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2020 harvest HAS CHALLENGES

Tad Campbell
Mason County Extension Agent

As we continue to tread 2020 with obstacles, harvest season has not been without varying hurdles. The weather early pushed many plantings back more than desired with narrow windows of planting during recommended planting times. After crops were in the field, prolonged dry spells had some impact on production while some areas received small rain events to help lessen stress to crops. Later during the growing season needed rains were sporadic but helpful. As harvest neared temperatures became mild and rain events were more prevalent around the region. These hurdles are typical from most producers, but in 2020 are causing a delayed harvest in grain crops.

Forages harvested during the season were reported to be in better shape due to packaging before the wet weather arrived. Many producers reported that during hay harvest season most of the hay put up was dry and rain free during the process. Rain events on hay during the process can cause nutrient loss over time reducing the quality from an as fed basis. Many have reported to have replenished hay supplies that have been depleted over the last couple of year. Tobacco crops have made way to the

barn with some of the crop being stripped currently. Tobacco quality for the most part has been above average from reports but some disease pressure was present in the county.

Grain crops still linger with harvest. The weather during 2020 is quite different from last year and many grain producers have seen slow drying of grain crops. Dr. Chad Lee, University of Kentucky Grain Specialist, and Dr. Sam McNeil, University of Kentucky Agriculture Engineer, offered a recent article in the Corn and Soybean News for October 2020. They described in detail of reasons for slow drying of grain across the state. The following is an excerpt from that article using weather from Lexington during the current fall time frame during both 2019 and 2020: "From September 1, 2019 to October 8, 2019 at Spindletop Farm in Lexington, Kentucky, there were 29 days where the maximum temperature was at or above 85 F. This year, over that same time span, there were zero (0) days with a maximum temperature over 85! The contrast is even greater. In 2019, there were 10 days with a maximum temperature over 95 F. In addition, in 2020, Spindletop Farm received almost 1.5 inches more rainfall. So, 2020 has been cooler AND wetter than 2019 ... and the grain drying process reflects

those differences.

At Spindletop Farm, we watched corn dry 0.7 points in one week (25.7 to 25.0% in seven days) because of the weather. Then, it dropped to 21.3% in four days because of warmer, drier weather. The following Monday, it was back up to 23.0% because of rainfall over the weekend. Corn grain moisture in the field can drop or rise depending on the weather. If humidity levels re-main high (greater than 75%) for extended periods in October when the average temperature is 60, corn will not dry in the field or bin below 16%."

The excerpt shows that weather plays a vital role for producers' ability to harvest grain. With 2020 throwing so many obstacles at everyone, grain producers are still facing challenges with harvest due to the weather changes seen each year. Farmers often face the challenges with market prices due to seasonal price drops, excess commodity inventories, and numerous other reasons. To add to concerns of typical market issues, the pandemic arriving early spring adds another hurdle for producers with the commodity market structure. We hope that processors will be able to stay open, and we don't see major price reductions this fall as we face another wave of infections.



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Make meals more festive with a UNIQUE FALL INGREDIENT



(BPT) - Looking for new ways to elevate fall favorites? Add a ruby red pop of color and sweet burst of flavor to your dishes with a unique seasonal ingredient: pomegranates. Known for their sweet taste, brilliant red color and antioxidants, pomegranate arils, or seeds, bring a touch of sweetness that elevates savory and sweet recipes like no other ingredient.

The good news is, you don't have to go through the hassle of opening a pomegranate and removing the arils yourself - POM POMS Fresh Pomegranate Arils make enjoying pomegranates easy with their convenient ready-to-eat packages. Available October through January, POM POMS are offered in an 8-ounce cup for cooking or baking, or a 100-calorie 4-ounce single serving for easy snacking. Because they're straight from fresh pomegranates, POM POMS are a good source of fiber and are known for their antioxidant goodness.

Here are some fun ways you can use pomegranate arils on your table this fall.

1. BRIGHTEN UP YOUR BREAKFAST

Adding pomegranate arils to typical breakfast fare like oatmeal, yogurt or smoothies gives morning meals the flavor and touch of healthiness they deserve. How about sprinkling onto a slice of peanut butter covered toast? Breakfast will never be the same with these juicy morsels.

2. TRANSFORM SALAD OR GRAIN BOWLS INTO FESTIVE DELIGHTS

The saying goes you eat with your eyes first, so brightening up your dish with pomegranate arils' ruby red color will instantly make your lunch or dinner appear even more tempting. Try tossing them into salads, grain bowls or guacamole! Whether you're creating a weekday or special occasion meal, using POM POMS in the dish or as a garnish will instantly make it pop, while adding a healthy burst of antioxidants and fiber.

