Looking for the Fountain of Youth?
Submitted by Aneta Eichler, UT Extension Sequatchie County

Take a peep in your refrigerator! The secret to feeling younger is tied to how well we eat. Eating well and staying active keeps us feeling our best. Eating well promotes better health, more energy and less weight.

Adopting a healthier eating habit is best accomplished in small steps that can be adopted for a life-time instead of big diets that last for a “season”.

Here are a few tips to get you started towards that fountain of youth:

- Move the salt shaker off the kitchen table. This will help reduce your sodium intake.
- Replace sugary snacks and desserts with fruit.
- Switch to whole-grain bread for more fiber.
- Eat more seafood.
- Include vegetables with lunch and dinner each day.
- Drink milk with meals.
- Set 4 water bottles on the counter and make sure they are all empty by the end of the day.
2017 Dates
- Workday at Sequatchie County Library January 16, 2017 (Martin Luther King Day)
- 100K Tree Day February 24&25, 2017 details on page 1
- Valley Fest May 5-7, 2017 Dunlap TN
- Quarterly Meeting April 29, 2017 Dunlap, TN (Conflict with Valley Fest)
- Eastern Region TEMG workshop June 8, 2017 Crossville
- Central Region TEMG workshop June 22, 2017 Murfreesboro
- Steak and Potato Day August 1, 2017 Crossville
- Quarterly Meeting August 12, 2017 (Week later due to 127 Yard Sale) Tomato Tasting in Dunlap
- Western Region TEMG workshop October 12, 2017 Memphis
- Quarterly Meeting November 4, 2017 Pikeville

2017 All Bugs Good and Bad Series
https://learn.extension.org/events/tag/2017%20all%20bugs%20good%20and%20bad%20webinar%20series
- 2017 All Bugs Good and Bad Webinar Series: Save Your Veggie Harvest From Hungry Insects!
  Friday, March 3, 2017 at 1:00 pm CST
- 2017 All Bugs Good and Bad Webinar Series: Mosquitoes and Insect Borne Diseases
  Friday, April 7, 2017 at 1:00 pm CDT
- 2017 All Bugs Good and Bad Webinar Series: Ticks
  Friday, May 5, 2017 at 1:00 pm CDT
- 2017 All Bugs Good and Bad Webinar Series: Aphids, Scales, and White Flies
  Friday, June 2, 2017 at 1:00 pm CDT - Presented by Erfan Vafaie
- 2017 All Bugs Good and Bad Webinar Series: Urban Landscapes as a Host for Insects
  Friday, August 4, 2017 at 1:00 pm CDT - Presented by Matthew Baur
- 2017 All Bugs Good and Bad Webinar Series: Meet Our Native Pollinators
  Friday, September 1, 2017 at 1:00 pm CDT
- 2017 All Bugs Good and Bad Webinar Series: New Invasive Ants To Know About
  Friday, October 6, 2017 at 1:00 pm CDT - Presented by Timothy Davis

100K Tree Day
There is still time!
The Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Division of Forestry, Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency, and the Tennessee Economic Council are providing free native seedlings in an effort to plant 100,000 trees in Tennessee on February 25th, 2017. The Sequatchie Valley Master Gardeners will handle the distribution for the Sequatchie County. The pick-up location is the Dunlap United Methodist Church, 1958 Main St, Dunlap, TN on Friday, February 24th from 1 pm to 5 pm and Saturday February 25th from 8 am to 12 pm

Individuals can order 5 to 20 free seedlings. These will be equal numbers of Eastern Redbuds, Shumard (red) Oaks, Virginia Pines, Yellow (tulip) Poplar, and American Plum. These seedlings are free although there are requests for donations to this worthwhile program. Given the loss of trees to drought/wildfires/etc. and the continuing loss of nectar and pollen sources for the pollinators, this program is even more important this year. Log on to the website below (or google 100K Tree Day) to order, remember to specify pick up at the church.

Ken is also looking for SVMG Members to help hand out seedlings Feb 24th and 25th contact Ken 972-977-1844 if you can help or need more information.
March Gardening Tips from the UT Gardens

When night temperatures rise to above 40 degrees, feed your pansies with a water-soluble fertilizer such as 20-20-20.

Broccoli, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, lettuce, chard, onions and potatoes should be planted this month.

Pull or carefully spot spray winter weeds in your landscape with an appropriate herbicide. Besides making the bed look better, doing so now will prevent them from going to seed, therefore making fewer weeds next year.

