Family & Consumer Sciences Newsletter Summer 2025

Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment
University of Kentucky.

Keep watching Facebook & the Bracken County News for new programs that I will be offering in the fall, I hope everyone is having a wonderful summer so far!

Shannon Smith

LRA Leadership Day
August 26th 10:00 AM

Montgomery Co. Extension Office

Get your fall lesson materials!

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

***LUNCH & LEARN AUG 13TH, 11:30 AM**
TOPIC: "LIBRARY SERVICES"
***JUNK JOURNALING JULY 29TH, 4:00 PM**

Please contact the office to register!

Germantown Fair
AUG 4-9

Kentucky State Fair
AUG 14-24

2025 GERMANTOWN FAIR FLORAL HALL CATALOGS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE EXTENSION OFFICE

WHAT IS JUNK JOURNALING?? JOIN US FOR A HANDS-ON CLASS WHERE WE TURN SCRAPS INTO TREASURES! WHETHER YOU'RE A PAPER LOVER, MEMORY KEEPER, OR JUST WANT TO TRY SOMETHING NEW, JUNK JOURNALING IS THE PERFECT MIX OF ART, SCRAPBOOKING, AND STORYTELLING.

NEW

The Basics of Sour Dough with Mary Campbell
Sept 9th

More information will be posted at a later time! Keeping checking our Facebook Page!
Spots will be limited!

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

Cooperative Extension Service

ADULT HEALTH BULLETIN

JULY 2025

Download this and past issues of the Adult, Youth, Parent, and Family Caregiver Health Bulletins: **http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/content/health-bulletins**

Bracken County
Extension Office
1120 Brooksville-Germantown Rd
Brooksville, Ky 41004
606-735-2141

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC

WHAT IS ALPHA-GAL SYNDROME?

Alpha-gal Syndrome (AGS) is a severe allergy that can happen after a tick bite. It causes allergic reactions when people eat red meat or use products derived from animals, such as cows, pigs, or deer.

Ticks carry a sugar molecule called alpha-gal, which is also in red meat. When the tick bites, it can transfer a small amount of alpha-gal into the person. In some people, this causes an immune response. The immune response triggers an allergic reaction each time the person comes into contact with alpha-gal in the future. It can happen when they eat red meat, such as beef, pork, or venison, or come into contact with products made from other parts of those animals, including dairy products, gelatin, or beauty products.

In the United States, Lone Star ticks are the most common transmitters of alpha-

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gal to humans. While it is possible for anyone to be bitten by a tick and have a reaction, adults react more commonly than children.

The best way to avoid getting AGS is to avoid tick bites! If you are going into areas of dense trees or shrubbery, use tick spray or wear tick-proof clothing. If possible, stay out of tall grass and thick woods, and walk in the center of trails.

After coming in from outdoors, check your skin, clothes, and pets for ticks. Take a shower and look for ticks on your body and always remove any ticks right away.

If you develop symptoms of a food allergy after a tick bite, contact your doctor. Make sure to tell them about your tick bite, to help them see if your illness may be related. It is important to get medical treatment for food allergy symptoms, even if the symptoms happen several hours after eating.

Get emergency medical treatment if you have symptoms of a serious allergic reaction. If you have trouble breathing, called anaphylaxis, or a constricted airway, rapid pulse, are feeling dizzy or light-headed, drooling, not able to swallow, or have full-body redness and warmth.

In order to diagnose you, a doctor may ask about your symptoms, medical history, and daily habits, take a blood sample for alpha-gal antibody testing, or recommend allergy testing to confirm or rule out other potential allergens.

If you are diagnosed with AGS, see an allergy doctor, known as an allergist, for help. They specialize in treating allergic reactions and can help develop a plan to help you cope with your diagnosis. They can also refer you to other health-care specialists, such as a dietitian, mental health therapist, or home health service if needed.

Other recommendations for people living with AGS include avoiding eating red meat (beef, pork, lamb, deer, rabbit), and avoiding other potential sources of alpha-gal from animal products such as dairy products, gelatin, and certain beauty products. Read labels carefully to avoid trigger products. Talk to a doctor before taking any new medicine or vaccines. It is also important to avoid new tick bites, as they can make the allergy worse.

REFERENCE:
https://www.cdc.gov/alpha-gal-syndrome/about

Written by: Katherine Jury,
Extension Specialist for Family Health

Edited by: Alyssa Simms

Designed by: Rusty Manseau

Stock images: Adobe Stock

MONEYWI$E

VALUING PEOPLE. VALUING MONEY. JULY 2025

Nichole Huff, Ph.D., CFLE | Assistant Extension Professor Family Finance and Resource Management | nichole.huff@uky.edu

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:
INVESTING FOR EVERYONE

Benjamin Franklin is credited with saying, "A penny saved is a penny earned." But is this principle true? In today's economy, not necessarily. If we put a penny (or dollar) under a mattress, it may be worth less than a penny (or dollar) tomorrow or next year. Because of inflation, goods and services usually cost more in the future than they do today. This is why even people who are good at "saving" can fall behind financially. Investing your money is one way to battle inflation.

