

# Growing Athens County



May | 2016



## Spring Gardening

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### Taking a Chance

It has been nice to walk out the door in the morning and feel the temperatures warming. I always take a look at the fifteen day forecast to see if there might be another touch of winter trying to hang on. Well, I looked at it this past weekend and noticed no new dips coming. Now I know that things can always change, but I see this as a positive sign of spring being here for good this year. I might even take a chance and plant a few things. Maybe it will work, maybe it won't. It's part of the excitement to see if you can get away with doing things just a little earlier than the books say I should. Now all I have to do is find out if my soil temperatures have warmed enough to let me get away with my mischievous plan. I don't plan on going all out, but maybe a tomato or two. What's the worst that can happen? So, who's going to join me in taking a little chance in the garden?

*Ed Brown*

## Plant Sale Prep

As you prepare plants for the plant sale, there are some timely tips to help you have some great looking plants that people will want to buy.

- Remove dead leaves. Be careful not to hurt the stem. Sometimes it is better to cut, rather than pull, the leaves off.
- Repot the plant if it is root bound. Not sure? Water the plant and then pull it gently out of its pot. Look at the roots. NOTE: plants should be repotted at least 2 weeks before the sale.
- Gently feed your plants, especially if they were potted last fall. Typically I start with 1/2 strength feed. As the plants start to really grow, you can increase to full strength as per label instructions.
- Pinch back your plants. Plants tend to grow as a single stem. Pinching your plant back will create branching and a bushier plant. Note sure how to pinch back a plant? Watch this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RD3tQrZB63E>
- As you pot plants, label them and keep a list of what you have.

## Master Gardener News

Master Gardener classes began in late January with ten students. After 50 hours of instruction, nine, new interns have completed training to become Master Gardeners. This includes 11 nights in the classroom, 2 Saturdays, and over 25 different subjects. We would like to congratulate all of those who have completed the course and to thank all of the Master Gardeners who helped out along the way.

The new interns will now spend the next year trying to complete 50 hours of volunteer service in order to become full Master Gardeners. Congratulate and encourage them as they start to participate in our various activities.

Plans are well under way for the many activities coming this spring and summer. Check out the tips in the sidebar for getting plants ready for the plant sale. There will be programs at the Children's Garden, libraries, schools and community gardens with our continued presence at the Farmers Market.



*2016 Master Gardener Class with co-president Zella Nisely (from left) Laura Bennett, Betsy Flum, Becky Galvin, Dandelion Duff, Cindy Boyd, Javiera Devia, Kerrigan Boyd, Betsy Brijun and David Boothe*



## SOUTHEAST OHIO HOPS WORKSHOP

Come learn from a hops specialist, brewmaster and hops grower

Come and join us to learn how hops are grown and marketed in a discussion led by Brad Bergefurd, OSU Extension Horticulture Specialist at Jackie O's Brewing Company. During this workshop there will be a tour of Jackie O's brewing with brewmaster, Brad Clark and then a tour of Little Fish brewing with Sean White. This will be followed by the opportunity to travel to Jackie O's Farm at 4500 Angel Ridge Road, Athens, OH for a tour and talk about growing hops.

Friday, May 20<sup>TH</sup>

9 A.M.-1 P.M.

\$25 Registration

Jacki O's

25 Campbell St.

Athens, OH 45701



### Learn about these topics:

- || Starting your own hops production
- || Startup expenses
- || Variety selection
- || Labor
- || Pest control
- || Irrigation
- || Economics

PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED. \$25.00 per person. Morning snacks will be provided. Registration deadline is Wednesday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Make checks payable to The Ohio State University Extension. Mail to: OSU Extension Athens County, 280 W. Union St., Athens, OH 45701

Please detach and return this form with payment. Questions please call 740.593.8555 or email [brown.6000@osu.edu](mailto:brown.6000@osu.edu)

