

Agricultural News

By: Warden Alexander, FSA Director

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County Executive Director

March 15 is Deadline to make elections and complete enrollment in 2021 Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) Programs

Agricultural producers can now make elections and enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for the 2021 crop year.

Enrollment for the 2021 crop year closes March 15, 2021.

ARC provides income support payments on historical base acres when actual crop revenue declines below a specified guaranteed level. PLC provides income support payments on historical base acres when the effective price for a covered commodity falls below its reference price.

Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium and short grain rice, safflower seed, seed cotton, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat.

2021 Elections and Enrollment

Producers can elect coverage and enroll in crop-by-crop ARC-County or PLC, or ARC-Individual for the entire farm, for the 2021 crop year. Although election changes for 2021 are optional, enrollment (signed contract) is required for each year of the program. If a producer has a multi-year contract on the farm and makes an election change for 2021, it will be necessary to sign a new contract.

If an election is not

submitted by the deadline of March 15, 2021, the election defaults to the current election for crops on the farm from the prior crop year.

For crop years 2022 and 2023, producers will have an opportunity to make new elections during those signups. Farm owners cannot enroll in either program unless they have a share interest in the farm.

Web-Based Decision Tools

In partnership with USDA, the University of Illinois and Texas A&M University offer web-based decision tools to assist producers in making informed, educated decisions using crop data specific to their respective farming operations. Tools include:

Gardner-farmdoc Payment Calculator, the University of Illinois tool that offers farmers the ability to run payment estimate modeling for their farms and counties for ARC-County and PLC.

ARC and PLC Decision Tool, the Texas A&M tool allows producers to analyze payment yield updates and expected payments for 2021. Producers who have used the tool in the past should see their username and much of their farm data already available in the system.

More Information

For more information on ARC and PLC, including two online decision tools that assist producers in making enrollment and election decisions specific to their operations, visit the ARC and PLC webpage.

For additional questions and assistance, contact your local USDA service center. To locate your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-locator

Next FSA County Committee Meeting Date:

March 3rd, 2020 8:30 A.M. at the Mt. Vernon USDA Service Center

COVID-19 INFORMATION:

At this time; due to the COVID-19, Rockcastle Co. Service Center is conducting business by online or by phone. No customers shall be in the building at any time. Anyone wishing to conduct business with FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service or any other Service Center agency should call the following phone number (606) 256-2525. Our program delivery staff will be in the office, and they will be working with our producers in the office, by phone and using online tools. More information can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.

Important program dates and Interest Rates

Farm Operating Loans-Direct = 1.375%

Farm Ownership Loans-Direct = 2.625%

Limited Resource Loans = 5.000%

Farm Ownership Loans-Direct Down Payment = 1.500%

Emergency Loans = 2.375%

Farm Storage Loans = 3 yrs. = 0.250% 5 yrs. = 0.375% 7 yrs. = 0.750%

10 yrs. = 1.000% 12 yrs. = 1.125% 15 yrs. = 1.125%

Commodity Loans = 1.125%

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users)

Yards to Paradise

By: Max Phelps
Dormant Pruning for Deciduous Plants

Think of pruning trees and shrubs as "correcting" them, sort of like disciplining a child. Cutting a broken limb or a dead one can be done about anytime, but major pruning of deciduous plants should be done when they are dormant. That's after the leaves have fallen, and before the buds swell and come to life in the spring. And the best time for most decorative or fruiting trees is after most of winter is over, after it's warmed above freezing, but before growth has commenced in the new season.

Pruning is a chore. Even hard work. So why would you want to do it?

Correcting the growth of a shrub or a tree is best done a bit every year from time it is first planted, not try to deal with an especially unruly "child" after neglecting it too long. Besides keeping it from growing into an ugly and misshapen plant, besides appearances, there are other reasons to prune as well. Many flowering shrubs produce the most blooms (and fruit if it's a plant you expect to harvest fruit from) on two and three year old wood. Older wood can be less productive. New wood typically does not fruit the same season; however there are a few exceptions—butterfly bush, blue mist shrub and hummingbird bush come to mind—where all the new blooms will be on new growth. Another reason to prune is to restore vigor. An old holly tree may not produce as many berries as it did before it stopped growing. An old apple tree may not set fruit anymore (or it may overset but have little apples that all drop off before they mature). A wigela may quit flowering if there are no new shoots. A blueberry will yield almost no fruit if old growth isn't removed forcing the plant to put out some young new

shoots. Keeping a tree from rubbing the house, from growing too tall, from hanging into the sidewalk or driveway, is another reason we might want to prune. Control, appearance, health and production are primary reasons to prune.

As mentioned, plants that flower on new growth need to be pruned in dormancy, as do most other deciduous trees. There are some plants that you should wait until after they've bloomed in the spring to prune them, otherwise you'll never see the display of flowers they want to show you. Azaleas for instance. Dogwoods. Redbuds.

Most evergreen trees are better pruned during the active growing season. Same for the shrubs. Spruce, fir, cedar, falsecypress, junipers, etc., fall into that category. As do the majority of broadleaf evergreens.

So what should you prune from your deciduous trees, and how?

You may want to shape a young tree so it grows to suit you. You may want to stake it so it grows straight. You may want to remove some limbs that are too close together or that are growing inward or are rubbing against other limbs. You may want to shorten some and cut back tips of all limbs, this will make an ornamental tree thicken and look more attractive. (Fruiting trees are best thinned rather than 'thickened'.) If you want it to grow into a tall and handsome tree, you will want it to have one central leader, one trunk. If several limbs are trying to be that one trunk, you'll have to shorten or eliminate all but the one you have chosen for the main trunk. On a few species you may want to have multiple trunks such as with a crape myrtle or birch trees.