3. WOW YOUR FAMILY WITH DELICIOUS MEATLESS MEATBALLS

These meatless "meatballs" have plenty of rich flavor, thanks to the warm spices and refreshing pomegranate taste. Serve as an appetizer or atop spaghetti squash for a meal the whole family will love!

Meatless Meatballs with POM Harissa Sauce
Prep time: 50 minutes; Total time: 1 hour 20

minutes

Meatball Ingredients:

1/3 cup plain breadcrumbs 1/3 cup grated Parmesan Reggiano 1/4 cup flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped 1 teaspoon dried oregano 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon 3/4 cup ground cumin 2 tablespoons olive oil 3/4 cup onion, finely chopped 3/4 pound eggplant, diced 1/4 inch 1 and 1/4 teaspoons kosher salt 3/4 cups toasted walnuts, finely chopped 1 clove garlic, minced 1 tablespoon tomato paste 1 large egg, beaten 1/2 cup POM POMS™ Fresh Pomegranate Arils

Sauce Ingredients:

1 cup POM Wonderful® 100% Pomegranate Juice 1 8-ounce can tomato sauce 2-3 tablespoons harissa 1 teaspoon honey 1/4 teaspoon cumin 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger Plain yogurt for serving POM POMS Fresh Pomegranate Arils for garnish Extra flat-leaf parsley for garnish

Preparation:

1. Make meatballs: Heat oven to 350 F. In bowl, combine breadcrumbs, Parmesan, parsley, oregano, cinnamon and cumin. Set aside. 2. Heat olive oil in large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion, eggplant and salt and cook, stirring occasionally, until soft, 6-8 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in walnuts, garlic and tomato paste. 3. Transfer half the eggplant mixture to food processor and blend until smooth. Add back to eggplant mixture. Stir in breadcrumb mixture and egg. 4. Generously coat hands with oil or water and form mixture into 24 1-and-1/4-inch balls. Place on baking sheet 1/2 inch apart. 5. Bake until cooked through, 25-30 minutes. 6. Meanwhile, make harissa sauce: In medium saucepan boil POM Wonderful 100% Pomegranate Juice over medium high heat until reduced by half, 12-15 minutes. Whisk in tomato sauce, harissa, cumin and ginger. Let cool slightly. Top meatballs with POM POMS

Fresh Pomegranate Arils and parsley. Serve with harissa sauce and yogurt.

4. BOOST THE HOLIDAY FACTOR IN DRINKS AND DESSERTS

Sprinkle bright red pomegranate arils in your cocktails, mocktails or punch to create extra-cheery holiday beverages you can feel good about. They add flavor and visual flair, even to simple mugs of cider or glasses of champagne. Garnish basic desserts with pomegranate arils to transform them into a celebration.

Find more recipe inspiration using POM POMS Fresh Pomegranate Arils at POMWonderful.com.

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How agriculture helps keep the U.S. ECONOMY MOVING FORWARD

(BPT) - Despite the economic challenges since the beginning of the global COVID-19 pandemic this year, one area of the U.S. economy is still going strong: agriculture. Amid so much uncertainty, food security is essential to the population of the United States and the world.

Currently, American farms not only grow enough food for America's 330 million residents, but they also export more than 20% of what they produce to international markets, according to American Farm Bureau Federation economist Veronica Nigh.

The pandemic had some impact on exports, although the effect appears to be temporary. "International buyers' ability to purchase U.S. ag products isn't what it was before the COVID-19 outbreak, but it appears this situation is just a temporary shock," says Nigh. "America is in a strong position when things normalize after COVID-19."

The importance of agricultural exports to the U.S. economy

All of the agriculture exports America produces help to drive the farm economy of the United States and the country's economy as a whole. Top exports include soybeans, corn, wheat and cotton.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the dollar value of agricultural exports in 2018 was nearly \$140 billion, combined with nearly \$163 billion in additional economic expenditure stimulated by agricultural exports - adding to a combined total of almost \$303 billion.

AgExportsCount.com reports that approximately



"The key is to avoid focus on just a few trading partners," said David Widmar, agricultural economist with Agricultural Economic Insights. "We need to maintain and grow trade with a host of countries."

How U.S. farmers can thrive

To succeed and expand agricultural exports moving into the future, American farms need to continue to produce the most marketable crops possible, using elite seed genetics and proven crop protection products.

"Twenty years ago, hardly any farmers were using fungicides in corn," said Lynn Sandlin, business intelligence manager at Syngenta. "Now, growers have

one million jobs are supported by U.S. agricultural exports, including 764,000 jobs in the nonfarm sector. Those non-farm jobs are connected to areas such as supplying seed and crop protection products, transporting commodities, plus processing and distributing agricultural products for export.

