

THE KENTUCKY COLONELS ‘KERNEL’

“Scion” of the Kentucky Nut Growers Association
Kirk W. Pomper and Sheri B. Crabtree – Editor/Publisher
(502) 597-5942

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KENTUCKY NUT GROWER’S ASSOCIATION **SPRING MEETING** **SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 2023** **ELIZABETHTOWN, KY**

A Date to Remember: The Spring meeting of the Kentucky Nut Growers Association will be held on **Saturday, April 29, 2023** at the Hardin County Extension Office Conference Center in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, at 9:30 am EDT. See driving directions and additional information on page 2.

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**KENTUCKY NUT GROWER'S ASSOCIATION SPRING MEETING
SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 2023**

The Spring meeting of the Kentucky Nut Growers Association will be held on Saturday, **April 29th**, 2023, at the Hardin County Extension Office Conference Center in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, at 9:30 am EDT in Conference Center Room C. The address is 111 Opportunity Way, Elizabethtown, KY 42701; Office (270) 765-4121. **For those that have not visited in several years, this is a NEW location.** KNGA signs will be posted.

The Hardin County Cooperative Extension Office is located right off Ring Road.

From Louisville: Take I-65 SOUTH to Exit 91 (WK Parkway West). Merge then follow the WESTERN KENTUCKY PARKWAY (WK) TO Exit 133 (Ring Road 3005). At the top of the ramp take a RIGHT. Turn RIGHT on the 4 first road on your right (Opportunity Way) past Farm Credit Services; we are located at the end of the drive.

From Bowling Green: Take I-65 North to Exit 91 (Fort Knox, Elizabethtown). Take the WESTERN KENTUCKY PARKWAY (WK) to Exit 133 (Ring Road 3005). At the top of the ramp take a RIGHT. Turn RIGHT on the first road on your right (Opportunity Way) past Farm Credit Services; we are located at the end of the drive.

From Paducah: Take the WESTERN KENTUCKY PARKWAY (WK) to Exit 133 (Ring Road 3005). Turn LEFT at the end of ramp. Turn RIGHT on the first road on your right (Opportunity Way) past Farm Credit Services; we are located at the end of the drive.

From Lexington: Take the BLUEGRASS PARKWAY all the way to I-65 (the end). Take I-65 SOUTH to the first exit (EXIT 91 - WK Parkway). Take the WESTERN KENTUCKY PARKWAY (WK) to Exit 133 (Ring Road 3005). Turn RIGHT at the end of ramp. Turn RIGHT on the first road on your right (Opportunity Way) past Farm Credit Services; we are located at the end of the drive.

From Fort Knox: Take PATRIOT PARKWAY South to RING ROAD (Hwy 3005) take a RIGHT. Follow Ring Road 4.9 miles to Opportunity Way and then turn LEFT. If you have passed over the WK Parkway you have gone too far.

Our featured speaker will be **Fred Blankenship**, one of the top, if not the top Midwest hickory expert. Fred will discuss shagbark and shellbark hickory varieties and their characteristics. The meeting begins at 9:30 am ET, and the KNGA Board of Directors will meet at 10:00 am ET.

The luncheon will be potluck. If you bring something that will need to be heated or warmed, there is a well-equipped kitchen that can be used for that purpose. Additionally, please bring **scion wood** and nuts for people to taste and items, such as plants and trees, which can be used as door prizes and for an auction.

For more information about KNGA, contact John Strang at (859) 396-9311 or jstrang@uky.edu.

**NORTHERN NUT GROWERS ASSOCIATION /
CHESTNUT GROWERS OF AMERICA / WALNUT COUNCIL
2023 ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

The 2023 Northern Nut Growers Association annual conference will be a joint meeting with the Chestnut Growers of America and the Walnut Council. The complete program and registration materials will be available in April 2023 on the NNGA website (nutgrowing.org).

Date: Sun. July 23 to Wed. July 26, 2023

Location: University of Missouri campus in Columbia, MO, with field tours at the Horticulture and Agroforestry Research Center in New Franklin, MO.

Overview: A wide array of presentations on many different nut tree species along with educational field tours. Conference topics will resonate with the backyard gardener to the large commercial grower and everyone in between. The joint conference provides an excellent way to share ideas across the different groups that are interested in nut trees. Ample social time will be provided at coffee breaks, meals, and evening gatherings to catch up with old friends and colleagues and make new ones. The University of Missouri is well known for their chestnut, pecan, and black walnut research but have now gotten into hazelnuts! Because of this and the location in the central part of the US, you can expect to see many people connected to hazelnuts.

