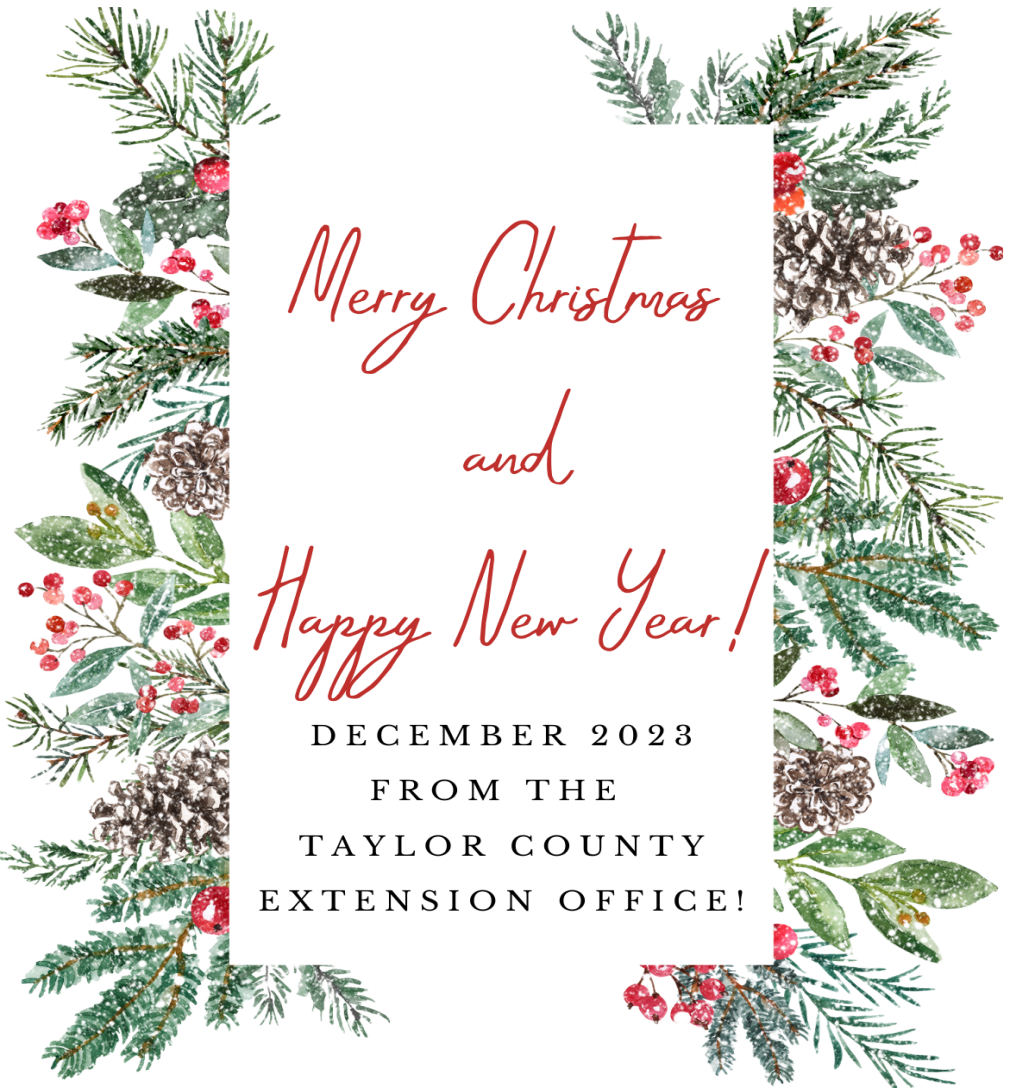




Taylor County Horticulture December 2023 Newsletter

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Sincerely,	
<i>Kara Back</i>	
Kara Back Extension Agent For Horticulture	



*Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year!*

DECEMBER 2023
FROM THE
TAYLOR COUNTY
EXTENSION OFFICE!

**Reminder the Extension Office will be closed
December 25, 2023 through January 1, 2024.
We will be open again January 2, 2024.**

**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

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Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.