Population growth and agriculture demand Demand for U.S. agricultural products can grow with more trade partnerships. According to the United Nations, the current world population is 7.8 billion, and more than 95% of those people live outside of the United States.

"The global population is projected to soar to nearly 10 billion people by 2050," says Sara Wyant, veteran farm policy reporter and president of Agri-Pulse Communications, Inc. "We need to keep looking at areas around the globe where demand growth is likely for U.S. ag products."

Growing populations in many parts of the world, like India and African countries, will likely need more U.S. agricultural exports.

Syngenta products like Trivapro and Miravis brand fungicides for broad-spectrum disease control and plant-health benefits. These help farmers grow the very best crop possible, in terms of quality and yield potential."

Optimizing a crop's potential in these ways is crucial - not only to continuing to feed all of America's families, but to encourage and keep up with increasing global demand for U.S. agriculture exports.

To learn more about the role of the agriculture industry in the economy, visit www.SyngentaThrive.com.

Despite all of the unprecedented economic challenges since the beginning of the global COVID-19 pandemic this year, there's one area of the U.S. economy that is still going strong: agriculture. Even in the midst of so much uncertainty, the population of the United States and the world still needs nutritious food.

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Fall nutrient applications HAVE ADVANTAGES

April Wilhoit

Fleming County Extension Agent

Now is a good time for grain producers to get a jumpstart on next growing season. Applying some nutrients to your ground now is one way for you to do that.

Fall fertilizer applications have many advantages. They allow you to get a job done that can delay planting if it is put off until spring. The weather tends to be drier during the fall in Kentucky, which means your soil is less likely to get compacted when you make an application. Since most fertilizer purchases occur during the spring, you may get a discount from your fertilizer dealer, if you purchase nutrients during the fall.

The first thing you need to do is soil test your fields, so you only apply the nutrients your fields need. This saves you time as well as money. You

can work with your local extension office to submit soil samples for testing at one of the University of Kentucky's regional soil testing labs.

Once you get your soil test results, you can begin to fertilize according to UK recommendations. Potash and phosphorus are the two nutrients that are ideal for fall fertilizer applications in Kentucky. Both react strongly enough with the soil that they remain in the ground and their value is not lost through leaching during Kentucky's wet winters. Recommended rates of phosphorus and potash should be applied before planting small grains in the fall. If you are a double-crop producer, you will want to include your soybean nutrient needs for potash and phosphorus in the fall wheat nutrient application.

The University of Kentucky encourages corn and full-season soybean producers to wait until the springtime to apply nitrogen and animal manures.

Both run a high risk of leaching from the soil with Kentucky's typically wet winters. Additionally, nitrogen losses can occur from denitrification and immobilization during the winter. Animal manures are most effective when there is a crop already growing in the field.

If you have planted wheat this fall, only apply enough nitrogen to get the crop off to a good start and encourage tillering, which should not be greater than 40 pounds of nitrogen per acre in the fall. If your wheat crop follows soybeans, tobacco or highly fertilized corn, you may not need a fall application of nitrogen as the wheat should have all the nitrogen it needs to grow. If it is determined that the wheat needs additional nitrogen, remember that most of the common phosphorus fertilizer sources in Kentucky (DAP 18-46-0 and MAP 11-52-0) also contain nitrogen that the wheat can use.



April Wilhoit

Fleming County Extension Agent

No matter how small your garden is, it can play an important role in absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and temporarily locking it in the soil. There are a number of ways you can improve on this natural cycle, but at this time of year, the best way is through a cover crop.

Soil left bare over the winter months is susceptible to weed growth, erosion that can wash away valuable nutrients and a loss of carbon into the atmosphere. Soil nitrogen left over from this year's crop is subject to leaching due to fall and winter precipitation. Planting a fast-growing cover crop can help prevent these problems. The term crop in this context may be misleading. These plants are not meant to be harvested. Instead, they add important nutrients, promote beneficial bacterial growth and stabilize the soil.

Easy and effective cover crops that can be planted at this time of year include annual rye grass, hairy vetch, red clover and winter rye.

Annual rye and winter rye are particularly effective as late-season cover crops. They germinate quickly and are an effective barrier against weeds. Grasses, however, do not capture

Winter cover crop can IMPROVE GARDEN SOIL

nitrogen in their root system, so consider pairing rye with a legume, such as red clover or hairy vetch.