Name : \_\_\_\_\_

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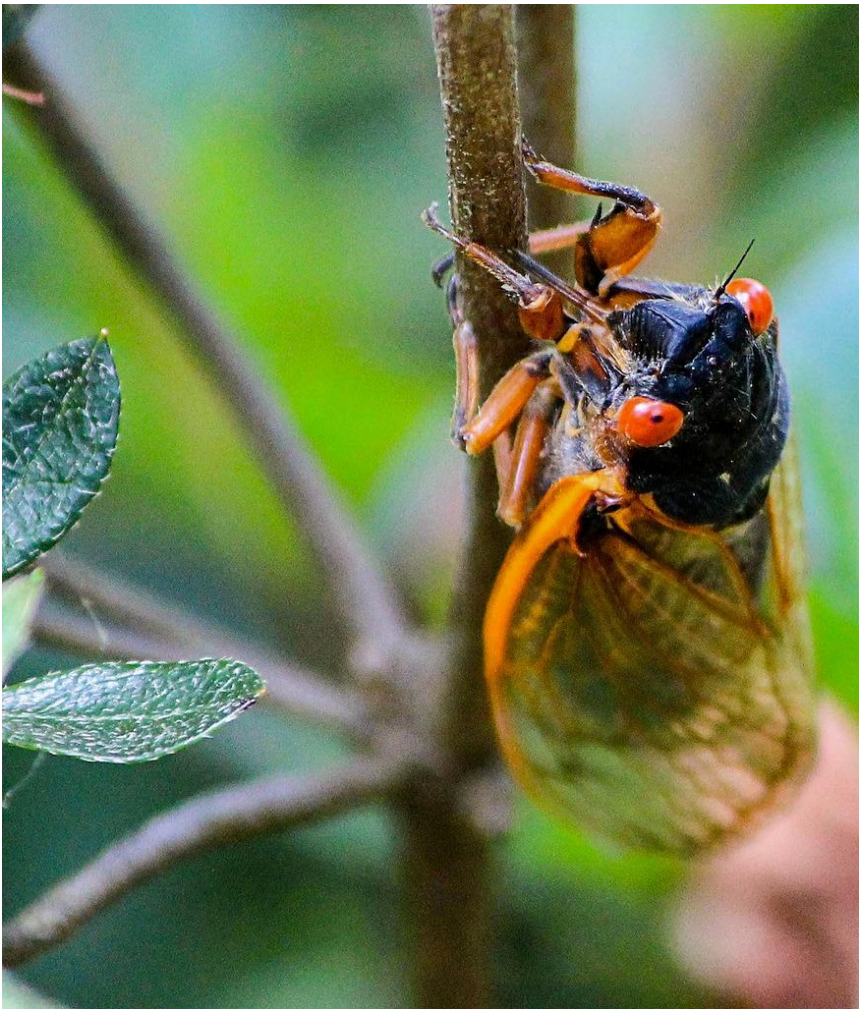


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## Cicadas

Every seventeen years we get to experience the end of the life cycle for the periodic cicada. The last time this occurred was in 1999. These are not the same as the yearly summer cicadas that we see in July and August. They are smaller, have the red eyes and will be here in late May and early June. For a three week period, the adult cicadas will rise out of the ground almost simultaneously. The males will begin their raucous mating song and the females will start to look for a place to lay their eggs. With over 200 species of plants identified as hosts, there won't be a lack of choices. She will be looking for stems between  $\frac{1}{4}$  " -  $\frac{1}{2}$  " in diameter where she will use her ovipositor to slice the branch and lay her eggs before dying.

The larvae will hatch and fall to the ground where they will burrow deep into the ground (sometimes eight feet) to begin feeding on the roots of plants. This will not cause damage to the plants.

Over the next seventeen years, they will go through several changes before emerging again in 2033. So, mark your calendars.

Cicadas are considered a perfect food source. You will see all sorts of animals, including humans and your pets, gorging on them. That is one reason why they emerge in mass. If your pets get too many, they may vomit. Don't worry, they are just overdoing it.

After several weeks of the noise and pestilence, there will once again be peace and quiet. Some of you have been through this several times before. For others, this will be your first time around. Either way, you can always tell the grandkids how you survived the cicadas of 2016.

### Protecting Young Trees

There is always a concern with young trees and damage from cicadas. Because they prefer branches that are less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  " in diameter, cicadas can really set back a young tree. If you are concerned, now is the time to prepare. Once the cicadas emerge, you will have a couple of days to cover the trees. Use a material with no opening greater than  $\frac{1}{4}$  ". This might be cheese cloth, spun fabric row cover or even tulle from the fabric store (the stuff they make tutus out of). Place it over the branches and secure it to the trunk. Cicadas can enter from the bottom. So, make sure that everything is secure. Don't worry about the trunk. They should leave that alone unless it is smaller than your pinky. If you plan on covering your trees, go ahead and buy the material now in case there is a shortage later.



