

**AG NOTES**  
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March 8, 2022

**FRUIT TREES**

They are budding. Let's hope that we don't have a late freeze that will damage the buds and blooms, but remember that is still a possibility.

But it is time to start protecting them from insects and fungus problems that can damage fruit before it sets on.

We have a really good publication for homeowners who have fruit plantings. There are insecticide recommendations for many of the common insect pests. These products have been used for years and thoroughly reviewed for safety by the Food and Drug Administration and USDA. Now is the time to start planning and in many cases to apply to protect the plants from insect invasion.

In addition, there are fungal problems that will damage the fruit and there are good and safe fungicides that can be helpful. These products are recommended as well. In many cases, they can be applied at the same time with the insect protection.

This publication is Disease and Insect Control in Home Fruit Plantings. Its number is PB 1622. The link is <https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/PB1622.pdf> There are some really good pictures to describe the various bud stages that are key to correct application times.

I can help with copies for those who don't have internet access, or for those who have email addresses I can share the link and to others on pruning, management, fertilizing and other topics. Call the office at 931-684-5971 or email me at [jteague1@utk.edu](mailto:jteague1@utk.edu).

**SOIL TESTING**

I'll keep reminding you. It's time to get those samples collected and sent to the lab. Fertilizers are too expensive to guess. These lab results will recommend lime if needed, nitrogen based on crop submitted, as well as phosphorus and potassium.

This is a year to make management decisions based on data, and not just guessing. With inputs approaching \$1,000 per ton, it's smart. Anything else is not.

We've got the sample boxes, information sheets, and soil probes to help with the sampling. I use a shovel and a bucket, so it's not surgery. Just get it done.

**SPRING**

If you've read my articles over the years, the past 21 plus years to be exact, you'll know that I get spring fever about September and I look forward to signs of new life that come out during the late winter and early spring.

Baby calves, new foals, little lambs and goats, baby chicks, flowers, tree buds, green grass, the smell of new life, it's just a good thing. I've attached some photos of some signs of spring that I found that I want to share. It's good to appreciate these things. Just take time and look around and think about how good this is.







## THE KIDS

Meme went to see the boys start the baseball season this past weekend. She shared a good report. Hank played shortstop and center field. In one inning alone, he caught two fly balls and stopped a ground ball and threw out a runner at second to retire the sides. He had other catches, too.

Ford played first, pitched, and between right field. He hit well, scored runs, and had a great time. He's still kicking in the dirt some, but he's having fun. And that's good. We're not looking for them to go to the pros yet. We want them to have fun, learn the game, get exercise, make friends, and learn good sportsmanship.

Piper went to school the other day dressed like Dr. Seuss and the Cat in the Hat. She was cute as she could be, but then what else would I think?! She is learning to read, or at least make us think she's reading. It's so much fun to listen to her version of what's in print. Entertaining to say the least!

Those are the most important things for all of 'em. Learning, friends, healthy and fun. Think about it.