Hairy vetch and red clover work well as a cover plant, whether paired with rye or by themselves. Being legumes, they are excellent at fixing nitrogen in the soil. They are also prolific enough to reduce weeds and prevent erosion. In the spring, their blossoms will attract bees to your garden. If you worry about hairy vetch or clover reseeding in your lawn – though they're pretty plants and would add biodiversity and important nutrients – just cut them back before they bloom.

Come spring, you have two options. You can turn over your cover crop into the soil, allowing your vegetables or flowers to benefit from the nutrients it will slowly release. Or you can cut it back and let it die naturally, planting directly into the crop and using it as a mulch to continue to suppress weed growth and supply nutrients to your garden. Depending on which cover you plant, this may be easier said than done, because some, particularly grasses, are difficult to directly sow or plant into.

Grasses have a densely packed root system, which make them difficult to till or turn over. If your garden is particularly small or you're gardening in raised beds, rye might not be your best option. However, vetch and clover both have

root clumps which are easily dug up and turned over or planted between. Be sure to terminate the cover crop before allowing the plants to go to seed.

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Get crafty this year and SPREAD A BUNCH OF HOLIDAY CHEER



(BPT) - Holiday decorations bring a smile to everyone's face, and this year, we could all use that now more than ever. Crafting seasonal décor instead of shopping for it gives you and your family something to occupy your extra time at home and helps you avoid big crowds and shopping stress.

Perhaps you'll make wooden signs with jolly messages or metal snowflakes covered in lights? Or maybe you'll craft ornaments for the tree or engrave life-lasting messages into the menorah? No matter the craft,

a homemade holiday novelty will bring a sense of pride and happiness to all.

Ready to get crafty and holiday savvy? Here's what to do:

MAKE A PLAN

Visualize your project in your space and measure the location so you know how many supplies you need. Take a look around to notice what areas have the most room. Get a view from the outside to see what your neighbors will see when passing by.

Browse social media/decoration

sites for inspiration. Save pictures of your favorites and then picture it fitting in your space. You could even sketch out your design on paper to get a clearer vision of what you're going to create.

Locate your sources of electricity if you want to incorporate lights, music or even snow machines (hey, we can dream!). Be sure you have extension cords if you'll need them.

SHOP FOR YOUR MATERIALS

Shop for and select the items that are eye-catching and fun. Consider bright, festive colors and pretty patterns.

Research the items you need, and what stores near you carry them before you leave to save some time. Price check between stores to ensure you don't overspend. If possible, you can even order online supplies ahead of time to avoid the crowds.

HAVE THE BEST TOOLS IN YOUR TOOL BELT

Equip yourself with tools that are lightweight, versatile, portable, user friendly and the very best to get the job done. The new MakerX line of tools from Worx will elevate your home-crafter game, giving you a range of creative options, allowing you to create from anywhere and perfecting the small details that make all the difference. The tool set revolves around a 20V Power Hub battery that powers five versatile tools, including an air brush, angle grinder, mini

heat gun, rotary tool and wood and metal grinder, so the possibilities are limitless.

Be sure to test out your tools on some scraps first before diving into your perfect materials and always follow safety measures and be careful when handling tools.

SET THE MOOD

You've got everything you need so now it's time to start feeling festive. Light an apple cinnamon, vanilla cookie, fir and firewood or whatever spiced-snow-scent-tickles-your-fancy candle, turn on the cold weather carols and get your groove on.

Pour a cup of cocoa - or a glass of spiked cider for mom and dad - and get to work!

KICK BACK AND ADMIRE YOUR WORK

Enjoy the company of those around you as you work together to make your holiday crafts and see the beauty in creating something with your hands, regardless of the imperfections. Work any mistakes into your final design. After all, the experience is half the fun, and you're making memories that will last forever.

Proudly display your holiday decorations in and out of your home for yourself, your family and your neighbors to enjoy.

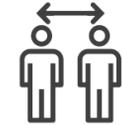
Take lots of pictures for friends and family who can't be there in person and share your work on social media. A little joy goes a long way.