Don’t delay cutting back the following plants. It is a much easier task before the new growth appears. March is an ideal time to cut back the following garden plants:

- Knock Out™ roses or other shrub roses. In mid to late March cut well-established plants back two to three feet shorter than the height you desire them to reach. In cooler parts of the state you may wait until early April.
- *Miscanthus* (maiden grass), *Pennisetum* (fountain grass), *Muhlenbergia* (muhly grass) and *Nassella* (Mexican feather grass). Cut to 3 to 6 inches above the ground.
- *Liriope* (monkey grass). Cut before new growth appears. Use a string trimmer for larger areas.
- Hardy ferns. Cut to the ground, particularly evergreen forms before new growth appears.
- *Epimedium* (barrenwort). Cut foliage to the ground.
- *Acorus* (sweet flag) and *Carex* (sedge). Cut back to 2 to 3 inches if the winter has browned the foliage.
- Prune out older branches on *Cornus sericea* and *C. sanguinea* (red twig dogwood) to encourage new growth, which will have the brightest color next winter.
- Summer-flowering *Spirea japonica* that are overgrown are best cut back before the new growth appears, and you won’t even know it come spring. A few common cultivars are ‘Gold Mound,’ ‘Magic Carpet’ and ‘Gold Flame.’
- Limb-up and remove crossed branches on trees and tree-type crapemyrtles as needed. Never top trees or crapemyrtles. For more information on tree topping, visit [https://tiny.utk.edu/tree-topping](https://tiny.utk.edu/tree-topping). For proper pruning tips on crapemyrtles check out this site: [http://www.statesvilletrees.org/](http://www.statesvilletrees.org/)
- Look closely at grafted plants and remove all growth below the graft. Commonly grafted plants include witchhazels, contorted filberts, weeping cherries, weeping mulberries, dogwoods, fruit trees, crabapples, grafted roses and Japanese maples.

A great way to stay in touch with insect and disease happenings is to follow the UT Extension Soil, Plant and Pest Center’s Facebook page. You will find a wealth of information on what is going on in the landscape:

February 2017 Plant of the Month: ‘Whoa Nellie’ Holly

This Holly’s Glow Brightens the Season

Submitted by Jason Reeves, research horticulturist, the University of Tennessee Gardens, Jackson

The first time I saw ‘Whoa Nellie’ was with Dr. Michael Dirr at the University of Georgia’s Horticulture Research Farm in 2011. It was a hot day in July and the bright glow of this holly’s beautiful foliage set me on fire. I had to have one! A few days later I bought one at a nursery in Atlanta and planted it in the UT Gardens, Jackson, that winter. Although the holly was named by Tony Avent, Dirr found the gold leaf selection as a branch sport on ‘Nellie R. Stevens’ on the Georgia campus.

Whoa Nellie’s bright gold foliage contrasts with its older, inner dark-green leaves. For the best gold color this holly should be grown in full sun. More than a few hours of shade will diminish its glow. A male pollinator such as ‘Edward J. Stevens’ or one of the Chinese hollies (Ilex cornuta) should be growing within 100 yards if you want to have bright red berries in the late fall and winter.

Whoa Nellie makes an outstanding single specimen in your landscape as well as a shining light in a mixed screen planting. Its evergreen foliage also works well as cut greenery and will brighten any Christmas arrangement. With no supplemental water, the Whoa Nellie in the UT Gardens, Jackson, has grown to about 6-feet tall in about 5 years. A slightly younger plant can be seen growing along Neyland Drive in the UT Gardens, Knoxville. Under average garden conditions you can expect this holly to reach between 10 and 12 feet tall by 6 to 8 feet wide in about 10 years.

Just like its mother plant ‘Nellie R. Stevens’, Whoa Nellie is a tough long-lived specimen that is hardy to zone 6. It is not the easiest plant to find for sale, but an online search will provide a persistent shopper some options.

The UT Gardens includes plant collections located in Knoxville, Jackson and Crossville. Designated as the official botanical garden for the State of Tennessee, the collections are part of the UT Institute of Agriculture. The Gardens’ mission is to foster appreciation, education and stewardship of plants through garden displays, educational programs and research trials. The Gardens are open during all seasons and free to the public. For more information, see the Gardens website: http://ag.tennessee.edu/utg
Don’t Forget the Water

It’s Important to Our Health All Year Long

Dr. Christopher Sneed, UT Extension Family and Consumer Sciences,

While the heat of the summer and the dry air of the fall may have passed, it is still important to drink plenty of fluids, a practice that sometimes falls by the wayside in winter. “Don’t let the cold of winter fool you,” says Chris Sneed, a specialist with University of Tennessee Extension Family and Consumer Sciences. “Fluids are important for your body year round.”