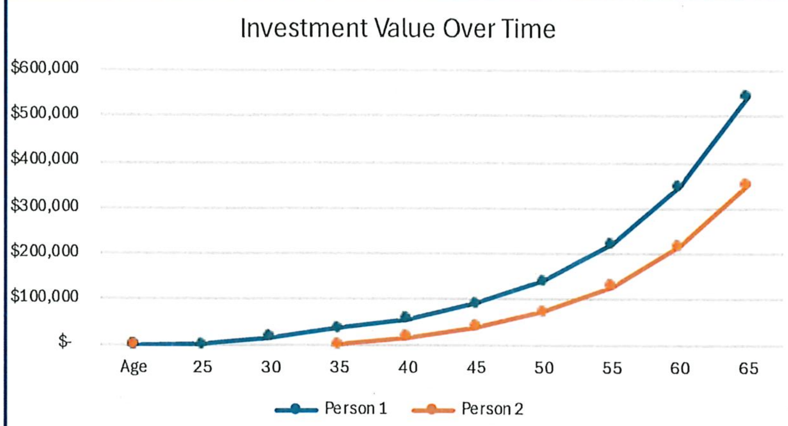
GROW YOUR MONEY

Saving is not investing. Investing is a way to make your money grow. Once you have an emergency fund in place for unexpected expenses, you should consider investing any extra money. Invest as much as your "risk tolerance" will allow. The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) defines risk tolerance as *"an investor's ability and willingness to lose some or all of an investment in exchange for greater potential returns."* There is risk involved when investing, but with research and careful choices, your money should grow steadily over time.

COMPOUNDING INTEREST

Anyone who has had a revolving balance on a credit card knows that for an item that originally cost $100, you could pay back more than $100 with interest. Credit card companies take advantage of compounding interest by charging extra for every purchase not paid off in full each statement. Then, they charge you interest on top of that interest, sometimes daily! This illustrates the principle of **compounding interest**, which is why getting out of debt can be hard. However, when investing, compound interest is a great thing! It helps your money grow faster. Learn more at ukfcs.net/MoneyWise2-23

MANY PEOPLE THINK THAT TO INVEST YOU NEED THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS, WHICH IS A MYTH



NOTE: *Both investors contribute $2,000 per year once they start investing. The example assumes a 9% fixed rate of return, compounded monthly. Reference: Investor Protection Trust. The Basics of Saving and Investing: Investor Education 2020. https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/commerce/documents/securities/posts/The-Basics-of-Savings-and-Investing.pdf*

CAN I AFFORD TO INVEST?

Many people think that to invest you need thousands of dollars, which is a myth. You can invest as little as a dollar a month. Almost anyone can open a brokerage account. This account is like a savings account but with a brokerage company allowed to sell "holdings" like stocks, bonds, mutual funds, and Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs). The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission offers a beginner's guide to investing at https://www.investor.gov/introduction-investing.

Check with your employer to see if they offer a retirement plan such as a 401(k). If they do, start contributing as much as you can each pay period. Your employer can take this amount from your pay and put it into a brokerage account for you. Many companies also "match" contributions up to a certain amount. This means that for every dollar you put in, the company also adds a dollar. This is free money! Try to maximize this amount each year. There also can be tax benefits depending on the type of account you have.

Once the money is in your brokerage account, you can decide what to buy (e.g., stocks, bonds, annuities). Try to learn as much as you can about the products you are buying, but don't wait to start investing. There are investment professionals who can help you figure out which purchases are less risky. Make sure your investment portfolio is diversified. That means you should invest in a variety of different things so you have more "eggs" in your "basket." On average, inflation has been 3.51% each year since 1950, so you should aim to earn at least 3.51% or more on your investments (https://www.officialdata.org/us/inflation/).

SLOW AND STEADY

Once you start investing, use the "buy and hold" strategy to sit back and watch your money grow over time. If you earn 9% interest (assuming a strong market), your money will double in 8 years! Then it will double again in the next 8 years, and so on. The sooner you invest, the sooner that can happen. So, whether you can invest $5 a month or $5,000, just get started. Your future self will thank you.

REFERENCE:

Office of Financial Readiness. *Investing Basics: Bonds, Stocks, Mutual Funds and ETFs*. https://finred.usalearning.gov/Saving/StocksBondsMutualFunds

Written by: Barbara Breutinger | Edited by: Kelly May and Alyssa Simms | Designed by: Kelli Thompson | Images by: Adobe Stock

Nichole Huff, Ph.D., CFLE | Assistant Extension Professor Family Finance and Resource Management | nichole.huff@uky.edu

How to Pack a Cooler

PLAN. EAT. MOVE.

QUICK TIPS

- Choose a well-insulated cooler with thick walls. Before you pack it, make sure it is cleaned out.
- Layer ice between each section to ensure everything remains cold. Put your ice in freezer or grocery bags to help make your cooler easier to navigate.
- Prechill foods and drinks when possible.
- Keep your cooler closed when possible and in the shade and out of direct sunlight.
- Store eggs in a sturdy leak-proof container and out of melted ice.