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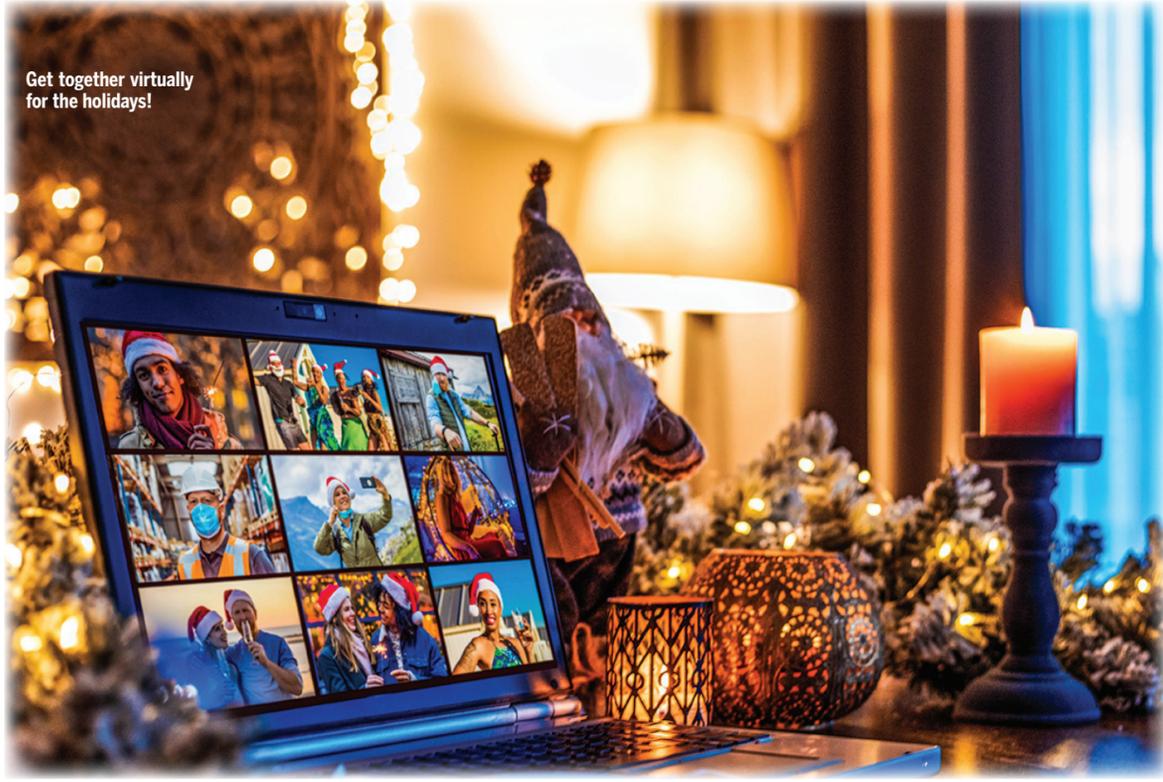



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4 Simple Tips for a Safe and HEALTHY HOLIDAY SEASON



Get together virtually for the holidays!

those taking extra precautions during this unusual holiday season.

GO VIRTUAL

Since you may not be able to see family and friends in-person, consider spending time with your loved ones from afar by using one of the many apps and programs that allow them to gather virtually. To keep the conversation flowing, prepare a list of fun topics, questions to ask or games to play while you are digitally celebrating the season together.

SHOP CONVENIENTLY

Online shopping has never been easier - or safer. Instead of heading out to crowded malls or stores, do as much online shopping as possible. Be sure to start early, as shipping times will likely be delayed and stocking of the season's most popular gifts may be limited. If you do plan to shop in person, be sure to follow your local guidelines to ensure you stay safe.

Don't let the pandemic steal your joy and ruin those time-honored holiday traditions. Instead, try following these helpful tips to ensure a safe and healthy season. You might even discover a new tradition to add to the list!

(BPT) - Traditionally, the holiday season is a time to gather with family and friends to reminiscence and celebrate all that has happened throughout the year. But with an ongoing pandemic, many are left looking for new and unique ways to enjoy those time-honored traditions in a way that keeps everyone safe and healthy.

So while things will likely look different than we are accustomed to, that doesn't mean you and your loved ones have to miss out on those most important and cherished traditions. Instead, consider trying these tips and tricks for safe, socially distant holiday fun.

HOST SAFELY

If you plan to host, there are a number of precautions you can take to keep guests safe. If possible, take your gatherings outside where you can

increase physical distance and airflow. Choose outdoor activities, such as a bonfire or an active game. If you live in a colder climate, bring out the hats, coats and gloves - and try using a patio or porch heater to warm up.

To limit travel, it is best to only invite people from your local area and limit the number of attendees. Provide information to guests about your local safety guidelines and take steps to prevent spread by providing masks and hand sanitizer.

GET HELP FROM THE EXPERTS

With everything to consider this year, there is nothing better than receiving a helping hand in the kitchen - especially one that can be delivered right to your doorstep. Boston Market, known this time of year as the Holiday Experts, has fully prepared, precooked holiday meal spreads, as well as a la carte sides

and desserts that can be delivered to your home, preordered or picked up at any location nationwide. This helpful solution is also perfect for

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