, tart cherries, pawpaw, blackberries, blueberries, table grapes, wine grapes, raspberries, strawberries (matted row/plasticulture))

TAKE THESE NAP*
PRICING SURVEYS


***NONINSURED CROP DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

**Help KY fruit & vegetable growers
set a local pricing basis for crop
insurance claims!**


Without KY specific data, growers will have
to use national data that may be
significantly lower than local prices.

No NAP coverage required to take the survey!

NAP FRUIT
SURVEY



NAP VEGETABLE
SURVEY



**SCAN THE CODES TO TAKE
THE QUICK SURVEYS**



2024 EASTERN KENTUCKY FARMER CONFERENCE

February 16-17 at the Morehead Conference Center

REGISTRATION IS \$45

<https://tinyurl.com/2024EKFC>



Join us for a two-day conference focused on a variety of farm topics, including high tunnels, small ruminants, beekeeping, farm funding, marketing, and more!

Lodging is available at Best Western Eagles Inn and Hampton Inn.

**REGISTRATION IS OPEN UNTIL
JANUARY 31**

THE CONFERENCE INCLUDES:

- A VARIETY OF CONFERENCE SESSIONS
- FARM TO SCHOOL PRE-CONFERENCE SESSION
- GROWER-BUYER MEETUP
- VETERAN FARMER MEETUP
- 20+ RESOURCE PROVIDER EXHIBITS
- LOCALLY-SOURCED MEALS



February KY Maple Days offer up-close look at syrup production

By Jordan Strickler, UK Agricultural Communications Specialist

The University of Kentucky [Cooperative Extension Service](#) and [Kentucky Maple Syrup Association](#) are excited to announce the fifth annual [Kentucky Maple Days](#) Feb. 3rd and 17th. Now two days, the event, part of the Kentucky Maple Syrup Project, invites the public to explore maple syrup production's rising status across the state's farms and sugarhouses.

Kentucky's journey with maple syrup production traces back to the 1930s during the Great Depression. Sugar rationing led many to produce their own maple syrup. Though this practice dwindled over time, the state has experienced a resurgence in maple syrup production, revitalizing a nearly lost art.

"Kentucky Maple Days is a great winter agritourism opportunity to get the family out to visit some of Kentucky's maple producers and see how this industry is making a comeback in the state," said [Billy Thomas](#), UK Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment's [Department of Forestry and Natural Resources](#) extension forester. Each participating location will provide various activities. Visitors can witness the syrup produc-

tion process and purchase pure maple syrup and related products. Some locations will even offer sugar bush and sap-collection system tours.

While sugar maple trees are widely recognized, red maple trees also produce high-quality syrup. The commonwealth is abundant in red maple trees, making them a valuable resource for potential syrup producers.

Attendees are encouraged to contact local producers for specific details about activities and products offered at each site.

Further information, including event timings and a map of all participating farms, is available at <https://ky-maplesyrup.ca.uky.edu/ky-maple-day>.

"The program represents a unique opportunity for Kentuckians to get their hands on pure Kentucky maple syrup and learn how it is made," Thomas said.

The Kentucky Maple Syrup Association, which originated from the Kentucky-Virginia Maple School hosted by UK Cooperative Extension in 2016, has played a pivotal role in the resurgence and promotion of maple syrup production in the state.

Register
Now!

Eventbrite Registration

2024

47th Annual Kentucky Turf & Landscape Management Short Course

February 20-22, 2024

Hardin County Extension Center
111 Opportunity Way
Elizabethtown, KY




Expect warmer, drier than average start to February in Kentucky

By Joshua Knight,
Senior Extension Associate,
Horticulture

Some general relief from the extreme cold and wet weather of January is headed our way. The [NOAA's Climate Prediction Center](#) is predicting an above average chance of warmer than average temperatures for the first half of February across the Commonwealth, and indeed most of the continental U.S. Moving into the latter half of February, the picture is less certain with equal chances of above and below average temperatures.