DECEMBER 2023

UPCOMING EVENTS

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4 BUSY BLOOMER GARDEN CLUB CHRISTMAS MEETING 1:00 P.M.	5	6	7	8	9
10	11 CHRISTMAS DOOR SWAG 1:30 P.M.	12	13 4-H ENTOMOLOGY CLUB 3:30 PM	14	15	16
17	18	19 4-H HORTICULTURE CLUB 3:30 P.M. 4-H BEE CLUB 5:00 P.M.	20	21 GREEN RIVER BEEKEEPERS 7:00 P.M.	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	THE EXTENSION OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED DECEMBER 25, 2023 THROUGH JANUARY 1, 2024. WE WILL REOPEN JANUARY 2, 2024.					

TO RSVP FOR THE CLASSES, CALL THE EXTENSION OFFICE AT 270-465-4511

FISHBONE CACTI

By: Jennifer Tungate (Taylor County Master Gardener)

Disocactus Anguliger; commonly known as a Fishbone, Ric Rac, or Zig Zag Cacti, is a species native to Mexico. They are known to be grown as an ornamental cacti for its fragrant flowers in the fall. The flowers are unique because they are nocturnal and only last for a short while. Flowers will appear when your cacti reaches maturity around two to three years during growing season.

This species thrives in drier conditions and only needs to be watered once the top half of the soil has dried. These cacti prefer warm humid environments due to their jungle origins where they grow from tree branches. Fishbone cacti prefer temperatures between 60-80 degrees Fahrenheit. They are ideal for environments that don't get lots of full, direct sun making their needs easier for succulent lovers. The fishbone cacti needs five to six hours of indirect sunlight daily to thrive.

It is recommended to fertilize this species of cacti once per month in the spring. The cacti should be checked regularly for pests. The most common found on the Fishbone cacti are mealybugs, spider mites, whitefly, scale, and vine weevils. Typical diseases associated with this species of cacti are root or leaf rot, leaf-spot, powdery mildew. Repotting needs to be done every two years using cactus and succulent potting mix. Use a pot two inches larger than the root ball with adequate draining holes. Fishbone cacti are classified non-poisonous making them safe around pets.

Fishbone cacti are easily propagated by taking a stem cutting and placing it on top of moist soil. Allow the plant and its wounds to callus over in order to kick-start the rooting process, along with preventing root rot. Keep the roots moist for about a week, misting the soil and foliage on opposite days. Provide a location with bright, indirect sunlight during this period. Now the cutting can be placed into soil submerging the bottom third of the stem into a shallow pot. Terracotta pots are a great choice; as well as plastic pots avoiding pots that are too big. Tap the side of the pot instead of patting down the soil keeping the soil fluffy and oxygenated in order to help prevent root rot and fungus. They can also be divided to create another plant.

The Fishbone cacti is an unusual, funny leaved houseplant to add to your collection. This jungle cactus is full of personality with very distinctive flat wavy stems that grow quite long in fountain-like shapes. It is considered a trailing cacti, but can be pruned to remain smaller and upright.



CHRISTMAS DOOR Swag



**MONDAY,
DECEMBER 11
1:30 PM**



**SPOTS ARE LIMITED!
RSVP BY CALLING THE
TAYLOR COUNTY
EXTENSION OFFICE AT
270-465-4511**

Gardening Tips by Month

December



House Plants

- During the winter, houseplants typically need less water than in the summer due to reduced hours of sunlight. Err on the side of caution and use tepid water instead of cold water. Overly wet soils can lead to increased numbers of fungus gnats that lay eggs in the wet soil.
- When purchasing houseplants during the winter, be sure to protect the foliage from the cold on the trip home. Place plants in a cardboard box or other protective covering to prevent damage to leaves.
- On extremely cold nights, move houseplants back from icy windows to prevent chilling injury.
- Holiday poinsettias do best with bright, indirect light and night temperatures in the 50-60's. Keep plants away from drafts, registers, and radiators. Let the soil dry only slightly between thorough waterings. Ensure the water can drain and evaporate; punch holes in the decorative foil if needed.
- Be sure to check houseplants often for common pests: aphids, spider mites, scale, mealybugs, whiteflies, and thrips.

Trees & Shrubs

- Only female hollies bear the red berries. There must be a male tree nearby for pollination and fruit production to occur.
- Branches of apples, pears, and other rose family plants that were infected with fire blight can be safely pruned off now. Another option is to wait until a dry period during mid-summer.
- Be sure the root zones of shrubs are thoroughly mulched. Any organic material will do.
- Live Christmas trees hold needles longer when you make a clean, fresh cut at the base and always keep the trunk standing in water
- Hollies may be trimmed now. The cuttings can be used in holiday decorations.