Sneed adds that when choosing fluids, nothing beats simple - yet refreshing - water. “Water is important to life – your life,” he says. “Water makes up approximately two-thirds of your body’s weight and plays an essential role in nearly every function of your body. Water is necessary to digest food, cushion joints, keep body temperature normal, and eliminate waste from the body.”

Sneed further explains that water is used continually by your body and must be replaced continually. If this water is not replaced, a person can become dehydrated. “We often think of dehydration as a problem during the hot summer days, yet, dehydration can be a problem all year long even during the winter months. Children especially infants, the elderly and individuals with chronic diseases are at a higher risk of suffering from dehydration.”

Sneed offers these tips for choosing water more often:

- Keep a covered pitcher of water in the refrigerator. Keep the pitcher where it can easily be seen when you open the refrigerator.
- Have a glass of water before and after work. Offer your children water before and after school.
- Bring water along when you leave home.
- Try to have at least one glass of water with each meal or snack.
- Buy reusable water containers that can be refilled at work or school.
- Choose water when eating out. You will save money and reduce calories.

Sneed credits much of his information on hydration to Rethink Your Drink, a publication of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

For additional information, contact your county’s UT Extension Family and Consumer Sciences agent at the county Extension office. You can also visit the UT Extension Family and Consumer Sciences website.

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UT AgResearch Announces 2017 Field Day Schedule

List Includes a New Field Day

Ginger Rowsey

University of Tennessee AgResearch has released the 2017 field day schedule, which includes 11 field days and four special events.

Field days are held at most of the 10 AgResearch and Education Centers located throughout the state. These events offer farmers, ranchers, gardeners and the general public a chance to see research findings, learn from university and industry experts and network with peers.

The 2017 schedule includes a new event, the "Forest Research Overview." Held at the Forest Resources AgResearch and Education Center, this event will provide opportunities for professional foresters as well as interested landowners to learn more about forest and natural resource management.

The biennial "Ag in the Foothills" event returns for 2017. This field day will be held at the East Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center, and program topics will cover the diverse agricultural interests of the region. Other changes include the return of the popular "Turf and Ornamental Field Day" on September 7 and the timing of the "Organic Crops Field Tour," which has moved from the spring to fall. Both events will take place at the East Tennessee AgResearch Center.

The complete schedule, including special events, is as follows:

Field Days

- **Tennessee Healthy Hardwoods** – May 20, Forest Resources AgResearch Center – Oak Ridge Forest (Oak Ridge)
- **Fruits of the Backyard** – June 13, Middle Tennessee AgResearch Center (Spring Hill)
- **Tobacco, Beef & More** – June 22, Highland Rim AgResearch Center (Springfield)
- **Summer Celebration** – July 13, West Tennessee AgResearch Center (Jackson)
- **Steak and Potatoes** – August 1, Plateau AgResearch Center (Crossville)
- **Cotton Tour** – September 6, West Tennessee AgResearch Center (Jackson)
- **Turf and Ornamental** – September 7, East Tennessee AgResearch Center – Plant Sciences Unit (Knoxville)
- **Forest Research Overview Gathering** – September 14, Forest Resources AgResearch Center – Cumberland Forest (Oliver Springs)
- **Ag in the Foothills** – October 6, East Tennessee AgResearch Center – Blount Unit (Louisville)
- **Northeast Tennessee Beef Expo** – October 12, AgResearch Center at Greeneville
- **Organic Crops Field Tour** – October 26, East Tennessee AgResearch Center – Organic Crops Unit (Knoxville)

Special Events

- **UT Gardens Green Industry** – June 20, UT Gardens, Knoxville
- **Fall Gardeners’ Festival** – August 29, Plateau AgResearch Center (Crossville)
- **Heritage Festival** – October 14, AgResearch Center at Ames Plantation (Grand Junction)
- **Fall Folklore Jamboree** – October 21, AgResearch Center at Milan

More information about each event will be posted closer to the scheduled time at the UT Institute of Agriculture “News and Announcements” website found at [http://ag.tennessee.edu](http://ag.tennessee.edu). You can also visit each AgResearch Center’s homepage or call each main office for details. Center addresses and phone numbers can be found online at [http://taes.tennessee.edu/centers](http://taes.tennessee.edu/centers)