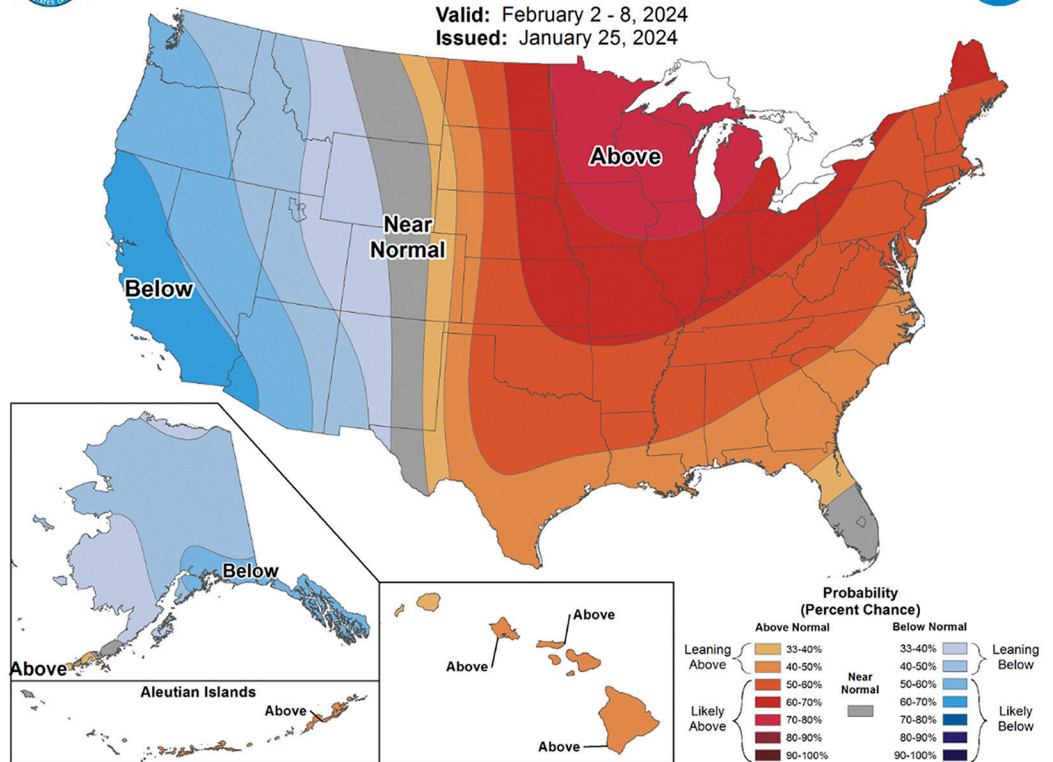
For the first week or so of February, the CPC is forecasting below average rates of precipitation for Kentucky as part of a larger pattern of drier weather centered around the Great Lakes. As this pushes east, equal chances of wetter and drier than average conditions take its place, though wetter than average conditions are expected west of Kentucky as we move further into February.



8-14 Day Temperature Outlook



Valid: February 2 - 8, 2024
Issued: January 25, 2024



Kentucky Local Food Systems Summit set for March 20th

By Jordan Strickler, UK Agricultural Communications Specialist

Registration for the sixth annual [Kentucky Local Food Systems Summit](#) (KYLSS) is now open. Scheduled for March 20th, the program is led by the [University of Kentucky Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food, and Environment Food Connection](#) in collaboration with the [Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development](#) and the [Kentucky Department of Agriculture](#).

The KYLSS event allows participants to engage in a full day of workshops, networking and critical conversations about local food systems development.

This year's summit is structured around three primary session tracks: "Cultivating Equity and Access," "Uplifting Voices and Catalyzing Change" and "Lessons From the Field." Each track addresses key challenges and opportunities facing the local food movement.

Morning sessions feature discussions on diversifying customer bases in local food markets, ideas

to enact cultural and systems-level changes and local schools' food programs.

Afternoon session topics range from institutionalizing cultural and systemic change in the local food movement to the financial and community impacts of U.S. Department of Agriculture grants, including the Local Food Purchase Assistance and Local Food for Schools programs. A popular, local chef will also present insights about her journey in building a restaurant group centered around local food procurement.

There will be two keynote conversations. The first is a panel discussion exploring how to align food as medicine efforts with local agriculture. The second is a conversation with award-winning author Crystal Wilkison and eight-time James Beard Nominated Chef Ouita Michel on exploring Kentucky foodways.

The summit qualifies for Kentucky Extension Reporting System credits for UK Cooperative Extension Service participants.

Registration is 8 – 9 a.m. ET. Morning sessions begin at 10:45 with afternoon sessions from 2:15 – 3:45, concluding with networking reception. After Jan. 15th, registration is \$95 per person. Scholarships are available as needed.

To register and view the full agenda, visit <https://foodconnection.ca.uky.edu/kentucky-local-food-systems-summit>.

Thanks for reading!

If you know someone who would enjoy our newsletter, or you're not subscribed yet yourself, visit www.uky.edu/ccd/newsletter and click "Subscribe Now." Or call Brett Wolff at 859-218-4384, or Christy Cassady at 859-257-5635. Stay up to date with the Center on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/ccduky/>

Christy Cassady

Christy Cassady, Extension Specialist

TECH TUESDAY

A WEEKLY SERIES FOR KY GREENHOUSE GROWERS

COMING SOON

Calling all active & prospective greenhouse growers!

Join industry specialists and growers across the state for a weekly series of webinars, interviews, infographics & more that explore all things greenhouse tech! Whether you are just starting to think about season extension or want to optimize your existing greenhouse operation, this series is for you! Stay tuned.

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