Miscellaneous

- Monitor overwintering dormant plants, bulbs, and tubers by ensuring they are not completely dried out or rotting.
- Check to see if any seeds purchased for the next season require stratification in order to germinate. The seed packet should indicate if this process is needed. Some common seeds that require stratification include Asclepias, Echinacea, Rudbeckia, and Baptisia. Mimic cold stratification as needed by placing seeds in the refrigerator at 33-40°F for 1-3 months.
- Mulch strawberries during this month.

Source: Missouri Botanical Garden

Spotted Lanternflies

By Jonathan L. Larson, Entomology Extension Specialist

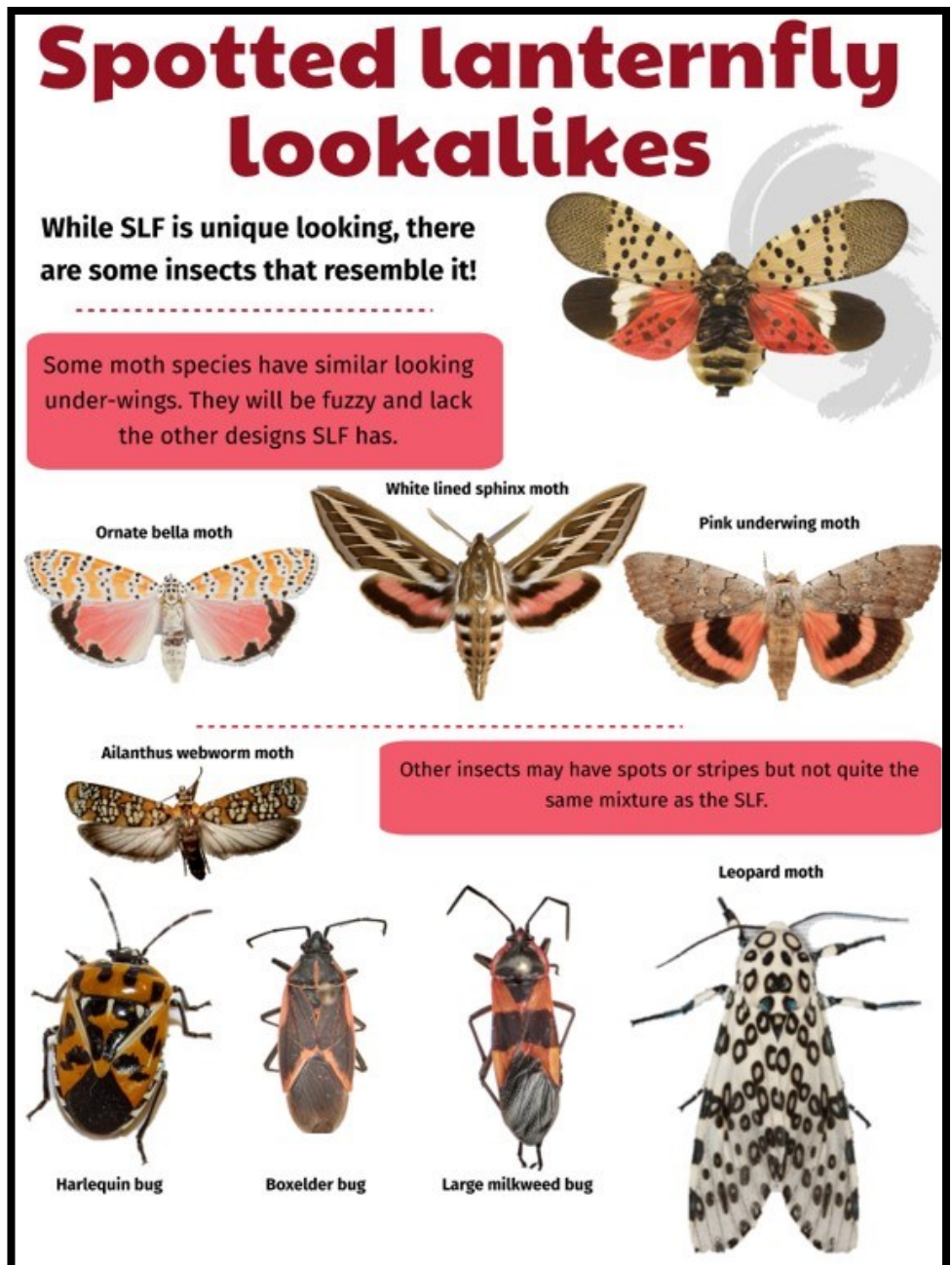
This pest is known to feed on more than 70 plant species, including specialty crops like grapes, apples, peaches, and hops, as well as trees such as maple and black walnut amongst other hardwoods, and fruit crops. Their preferred host for a portion of their life cycle is the tree of heaven (another non-native/invasive species). SLF is classified as a true bug, part of the order Hemiptera. They feed using piercing sucking mouthparts. As they feed, they excrete honeydew, a sugary fecal material that accumulates on nearby plants and surfaces and can attract black sooty mold fungi. Honeydew can also be slippery for people and unfortunately can attract stinging insects looking to feed on it. Another unique problem is that beekeepers near SLF infestations report that their bees will forage so heavily on the honeydew that they end up with honey made from SLF fecal material rather than nectar.