Newly planted shrubs and trees probably lost some roots in the digging and moving process. It will get your new plant off and growing faster if you remove an equal

amount of the growth above ground. I realize this is hard to do when you've just bought the prettiest tree at the nursery. Plants you purchase growing in containers generally don't need the trimming at planting time like bare root or B&B trees.

Older shrubbery sometimes just needs older limbs cut off with loppers, saw, pruning shears, down all the way to just above ground level. This forces the plant to grow some newer limbs.

Older shade trees may need but little pruning. Water sprouts, root sprouts, should be removed each year. Limbs growing inward or rubbing should have the offending portion pruned away or the whole limb removed. One of the problems with a large tree growing all alone is it top becomes so big and thick and heavy, when the ground is soft and the wind blows fierce, it can come crashing down. Thinning (removing some of the limbs of such a tree so that wind can flow through it's branches is the proper way to deal with this.

Butchering a tree and leaving just the trunk and a few stubs sticking up is not good tree care, although it may work for some types of shrubs or some evergreens such as a holly. Topping trees is not good practice, and no what I'd call pruning. In most cases where topping is chosen as a way to deal with problem trees, some other type of tree should have been chosen for that location to begin with.

Humid and moderately warm weather is the best time to prune. Not in summer heat, drying winds, nor when the limbs are frozen in cold weather.

Your trees and shrubbery will make you proud if you spend the time to correct and stimulate them.

The author is a landscaper
Comments welcome.
www.rockcastles.net,
606-416-3911.

Kentucky juniors have chance to win scholarship, photo shoot

A rising junior at one of Kentucky's public or private high schools will win a \$500 scholarship and a photo shoot at their school through the "Promote Your School" scholarship contest, sponsored by the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA).

"The 'Promote Your School' scholarship contest gives students an opportunity to inspire others and showcase the true value of education in their community," Gov. Andy Beshear said. "In addition to receiving scholarship money, the winner will also get to see themselves and their classmates featured in KHEAA publications that are distributed to all the high schools across in the commonwealth."

A school must participate in the Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES) program for one of its students to be eligible to enter. To be considered for the scholarship, students must submit an essay addressing one of these subjects:

- "How I will inspire others to do better"
- "How education makes a community stronger."

The essay must be no more than 200 words in length and cannot men-

tion the student's name, school, county or community. The essay should not identify the student by race, gender, religion or other manner. Essays in excess of 200 words or ones that include identifying information will be disqualified.

The essay topic must be clearly indicated at the top of the page. The student's name, address and high school must be listed at the bottom of the essay. The student must be a high school junior during the 2021-2022 school year. For contest details, visit kheaa.com/website/contest/intro.

Photos from the winning school will be used in KHEAA publications and on KHEAA websites.

To enter, mail your essay to KHEAA Publications, P.O. Box 798, Frankfort, KY 40602. You may also email your essay to publications@kheaa.com. The winner will be chosen by a committee of KHEAA employees. The deadline for submissions is May 31, 2021.

The scholarship funds will be sent to the winner's school when he or she enters college as a freshman.

Students from high schools that have been featured in the past five years — Bullitt East,

Warren East, Paducah St. Mary, Logan County and Daviess County — are not eligible to enter this year's contest.

KHEAA is the state agency that administers the Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES), need-based grants and other programs to help students pay their higher education expenses. Kentucky Lottery funds pay for many of those programs.

In addition, KHEAA disburses private Advantage Education Loans for its sister agency, the Kentucky Higher Education Student Loan Corporation (KHESLC). For more information about Advantage Education Loans, visit advantageeducationloan.com.

For more information about Kentucky scholarships and grants, visit kheaa.com; write KHEAA, P.O. Box 798, Frankfort, KY 40602; or call 800-928-8926, ext. 6-7214.

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SECTION 00100 ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

City of Mount Vernon
Richmond Street Lift Station Replacement

Separate Sealed BIDS for the construction of Richmond Street Lift Station Replacement Project will be received by the City of Mount Vernon, 125 Richmond St., Mount Vernon, KY 40456 until March 17, 2021 at 2:00 P.M. local time and then publicly opened and read aloud at City Hall.

Project consists of installing a new lift station and all necessary appurtenances.

The CONTRACT DOCUMENTS may be examined at the following locations:

CITY OF MOUNT VERNON, 125 RICHMOND ST.,
MOUNT VERNON, KY 40456
KENVIRONS, INC., 770 WILKINSON BLVD, FRANKFORT, KY 40601

Copies of the CONTRACT DOCUMENTS may be obtained from Lynn Imaging, 328 Old Vine Street, Lexington, KY 40507 (859-226-5850) and www.lynnimaging.com upon payment of a nonrefundable price of \$150.00 for each set plus any shipping charges.

Each Bidder must accompany his bid with a Bid Bond in amount of not less than five (5) percent of the base bid. No Bidder may withdraw his bid for a period of ninety (90) days. The Bidder awarded the contract shall execute a 100% Performance Bond and a 100% Payment Bond and shall furnish insurance as required, in the General Conditions. Each contract shall be completed within 120 calendar days after date of authorization to start work. Liquidated damages will be \$800 per calendar day.

Bidders must comply with the President's Executive Order Nos. 11246 and 11375, which prohibit discrimination in employment regarding race, creed, color, sex, or national origin. Bidders must comply with Section 3, Section 109, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Anti-Kickback Act and the contract Work Hours Standard Act. Bidders must certify that they do not, and will not, maintain or provide for their employees any facilities that are segregated on a basis of race, color, creed, or national origin.

Any bid that is obviously unbalanced may be rejected. The City of Mount Vernon reserves the right to reject any and all bids and waive informalities.

Small, minority and women's businesses and labor surplus area firms are encouraged to bid this project.

By: Mike Bryant, Mayor
City of Mount Vernon