Sunday morning and afternoon is reserved for board meetings of the various organizations followed in the evening by a welcoming reception and the traditional show and tell. The NNGA and Walnut Council Foundation will meet in the morning and the Walnut Council and Chestnut Growers of America in the afternoon. Presenters can set up their posters Sunday afternoon or evening. Attendees are asked to consider contributing something to the silent or live auction. As items arrive, the Walnut Council Foundation will set up their silent auction that will be open through the afternoon break on Tuesday.

Monday will be an all-day field tour at the Horticulture and Agroforestry Research Center. Plan to see research plantings of Chinese chestnut, hazelnut, black walnut, northern pecan, pawpaw, and elderberry. In the evening is the NNGA live auction where proceeds support the NNGA grant program.

Tuesday will be filled with invited presentations. The plan is for two concurrent sessions with one focused on chestnut, hazelnut, northern pecan, and other topics and a second focused on managing walnut and other species for timber production. Presenters with posters will stand by their posters during the morning and afternoon breaks. The social and banquet will be held in the evening and includes a presentation by the keynote speaker (TBD). After the keynote presentation, each organization will entertain the group with activities including crowning the next Big Nut, honor and service awards, the Walnut Achievement Award, Pass the Hat, and elections.

Wednesday morning will be a joint session with additional invited presentations and a final time to visit the poster session. The conference will close at noon with an invitation to participate in the post-conference tour.

FRUIT CROP NEWS
Daniel Becker, U.K. Extension Associate
From: Fruit Facts March/April 2023

Signs of spring have once again arrived too early to the Bluegrass, ushered in by rapidly accumulated growing degree days (GDD) since February. Growing degree days are a measure used to estimate growth and development of plants and insects. In this case, they are being used to measure the beginning of bud break and bloom. Most of our fruit crops in Kentucky require 100 to 300 GDD (base 50°F) starting from January 1 to begin blooming. The UK AG Weather Center has an online GDD calculator that can be used to track accumulation by county at http://weather.uky.edu/php/kyc_dd.php. As shown in Figure 1, 2023 is tracking closely with 2017 and plant development is running about three weeks ahead of normal.

It does seem like crop losses due to a severe cold weather event or early plant development leading to frost/freezing injury has happened about every two to five years since the mid-2000s. Widespread crop losses occurred in 2007 (April freeze), 2012 (March frost/freezing), and 2015 (February cold). I would place 2018 (April frost/freezing) with this group, though it could also be considered a near-miss for some growers. Crop damage was not evenly spread statewide, some growers came through fine, while others experienced losses. According to Matt Dixon, Senior Meteorologist, UK Ag Weather Center, 2022-2023 was the second warmest winter on record for Kentucky (Table 1). “Five of the top 10 warmest winters on record have occurred since 2011-12 and while not in the top 10, 2018-19 places at #17 and 2021-22 at #19.” I also find it interesting that we are in a similar situation this year as back in 2017 in which La Nina has weakened to a neutral state.

Kentucky Top-10 Warmest Winters on Record (December - February)(1895 - 2023)				
Rank	Year	Avg.	Normal	Dep.
1	1931-1932	44.2	36.9	7.3
2	2022-2023	42	36.9	5.1
3	2016-2017	41.4	36.9	4.5
4	1948-1949	41	36.9	4.1
5	1949-1950	40.8	36.9	3.9
6	2019-2020	40.7	36.9	3.8
7	2011-2012	40.3	36.9	3.4
8	1997-1998	39.9	36.9	3
8	1998-1999	39.9	36.9	3
10	2015-2016	39.7	36.9	2.8

Data Courtesy: Midwestern Regional Climate Center cli-MATE toolkit:
<https://mrcc.purdue.edu/CLIMATE/>

Table 1. Top 10 Warmest Winters on Record for Kentucky.
(Matt Dixon, Meteorologist, UK Ag Weather Center)

Peach trees that did not have all their flower buds killed by the December freeze have been in bloom since early March. Shawn Wright noted first bloom on ‘Saturn’ at Quicksand as early as late February. What few flowers are left on trees at Princeton started opening about a week later. Blueberries across the southern portion of the state are mostly at bud swell, but a few of the earliest have progressed to tight cluster. The blackberries I have seen are at green tip for the most part. European pears had terminals at green cluster in Lexington a week ago, but most spurs were still at bud burst. ‘Gala’ apple trees in our high-density NC-140 block are mostly still at green tip to half-inch green.