Females lay their eggs on natural and unnatural surfaces alike. Eggs are being laid right now as autumn settles in, and they will overwinter in that stage. While they use trees, the cryptic and hard-to-see egg cases have also been found on automobiles, trains, lawn furniture, firewood, stones, and many other substrates. It's possible that Kentuckians who travel to Gallatin County or to Cincinnati, OH could pick up hitchhiking female lanternflies that will come back to un-infested parts of Kentucky and lay eggs there.

What can people do to help?

Kentuckians should be on the lookout for this pest. Report suspicious looking bugs and egg cases to the Office of the State Entomologist at reportapest@uky.edu. When making a report, please include an image or a sample of the suspect, otherwise it will be difficult to confirm the problem. It is also important to include geographic information. It is true that this is a difficult pest to eliminate, but with the help of citizens monitoring for populations, there is hope that their spread can be slowed to allow communities more time to prepare.

While the SLF is a unique looking insect, there are some other species that can be mistaken for it at a quick glance. These are just a few that have been submitted to the University of Kentucky over the last year (Photo: University of Kentucky Department of Entomology).



TIPS FOR 2024 GARDENING

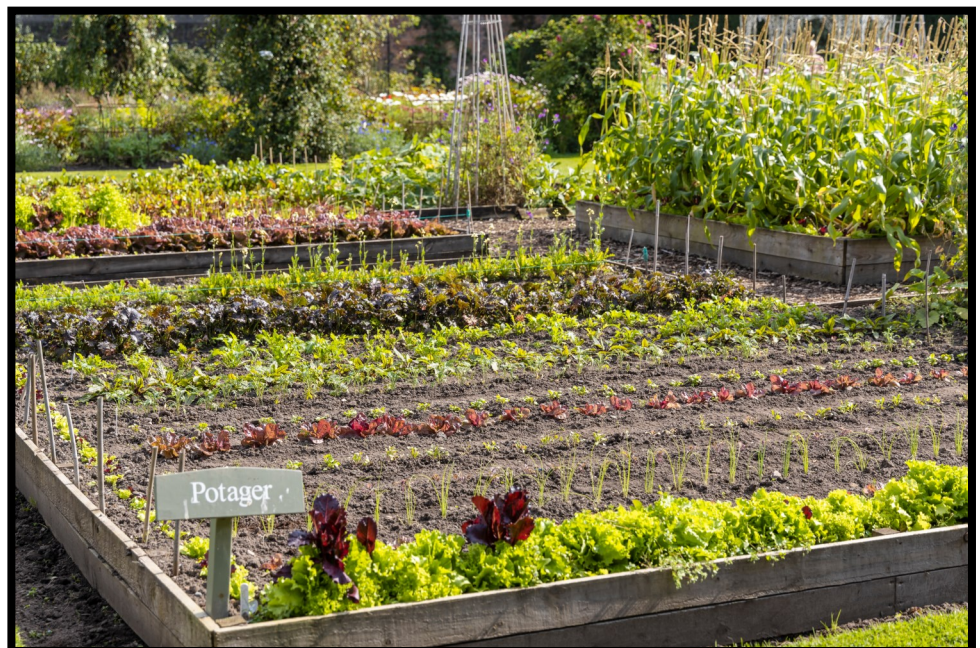
By: Karen Redford (Taylor County Master Gardener)