Put the most delicate foods including fresh fruits and vegetables, healthy snacks, and other items that may require easy access at the top.

Pack in any cheeses, yogurts, and cooked foods.

Store meat products and milk at the bottom of your cooler in airtight and spill-proof containers to avoid cross-contamination.

Line the base of your cooler with ice and/or frozen water bottles.

This work is supported by the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture

EFNEP

Cooperative Extension Service

USDA SNAP Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

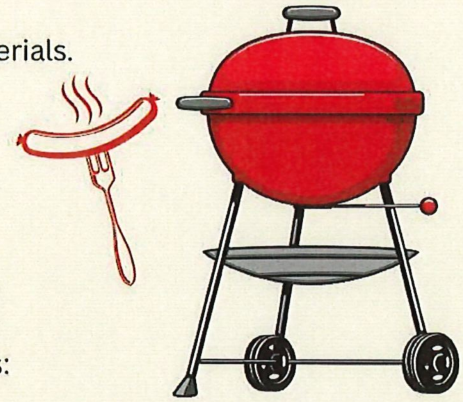
Putting Healthy Food Within Reach

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. This material was partially funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - SNAP.

IT'S TIME TO GRILL

It's time to fire up the grill and get cooking! Grilling outdoors can liven up your summer social events with tasty food and fun, and it can also provide a nice break from your regular meal routine. Follow these grilling safety guidelines to keep grilling injuries from spoiling your next cookout:

- Use grills outside only.
- Keep the grill away from the house and any flammable materials.
- Use the right lighter fluid for your grill.
- Establish a child-and-pet-free zone.
- Clean the grill well before use.
- Don't overload the grill.
- Keep a spray bottle filled with water nearby.
- Never leave your grill unattended.
- Never add lighter fluid after the flame has been lit.

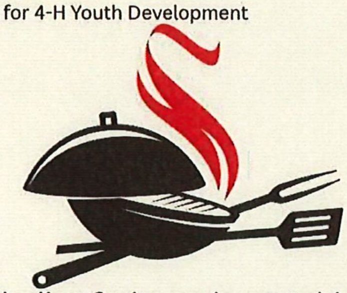


If you use a gas grill, follow these additional safety precautions:

- Make sure the lid is open before lighting it.
- If you smell gas, and the flame is off, turn the gas off.
- If you smell gas and the flame is on, get away immediately.

Source: University of Kentucky Exclusive June 14, 2024- Isaac Hilpp, Sr. Extension Specialist for 4-H Youth Development

Grilling Fruits and Vegetables



- Grills are so versatile for preparing a variety of foods including fruits and vegetables. Grilling fruit and vegetables has many benefits.
- You can add new flavors to some of your favorite dishes, increase your family's fruit and vegetable intake, and they typically take 10 minutes or less to cook.
- Stone fruits like peaches, cherries and plums do extremely well on the grill as do apples, strawberries and bananas. Select firm fruit that is not too ripe, as over-ripe fruit can end up too soft when grilled. You can enhance their flavor by applying olive oil or lemon juice before placing them on the grill.
- Firm vegetables like corn on the cob and asparagus are easy to prepare on the grill. Place them right on your grill's cooking grid. Frequently turn vegetables to keep them from burning on the grill. You can grill smaller or chopped vegetables by wrapping them in aluminum foil and then placing them on the cooking grid. Season your vegetables with olive oil and fresh herbs in the aluminum foil. Grilled vegetables taste great as a side dish or dipped in hummus.

Source UK Exclusive - Grilling Fruit and Vegetables - 05/30/2019 Heather Norman-Burgdolf, Assistant Extension Professor

Summertime Sensation Casserole

4 strips turkey bacon

⅓ cup minced onion

3 tablespoons diced green pepper

4 ears fresh sweet corn

½ teaspoon salt

⅛ teaspoon black pepper

1 teaspoon dried sweet basil

2 cups tomatoes, chopped

⅓ cup reduced fat shredded cheddar cheese

1. In a large skillet, **cook** turkey bacon until crisp.
2. **Drain** turkey bacon on paper towel, **chop** and put aside. Do not drain pan. **Cook** onion and green pepper in bacon drippings over medium heat until tender.
3. **Cut** corn from cob and add to onion and green pepper mixture in skillet. **Add** salt, black pepper, basil and tomatoes. **Cook** 5-10 minutes. **Add** chopped turkey bacon and cook an additional minute.
4. **Pour** skillet contents into a greased 1-1/2 quart casserole dish.
5. **Top** with shredded cheddar cheese.
6. **Bake** at 350°F for 30 minutes, or until cheese is melted and bubbling.

Yield: 5, ½ cup servings.

Nutrition Analysis: *160 calories, 7 g fat, 2.5 g sat.fat, 25 mg cholesterol, 680 mg sodium, 19 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber, 7 g sugar, 8 g protein.*

Plate it up! Kentucky Proud

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