With the advanced phenology this spring, the cold weather of two weeks ago has been a concern. Temperatures across the state dropped into the upper teens to low 20’s on Wednesday morning, March 15th, with another round of cold mornings on the 20th and 21st to end the week (Figure 2). Northern highbush blueberries, matted row strawberries, and most apples should have come

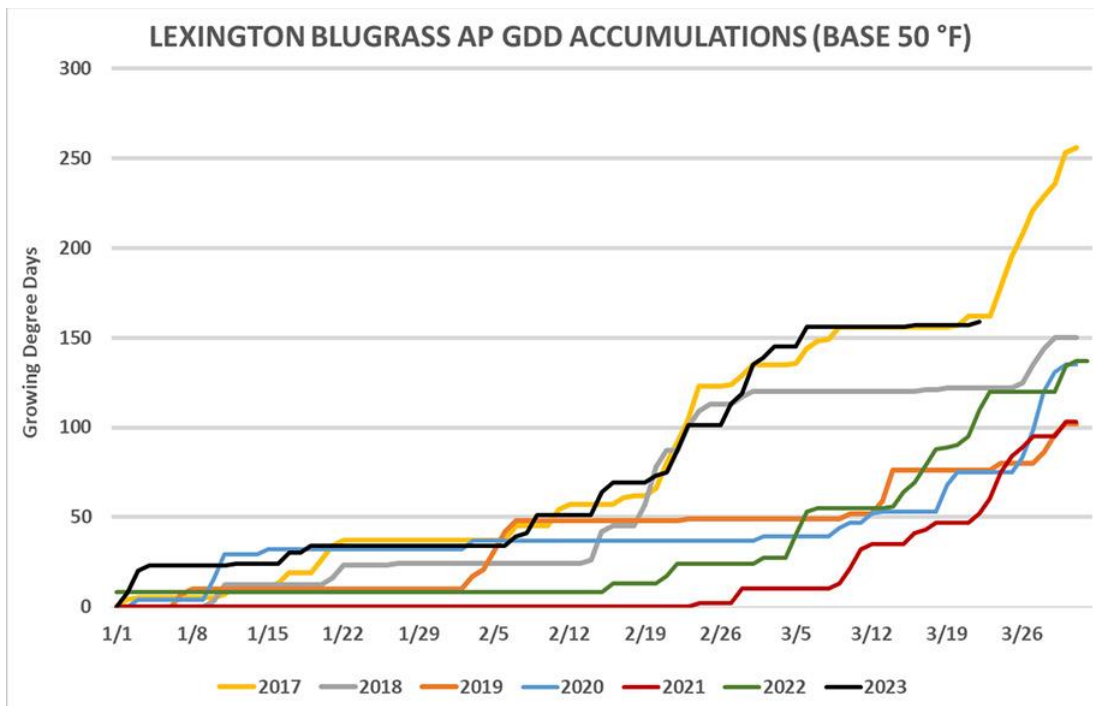


Figure 1. Lexington growing degree day accumulation (base 50°F for 2023 and past years. (Matt Dixon, Meteorologist, UK Ag Weather Center)

through with modest losses. Critical temperatures for apple flowers at half-inch green is 23°F for 10% kill and 15°F for 90% kill. I found 57% survival of the ‘Gala’ buds, so there is still potential for a full crop, we will just need to adjust our thinning strategy. Blueberry flowers at bud swell can tolerate 10-15°F while newly emerged buds of strawberries can tolerate into the low 20s. Plasticulture strawberries that were double covered for protection and had most of their emerged buds still closed should have fared well also. Any open flowers were likely killed. However, keeping covers in place has been no small feat so far this year with multiple 30 to 40, and in some areas +50 mile per hour wind gusts. Peaches and any other fruit trees with open blooms experienced another devastating crop loss event.

Where the peach crop has been lost, growers will want to either forego or only apply half the normal amount of nitrogen fertilizer to avoid excessive vegetative growth. Orchards that show moderate amounts of wood injury (browning) due to the December freeze should be pruned heavily, but not dehorned (major scaffold limbs severely cut back). Severely damaged trees with bark splitting (common on trees younger than five years) due to cambium injury should be removed. If a limb is dead, it can

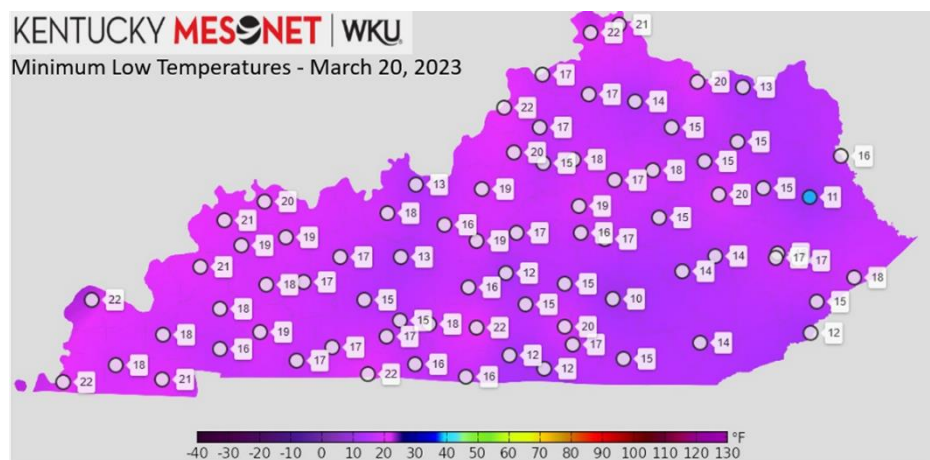


Figure 2. Minimum temperatures (°F) experienced across the state on the morning of March 20, 2023. (Matt Dixon, Meteorologist, UK Ag Weather Center)

