

AG NOTES
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INDICATOR PLANTS

I saw this on the Tennessee Cattlemen Association email this week and I want to share this bit of useful information.

Greg Brann, Natural Resources Conservation Service Grazing Specialist in Tennessee, recently sent some information out about “indicator plants” along with some tips for how to use that information to improve soil health and pasture quality. It’s good information for everyone to consider.

Indicator plants are plants that, by their presence or abundance, can help us assess the quality of the site and what’s occurring below the surface. This is somewhat an old science, but there is an online site that has compiled this information into a useful format. There are charts and easy reading, and some good photos to help with weed identification.

The site is called the On Pasture Library. The link is pretty long, but I’ll be glad to share via email. Contact me at the office at 684-5971, or send me an email to jteague1@utk.edu

GARDENING DREAMS

It’s about the time for folks to start dreaming about gardens. It’s not for the faint of heart, if you will think back to the cold wet spring, then the dry weather and the high temperatures, and the continuing drought for the entire season.

But for those who are resilient, and those who are optimistic, it’s time to think about plants for the 2023 season.

I have a list of vegetable garden publications that we have in the UT Extension publications. There are 30-40 of them. I’ll be glad to share the link to these publications. Again, contact me and I’ll be glad to share.

AND FRUIT

Dr. David Lockwood, our fruit and nut tree specialist for forty-five years, retired this summer, but being the workhorse that he has been for decades, he wrote me a message recommending some fruit tree varieties and some not to use in our landscapes.

I saved the email, and with his permission, I have shared it with folks who want to plant a few trees. I’ll be glad to share this as well.

TREES

It’s not a bad time to plant trees in the landscape. This moderate weather with some moisture allows for root development and establishment, instead of the spring plantings that lead to hot and dry conditions after a few weeks.

We have a good group of tree recommendations for landscapes and certain locations. If you are considering planting trees in the landscape, you might want to take a look at these. Again, contact me and I’ll be glad to share.

WEED CONTROL

With temperatures in the 60’s and moderate weather, this is not a bad time to use chemical weed controls in pastures and barn lots for wild buttercup, thistles, and other weeds. These products of choice are pretty much such 2,4D or Duracor. The target weeds are usually easy to identify and off-

target plants such as shrubs, vegetables and the like are relatively safe. But it is important to identify the weeds correctly.

For instance, I checked photos sent to me for ID and chemical recommendations. The difference is that both products were rated for these three weeds, but only one of them had a 9 rating on all three weeds. The other product was rated 9's on two weeds, but only a three on the third one. Obviously it makes a difference.

Be sure to read the label. That's the law. And applicators are responsible for any damages, but like I said, off-target plants are not a bad problem now compared to spring and summer. Just be mindful of the conditions as recommended on the label.

THANKSGIVING

Holidays are times for reflecting. I was fortunate to have all of my family together this past week. The young ones are the focus and that's a good thing. As they grow and learn about relationships and family, I'm proud when they realize their relationship to each other and aunts and uncles and cousins.

I try to reflect on family members that are not with us and help the younger ones to realize who they were. The boys remember my parents and others, but it's important that the little one learns who they were and how they relate. We're getting there.

Holidays are important but so are all of the other days. Cherish them all as if every day is a holiday. Focus on family and friends.

Think about it.