

AG NOTES
By John Teague
UT/TSU Extension
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FARMERS MARKET

The market was good last week and it should be better this week with the rains that we have had. We still are getting some late planted vegetables coming in, and that's good.

We had 12 vendors last week, and we look for a good variety of items this week. There have been some changes in the regulations as of July 1 and we will pass those along with time. Some canning items are now allowed, as well as baked goods and the like.

Come see the market on Thursday afternoons, with selling starting at 2:30 pm. We like to hold to that so all of our vendors can get set up to serve customers. The market is next to the big blue water tower at the Celebration Grounds across from Calsonic Arena.

SUITABLE PLANTS

I had a request for some flower and ornamental plant information that is suitable for this area, easy to maintain, perennials that are not just there for one season, and relatively economical. Now that's a chore, to have a landscape easy to keep up, not pricey, and one that lasts.

I had a conversation with a good friend who is a horticulture agent in another county close by, and he has put together two flyers with do's and don'ts and suggestions for selection for plants that will fit this need.

I will be happy to share these publications with anyone who wants them. Send me an email to jteague1@utk.edu or if you don't have email, call the office at 961-684-5971.

MOTHS

This is when we see a lot of moths. Many of them are beautiful in color, some are interesting in their shape, and others have distinct patterns.

Most folks don't relate them to the fact that they were once a worm or properly called larvae, and in this stage they can devour crops in a hurry. Others are relatively safer and don't destroy our precious food supply or cause plant damage.

I have some images sent to me and I'm in the process of identifying them. I'll share them as I go. One for this week will make a Tennessee Vol proud with its orange and white colors. I hope when I find out exactly what it is it's not one that is a problem. But it is pretty to look at. It was found in a barn and there is no idea where it came from.



WHAT IS THIS?

I had a request from a very nice lady who wanted to know what a plant next to her house is. She is very fond of its orange blooms, but she is concerned about these plants that have been broken or in decline. I sent the picture of the plant to my horticulturist friend and he identified it for me.

Its proper name is rhododendron calendulaceum, specifically a flame azalea. It has a beautiful set of orange blooms in the spring. No wonder she is fond of it! It's a plant that needs reasonable caution, because all parts are poisonous to humans. But it's still manageable.

Sadly, the plants she has are in a bit of decline. Some have died off. These plants prefer some shade, and hers are in a lot of sunlight, and they are older plants. But we are trying to help her find a source for a fresh young plant that she can enjoy this spring. She has some health issues and is a very senior citizen, so we'll try to put it where she can see it easily.



THE KIDS

Have I told you about my grandchildren lately? Well, here is an update. Hank and Ford came to the Bedford County Fair and then went on last week to the baseball camp at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. They have a pretty good baseball program there if you haven't heard.

The boys got to work with the players and the coaches on skills that they can use as they play. It was a great experience, and MeMe and I got to take a day and go watch them scrimmage with other teams in their age brackets. It was great fun. Hank's coach was one of the headline pitchers who is from South Carolina about an hour from them. He has a standing offer of a fried chicken dinner! The boys have returned home and are getting ready to start school in a few days.

Piper has had a big week or two, having fun doing whatever she sets out to do. She is one positive young'un, giggling and laughing her way along. But she is very observant, too. She has learned a lot at her preschool and the children programs she watches under supervision, and now she is ready to start her kindergarten year.

That's going to be a big experience, and she is looking forward to it. So are we! Can't wait for her to share what she learns, either by word or by drawings or whatever. And she'll let us know! Her chatter is funny and serious both.

Kids, we love 'em all!

