

AG NOTES
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FARMERS MARKET

I've been asked when we'll start the Bedford County Farmers Market for this year. We host the market at the Farmers market Pavilion at the Celebration Grounds in Shelbyville.

We are sending out an email to our vendors this week to check on their vegetable crops progress. Our vendors are here in Bedford County and the lower middle Tennessee area, and the late cold and wet spring delayed their gardening. We'll be letting everyone know by this article, the Farmers Market website, our Extension website and our email newsletter.

We usually get started in mid-June and I hope that's the case this year as well. We expect to have a good group of vendors again this year. Anyone that may be interested in selling at the market should contact me to start the application process. We screen our vendors to verify they grow what they sell. We also operate by the recommended guidelines for these markets from the Tennessee Department of Agriculture. There are some things we don't allow for one reason or another, so we'll need to discuss your products beforehand.

Contact me by email at jteague1@utk.edu or phone 931-684-5971. I will be in and out this week, but I'll try to contact you back when I can.

POISON HEMLOCK

I have mentioned this deadly weed before. It is a bad one, and it is common in the middle Tennessee area. I have real concerns here for exposure to the plant by unknowing adults and children as well. I've attached a picture of this plant I found in a ditch along one of our county roads.

I relayed a few weeks ago that I had read an article about a gentleman who had experienced exposure to the deadly chemicals in the sap when he cleaned up a weedy area on his lot. He absorbed it through his skin and breathed some droplets in when he used lawn equipment that caused the moisture to be in the air. This man was in the hospital in his home town for 109 days and was very critical during most of that time.

I received a message from one of my coworkers in east Tennessee about a young girl who smelled the flower structure on this plant. It looks like Queen Ann's lace, with a white flower structure containing many little florets.

This youngster's reaction to the plant started out with a rash, and shortly it turned into swelling and a terrible reaction. Just inhaling the pollen and the aroma caused a lot of pain and suffering.

Have I told you about my grandchildren? Most of you readers are aware that we have three grandchildren and Grandee (me!) is pretty fond of them. After I read about this child having a severe reaction, I shuddered to think about Hank, Ford or little Piper getting sick, or worse, from exposure to this plant. We have been teaching Piper about avoiding this plant and poison ivy as well.

Our son has started a campaign to spray this stuff on the farm. I recommend you look around to find it on your property. We have some good products that will kill it. There are several auxin chemicals that works. Our standby 2,4-D will work. The problem is it is in many locations. I've seen them in the ditches along our roads, in fence rows, in patches here and there in pastures. Animals can be affected if they ingest this plant. This poison hemlock is a prolific seed producer, so this project will take time and effort to help reduce them.

I know it sounds like a long and maybe costly process, but if I can help save someone's life, it's worth it all. Think about it.



THE KIDS

We are back on the ball field. Baseball for Hank, soccer for Ford. They will finish their school year in two weeks. So far, they tell me the grades are good, too. We'll see when we visit to watch games shortly. After all, they are boys and will be boys, so sometimes I have to call 'em out on the grades!

Piper graduated from pre-school, has a dance recital coming up, and a horse show to go to. She is full of enthusiasm for practically everything she does. We get tired just trying to keep up!

But I wouldn't have it any other way!