be pruned out anytime. Have an eye towards preserving points for renewal and crop production in the lower canopy and try to keep these areas well-lit to encourage growth with moderate summer pruning. Phomopsis twig blight is possible this year on shoots that have been injured. Fungicides are not effective for this disease. Prune out the infected tissue to reduce carryover into the fall.

I have noticed cambium browning of blackberry canes due to the December freeze. Thornless blackberry canes usually begin experiencing injury at temperatures below 0°F. In the spring, buds on injured portions of the cane look alive and may leaf out, but growth will collapse and dry up under warm weather conditions. Damaged canes can be cut back to living tissue to produce a crop on the lower, uninjured sections. Dead canes should be removed entirely.

Farm marketers need to begin searching for sources of fruit now if they plan to have peaches to sell. Southern growers are reportedly worried about not having enough chilling acclimated this year and may be dealing with a ragged bloom and lower crop expectations. It looks like Pennsylvania or more likely Michigan will be the best bet; this is probably where most of the peach crop will come from in the eastern U.S. in 2023. Any readers having trouble pinning down a source for fruit this year should let me know by email (daniel.becker@uky.edu).

Annual Dues Information

NOTICE: the year listed immediately after your address label indicates the year through which your membership dues are paid. **Please note** that dates highlighted in pink indicate that your KNGA membership is past due. Please renew your membership. Thanks!

KNGA ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

Would you like to receive the KNGA Newsletter electronically? This would enable you to see photos in color, easily follow internet links, and save paper. If you would like to receive the newsletter via email, please send your name and email address to sheri.crabtree@kysu.edu.

Please check out the **Kentucky Nut Growers Association Facebook Page** at:
<https://www.facebook.com/Kentucky-Nut-Growers-Association-1599224510355036/>

The **Fruit and Nut Cultivar Nursery Sources List** has been revised and is available at https://www.uky.edu/hort/sites/www.uky.edu/hort/files/documents/HortFact_3002_2020.pdf , or ask your county extension office to print a hard copy.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

April 29, 2023. Kentucky Nut Growers Association Spring Meeting. 9:30 AM ET in Conference Center Room C at the Hardin County Extension Office, 111 Opportunity Way, Elizabethtown, KY 42701. See the full announcement on page 2.

July 23-26, 2023. Northern Nut Growers Association/ Chestnut Growers of America/ Walnut Council 2023 Annual Conference. University of Missouri campus, Columbia, MO. See the full announcement on page 3.

September 21, 2023. Pawpaw Third Thursday Thing. 10am-3pm ET, Kentucky State University Research and Demonstration Farm, 1525 Mills Lane, Frankfort, KY. Contact Sheri Crabtree sheri.crabtree@kysu.edu 502-597-6375 for pawpaw information or Morgan Wemmer morgan.wemmer@kysu.edu 502-597-6673 for general Third Thursday Thing information.

November 9-11, 2023. North American Fruit Explorers virtual conference. Via Zoom or phone. See www.nafex.org for more information.

January 2-4, 2024. Kentucky Fruit and Vegetable Conference. Mark your calendars, the Kentucky Fruit and Vegetable Conference returns to the Sloan Convention Center at 1021 Wilkinson Trace in Bowling Green, KY 42103. The event will start with a pre-conference workshop on Tuesday, Jan. 2nd with the main conference educational sessions and trade show being held on Wednesday and Thursday, Jan. 3rd and 4th.



KENTUCKY NUT GROWERS ASSOCIATION
Douglas Hines
679 Townsend Valley Road
Paris, KY 40361

FIRST CLASS

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
KENTUCKY NUT GROWERS ASSOCIATION**

**TO: Douglas Hines
679 Townsend Valley Road
Paris, KY 40361**

DATE _____

☐ **NEW MEMBER**

☐ **RENEWAL**

☐ **CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

NAME _____

ST OR RFD _____

CITY _____ **STATE** _____ **ZIP** _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

OCCUPATION _____ **COUNTY** _____

AMT. ENCLOSED FOR DUES \$ _____ **FOR YEAR(S)** _____

Dues are \$5.00 for one year. Annual membership begins January 1st. New members joining after July 1st shall be credited as paid in full for the next calendar year.) For additional information about joining KNGA, contact John Strang at (859) 396-9311 or jstrang@uky.edu.