Apples, brought in mid-June. Grower has followed a judicious spray schedule, and while we have had a wet spring and early summer this appeared during a dry period.
2017 Dates

- **Steak and Potato Day**, August 1, 2017, Crossville
- **Quarterly Meeting and Tomato Tasting**, August 12, 2017 (Week later due to 127 Yard Sale), Dunlap Mountain Valley Bank
- **Bledsoe County Fair**, August 14-19, 2017
- **Sequatchie County Fair**, August 21-26, 2017
- **Fall Gardeners’ Festival**, Tuesday, August 29, 2017, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm The Plateau Research & Education Center Crossville, TN
- **Western Region TEMG Workshop**, October 12, 2017, Memphis
- **Quarterly Meeting**, November 4, 2017, Pikeville

Steak & Potatoes Event Returns Aug. 1

Beef producers, fruit and vegetable growers, landowners and interested members of the public are invited to the UT Plateau AgResearch and Education Center in Crossville on August 1 for the annual Steak & Potatoes Field Day. Beef topics to be discussed include pasture management and herd health. For more complete information visit the website plateau.tennessee.edu. Photo courtesy UTIA.

The first day of August is the date for this year’s annual Steak and Potatoes Field Day sponsored by the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture. The event will once again showcase the research and outreach activities at UT’s Plateau AgResearch and Education Center.

The free event will be of interest to beef producers and those interested in large- and small-scale fruit and vegetable production. Three talks will also be presented for landowners interested in forest management.

The event begins with registration and a trade show at 8 a.m. CDT on Tuesday, Aug. 1, at the Center’s main unit just west of Crossville. Tours and seminars begin at 8:30 and conclude at 11:30. A sponsored lunch will be provided following the program.

The beef production presentations will address diverse topics including fescue-based management, summer annuals and cost share, drill and seeding recommendations as well as applying fertilizers to pastures using GPS. Stocking densities, herd management through artificial insemination (AI) and health protocols will also be discussed.

Four fruit and vegetable sessions will address variety selection; irrigation, beds and mulching; sprayer calibration; and disease diagnostics. Landowner talks will address firewise management and the choices required for managing for food, beauty or money. A talk on nuisance wildlife will also be presented.

Pesticide recertification points will be awarded to participants in need of continuing education to maintain their certification.

Contact the Center for more details about the event or to request an accommodation for accessibility by calling 931-484-0034.

The Plateau AgResearch Center is located off on Highway 70N at 320 Experiment Station Road in Crossville. A map to the facility and complete directions are available online at plateau.tennessee.edu. The Plateau AgResearch and Education Center is one of 10 outdoor laboratories located throughout the state as part of the UT AgResearch system.

Through its mission of research, teaching and extension, the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture touches lives and provides Real. Life. Solutions. ag.tennessee.edu.
August Garden Tips

- Sow pansies, ornamental kale and cabbage, and Swiss chard seed in a good quality potting medium. After seedlings develop true leaves, transplant them into individual cell packs or pots. Feed with a water-soluble fertilizer. By late September or early October they should be ready to transplant into the garden.

- For late crops of beets, carrots, collards, kale, lettuce, spinach, turnips, mustards and radish, sow seeds before the middle of the month. Transplants of broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and onions can be planted mid- to late August.

- Stop watering amaryllis bulbs late this month and place in a dry location. After leaves turn yellow, remove the foliage and store bulbs in a cool, dry and dark place for about two months. If need be, repot bulbs so that the top one-half to two-thirds of each is above the soil. Water and place indoors in a well-lit area. The bulbs should bloom in six to eight weeks.

- Divide and transplant bearded iris during the month of August. Cut back the foliage by two-thirds, dig and divide rhizomes, and remove any dead portions. Check for iris borers and replant in a sunny, well-drained location with one-third of the rhizome above the existing soil level. Water well.

- August is also a good time to dig and divide daylilies, using a sharp shovel to split the clumps into desirable sizes. Cut back foliage to 5 inches and replant in a sunny location.

- Cut back by one-third early planted annuals that are getting leggy or out of control to keep them looking good into the fall. Give them a shot of a water-soluble fertilizer. Good candidates include impatiens, salvia, sweet potato vine, trailing or ground cover-type petunias, and herbs like basil.

- Autumn crocus (Colchicum sp.) bulbs should be ordered now and planted soon after they arrive for a beautiful fall display. They are sometimes available at garden centers but more often can be obtained from mail-order catalogs, such as Brent and Becky's Bulbs.

- Avoid pruning trees and shrubs starting in late August, particularly hedging plants, such as boxwood, hemlock and hollies, as doing so this late in the season can stimulate new growth that will not harden off before frost. If spring-flowering shrubs are pruned now, you will be sacrificing next year’s flowers. Delay pruning any tree or shrub until the plant is dormant. Any major pruning should be done in late winter.

- To encourage another flush of flowers on your chaste tree (Vitex), cut the seed pods off as the flowers fade.

- Avoid fertilizing most trees and shrubs from August to November. Fertilize roses one last time to encourage new growth and late summer/early fall flowers.

- Photograph your garden to help yourself remember what you did and did not like this year. See what works and what doesn’t. In winter, you will be able to determine which plants you need to move, remove or add when you analyze the photos.

- To reduce the number of pests on your fruit tree for the coming year, pick up and destroy all fallen fruit.

- Every weed that produces seed means more trouble next year. Don’t give in to the heat, and control weeds before they go to seed. Do not add weeds with mature seed heads to the compost pile. Many weed seeds can remain viable and germinate next year when the compost is used.