# MASTER GARDENER PLANT SALE

SATURDAY MAY 21ST, 2016

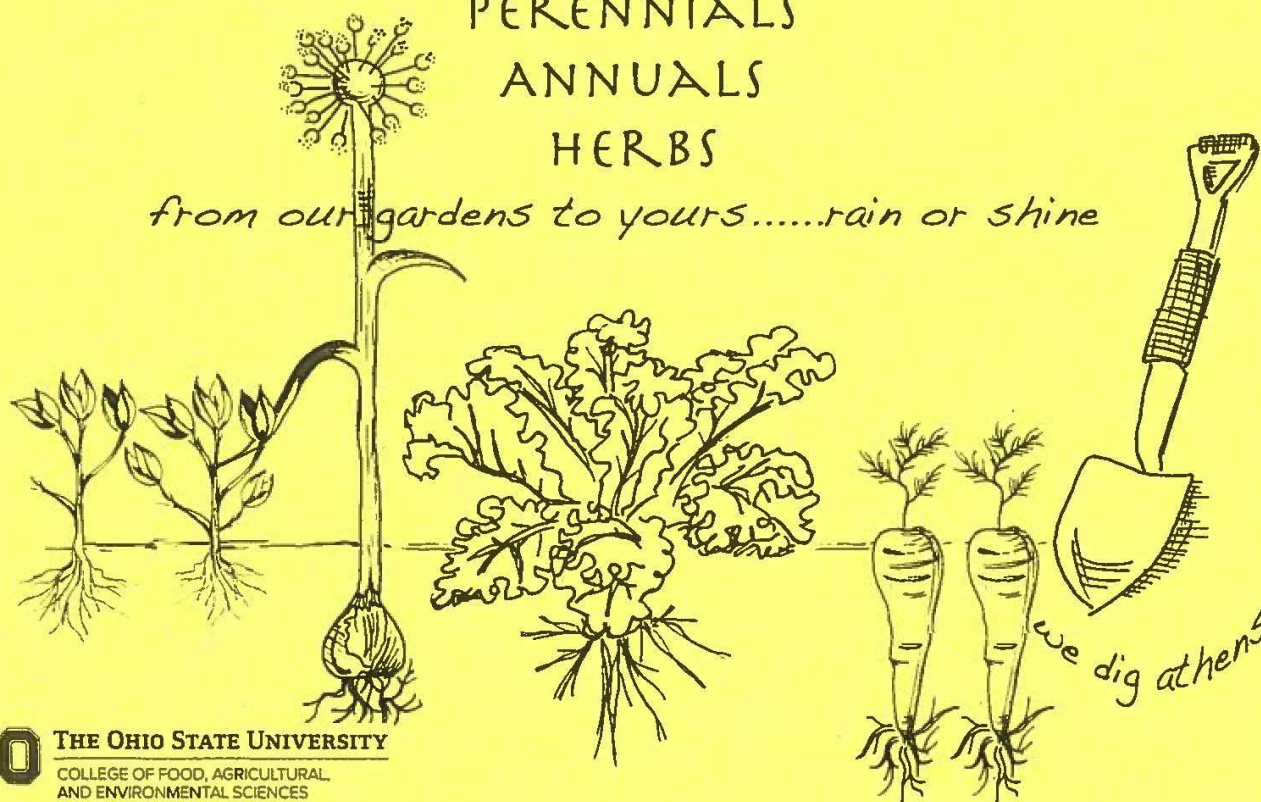
8:30 AM - 12:00 PM

COMMUNITY CENTER SHELTER HOUSE

COME EARLY FOR THE BEST SELECTION  
NEW AND EXCITING PLANTS  
OLD FAMILIAR FAVORITES

VEGETABLES  
PERENNIALS  
ANNUALS  
HERBS

*from our gardens to yours.....rain or shine*



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SPONSORED BY ATHENS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER



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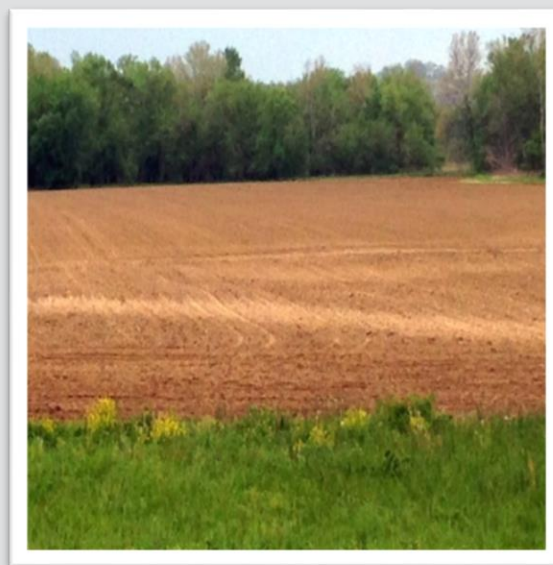
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## The Last Word

Although this is the last word of this newsletter, it really kicks off the spring and summer growing season. I really did spend most of the winter training gardeners and farmers for this very moment. This is where they take everything that they have learned and put it into practice.

Many members of the public have been coming in, asking questions and submitting soil samples. Everyone seems to get bit by the gardening bug this time of year. I even talked with someone who had already decided that she wouldn't be starting any kind of garden because it didn't fit into her current situation. Yet, she is feeling that uncontrollable urge to go out and plant something. I am not sure if there is a cure for this ailment and you might as well give in to the temptation and plant something. If anything, the deer will have something good to eat.



*A cultivated and planted field is a picture of hope  
that everything will go right this year.*