November and December are busy months for most of us, but it's also a good time to reflect on what went well, and what didn't work so well for our gardens. What do we need to do differently than last year's garden? It's never too early to start thinking about how to make our gardening plans for 2024. Time flies, and it will be here before you blink twice. It isn't a bad idea to start your plans out on paper. Plot out your layout. Think about what you want your garden to look like. Do you want to section it off? What about having it in raised beds? That is what I would like to start working on, if I could get my husband to stay out of the deer stand long enough. Start drawing your garden out on paper. Think about what plants do well with other plants. Think about where you would like your garden to be located. For the most part you will need to have around 8 hours of sunlight during the day. We need to look at things such as avoiding low lying areas, that retain too much water. How much space will you need to get between rows? Can you get a wheelbarrow through that space? Will you have room to use a tiller? Will you plant it in rows, or do you want it in sections? Will your location have access to water? Look on the internet for ideas on layouts or use resource books such as the Home Vegetable Gardening Guide in Kentucky <https://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/ID/ID128/ID128.pdf>. Then plan it out on paper. Figure out what to plant next to certain plants. A companion planting video may be viewed at the following website <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N--c4YPgzBw>.

Tomatoes and peppers will need a sunny area. Preferably, away from wind that can harm plants. Corn should be in the back of the garden, so it does not block other plants. If you are using a raised bed, fill the whole bed up with corn, this will help with pollination of the corn. If you plant it in a raised bed, you want it to be around 4 feet across so you can easily weed the bed.

Climbing crops needs to be planned out as well. Will you have a trellis or an archway? You need to figure out where to plant them so they will not block other plants. Examples of these plants are beans, and cucumbers. They are much easier to harvest too. Plants that vine out and spread need to be considered where they should be set out as well. Squash and zucchini plants get huge. They can cover your pathways and can smother other crops out as well. If you have cool crops or some that require more shade, you have got to plan for that as well. You also need to plan for those that are harvested often like tomatoes and cucumbers might be helpful they were closer to your house as well. I didn't think about little stuff like this in my garden last year. So, I am trying to think of little things that will hopefully help me have more success this coming year and make things easier for us.

Plant pollinator plants in and around your vegetables too. Plus, plant flowering plants like marigolds in and around your vegetables to help with pests and insects. Hope this is something for you to be thinking about and will help get your plans put into action for the next gardening season. Happy planning, and May God bless you and yours this Christmas Holiday!





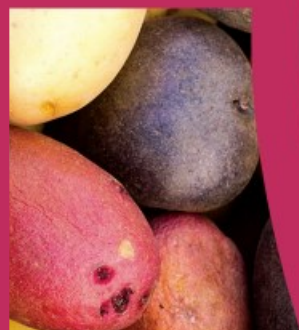
University of Kentucky
College of Agriculture,
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Taylor County
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Campbellsville, KY 42718

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Plate it up!



Red Potato Salad with Creamy Pesto Dressing

2 pounds new potatoes	½ cup prepared pesto	1 medium tomato, diced
2 large eggs	½ lemon, juice and zest	1 medium red onion, diced
¾ cup nonfat Greek yogurt, plain	Salt and pepper to taste	

Wash potatoes, **chop** into 1 inch cubes. In a saucepan, **boil** potatoes in salted water until just tender, about 10-15 minutes. **Drain** and **cool**. **Place** eggs in a small saucepan. **Cover** eggs by 1 inch cold water. Bring eggs to boil over high heat. **Remove** saucepan from burner and **cover**. Let eggs **stand** in the water for 12 minutes. **Drain**, run under cool water and **peel**. **Slice** eggs and set aside. In a small bowl, **whisk** yogurt, pesto,

lemon juice and zest. **Season** with salt and pepper. In a large bowl, **combine** potatoes, eggs, diced tomato and onion. Gently **stir in** yogurt mixture. **Chill** several hours and **serve**.

Yield: 6, ½ cup servings

Nutritional Analysis: 210 calories, 8 g fat, 1.5 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 60 mg cholesterol, 290 mg sodium, 29 g carbohydrate, 3 g dietary fiber, 5 g sugars, 10 g protein.