- Gather herbs and flowers for drying and preserving. The best time to gather herbs for drying is during the midmorning hours, just after the dew has dried off the herbs but before the sun causes them to wilt. Cut the herbs in clusters with the stems attached.

- Many trees and shrubs are now setting fruit and flower buds for next season, so it is important for the plants to have sufficient water at this time. A lack of water now will reduce next season’s crop of fruit or flowers. Use mulch to help conserve moisture and keep the soil temperature cooler during the dog days of August. Also, use soaker hoses to water deeply and minimize water loss due to evaporation.
July: Tennessee Dancing Gourd  
A Native and Heirloom that Will Dance Its Way into Your Heart  
Submitted by Amy Dismukes, UT/TSU Extension, Williamson County

My first introduction to the Tennessee Dancing Gourd was a few years back at the Williamson County Fair, when a Master Gardener submitted a tiny, green and white cutie for judging in the fruit and vegetable competition. With just one glance I knew I was in for trouble. I had to have it if only to satisfy my infatuation with heirloom plants.

When thinking of the gourd plant, we immediately envision the typical bottle-type variety most recognizable in its birdhouse form. There are many others, however, that tend to be overlooked, if only because they’re not commercially available by seed or hard to find. This would be the case with the Tennessee Dancing Gourd (TDG).

TDG (Cucurbita pepo var. ovifera), also known as the Tennessee Spinner, is an heirloom variety and a member of the cucurbit family. It’s grown annually from seed. At one time, seeds became almost impossible to find, leaving many a gourd enthusiast to believe this gem may have disappeared for good.

There’s very little known about the TDG other than it originated from a Mr. Gordon of Primm Springs in Hickman County, Tennessee, and its popularity was high with children. These tiny treasures provided hours of entertainment as they can be spun just like a top. It’s said that many a playground would be littered with these tiny treats after lunch because kids would carry them in their pockets to play with at school.

Cultivation tips for TDG are similar to others in the family. Plant in warm soil, whether starting with seed or seedling. Provide plenty of nutrients throughout the season. Cucurbits are heavy feeders and benefit with a side dressing when the plants begin to bloom and fruit.

Just like its brothers, sisters and cousins, TDG is a vining plant that loves a good sprawl and can grow upwards of eight feet in length, while the gourd itself only reaches one to three inches at maturity. The prolifically productive vines can be left to trail the ground or like those at my house, grown upright in a large pot with a support trellis.

Gourds like water as do other cucurbits, but not too much. Water TDG deeply once a week, applying at least one inch of water. If growing in a raised bed or container system, increase frequency as the roots and surrounding soil will dry faster because they are exposed to the elements when above ground. A little wilt in scorching, mid-afternoon sun is normal and they’ll recover once the sun sets.

The extreme heat, humidity and periods of drought experienced in Tennessee can stress these plants, reducing production. Mulch can help keep the soil around the roots moist, regulate soil temperature and keep the plants healthy.

Common pests include cucumber beetles, vine borers and squash bugs. Trap crops of nasturtium or dill as an herb companion can be beneficial in deterring these flying plagues. Proactive applications of pyrethrum can also significantly reduce pest populations. To decrease incidence, use disease-resistant varieties, don’t overhead water, prune and destroy any damaged plant tissue and rotate annually.

To ensure pollination and fruit set, use a small paintbrush or similar device to transfer pollen from the male to the female flower. The female is very easy to recognize in that a tiny fruit will be visible on the backside of the flower. This technique can be especially beneficial early in the season, when pollination may be questionable.

TDGs are best if harvested around 95 days after planting and should be dried in a cool location. Poking a small hole in the bottom of the gourd is recommended to prevent mold or mildew of the seeds inside. After the hard shell fully dries to a light tan and the seeds rattle inside when shaken, you’re ready to spin them. These little guys also make great decorated ornaments and because they’re an heirloom, the seeds may be saved for years to come.

Once thought to be on its way out, the Tennessee Dancing Gourd is no wallflower … and if you let her, she’ll spin her way into your heart just as she did mine.
What is it? Answered

The problem with apple leaf is not insects or diseases. The leaf browning most likely is a phytotoxic reaction of a fungicide sprayed on the leaves. Captan has been shown to burn leaves between the full bloom to 2nd cover spray especially on Braeburn apples (the variety in the picture). Phyto (plant) toxic (poisonous) is the effect of any chemical on a plant – be it pesticide or fertilizer. According to Penn State Extension phytotoxicity can occur when:

- “A material is properly applied directly to the plant during adverse environmental conditions.”
- “A material is applied improperly.”
- “A spray, dust, or vapor drifts from the target crop to a sensitive crop.”
- “A runoff carries a chemical to a sensitive crop.”
- “Persistent residues accumulate in the soil or on the plant.”

**How to avoid phytotoxicity**

- Choose the best product, labeled for the plant/crop being sprayed and for the pest
- Be conscious of the weather and conditions in garden
  - Temperatures during and after treatments should be moderate. High temperatures favor chlorinated hydrocarbon and sulfur toxicity. Low temperatures favor oil, carbamate, and organophosphate toxicity.
  - Humidity or plant wetness. Wet foliage at the time of application or prolonged wetness of foliage after spraying can result in injury.
- Some plants are more sensitive to certain chemicals so know your plants
- ALWAYS READ THE LABEL – granted not the most exciting of reading but it is important

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**Hours first half 2017**

**232 hours reported for January – June 2017**

Value $5,600.00 (at $24.14/ hour)

Three Master Gardeners have completed their hours for recertification thus far and 10 others have reported hours in 2017.

Please remember you cannot be recertified without 25 Hours of Volunteer time and 8 Hours of Continuing Education.