

COMMUNITY

Extension News

By: Ashley Hughes
Vice

Beginning farmers encouraged to apply for 2026 KY Farm Launch program

Have you ever dreamed of starting your own farm but felt overwhelmed by the business side of things? Or maybe you've already dipped your toes into farming and want to take your operation to the next level. If that sounds like you — and you've been farming for less than 10 years — KY Farm Launch might be the perfect opportunity. KY Farm Launch is a nine-month, in-person training program based in Lexington, designed specifically for beginning farmers. The program kicks off in March 2026 and runs through

November, meeting one full day each week. Best of all? There's no cost to participate, just a commitment to show up and a passion for building your farm business.

This hands-on program is more than just learning how to grow crops or raise livestock. It's about building a sustainable, profitable farm operation. Participants will receive training in production techniques for vegetables, small fruits, beef cattle, sheep, goats and poultry. KY Farm Launch also dives deep into business planning, marketing strategies and management skills, areas that often seem overwhelming to new farmers. The goal is to take away some of the barriers that discourage people from getting started. The program is a part-

nership between the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service, the Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development (KCARD), the Kentucky Sheep and Goat Development Office, UKCSA and The Food Connection @ UK. It's funded through a USDA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program grant, which means participants get access to top-notch resources and expertise at no cost.

Participants will learn from experienced community farmers and Extension staff on UK farms in and around Lexington. You'll get one-on-one mentoring and join a supportive cohort of other beginning farmers who share your challenges and goals. If you've got less than

10 years of farming experience and the drive to grow your operation, don't miss this chance. Applications for the second class of KY Farm Launch are now open. For more information, contact your Nicholas County Extension office or visit <https://bfrdp.mg-cafe.uky.edu/>.

Educational programs of the Cooperative Extension Service serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expressions, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, or physical or mental disability.

Home sales cont. from pg. 3

Hyatt, president of Bluegrass Realtors®. “One month doesn't set a trend but buyers should keep an eye on the market to see what may take place in the weeks ahead if they are thinking of jumping in.”

Pending sales remained relatively steady, with 965 homes going under contract — a slight 1% decrease from 976 a year ago. For the year, pending sales have outpaced 2024 by 5% with 13,346 in 2025 compared to 12,700 last year.

New listings hit 1,284 for the month, a 5% decrease compared to the 1,345 homes listed one year ago. The dip is the second month in a row of year-over-year decreases, however, year-to-date, homes coming to the market are still up 7% with 18,612 homes compared to 17,408 in 2024.

Although homes coming to market slowed, overall housing inventory is still pushing ahead. The region recorded 4,454 homes available in November, a 7% increase from the 4,176 properties on the market last year. Inventory has now posted 25 months of consecutive year-over-year growth, giving buyers more options and choices in their search.

“Inventory expanding is one of the best things that can happen with this market,” continued Hyatt. “With the limited selection that hung around through so much of the past several years, it's refreshing for buyers to see their housing choices going up.”

With the slower sales and rise in inventory, months of inventory (MOI) spiked a 7-year high. At 4.7 months, this represents a 15% increase from 4.1 months a year prior and up 21% from the previous month. This jump continues a multi-month pattern of rising supply relative to sales activity, with 6 straight months of month-over month increases and 43

consecutive months of year-over-year growth.

However, homes spent less time on the market compared to both last year and last month, dropping for the first time since June. The average days on market (DOM) in November fell to 42 days, down 5% from 44 days a year earlier and dropped from 46 days the month prior. The decline snapped a 14-month stretch of year-over-year increases. The median days on market slid to 21 days down from 23 days in 2024. For the year, the average time on market was still up 18% to 46 days, from 39 days last year.

“Homes didn't stay on the market as long in November,” stated Hyatt. “Demand is still strong in the region and buyers are taking advantage of the conditions during these colder months. They are in a more favorable position now than they were earlier in the year.”

The average interest rate dropped to 6.24% in November, the lowest monthly average in 14 months. From the previous year, the rate was 8% lower when it averaged 6.81%. Rates have been downwardly adjusting since the summer as the Fed has cut rates three times in the second half of the year.

As the region's leading advocate for homeownership, Bluegrass Realtors® understands the value and joy of owning a home. The Association represents more than 4,000 Realtors® located in 38 counties: Anderson, Bath, Bell, Bourbon, Boyle, Casey, Clark, Clay, Elliott, Estill, Fayette, Franklin, Garrard, Harrison, Henry, Jackson, Jessamine, Knox, Laurel, Lee, Lincoln, Madison, McCreary, Menifee, Mercer, Montgomery, Nicholas, Owsley, Powell, Pulaski, Rockcastle, Rowan, Russell, Scott, Shelby, Wayne, Whitley and Woodford counties. Visit www.bluegrass-realtors.com for up-to-the-minute real estate listings and buying and selling resources.

Rudy & Trevor

By Alison Mason



Masonic Lodge 65 gifted a picture of George Washington



Dougherty Masonic Lodge 65 F&AM at Carlisle, KY was presented with a beautiful picture of George Washington framed with an amazing frame. It was given to Danny "Greasy" Belcher and Kim Lyons on a re-

cent trip to Washington, DC by Brother Larry Vigil from the Navel Lodge 4 and charter member of the John Phillip Suza Lodge 1106 in Washington, DC. The following at the Dougherty Lodge 65 F&AM Lodge in Carl-

isle, KY presentation are from left to right: Walt Ryder, Masons Helping Masons, Jeff "Rudy" Randolph, Master, Wilson Wilder, Most Worshipful Past Grand Master, Danny "Greasy" Belcher, Senior Deacon, Kim Ly-

ons, Thomas Fletcher, Masonic Homes Ambassador District 23. Special thanks to Brother Larry Vigil for this priceless gift that will be in the Dougherty Lodge 65 F&AM in Carlisle, KY.

CLOSED

The City of Carlisle Office will be closed on Monday, January 19th in observance of the Martin Luther King Holiday and will resume to normal business hours on Tuesday, January 20th. There will be no trash pickup on Monday. Monday's trash pickup will be Tuesday, January 20th.

CLOSED

The Nicholas County Convenience Center will be closed on Monday, January 19th in observance of the Martin Luther King Holiday and will resume to normal business hours on Tuesday, January 20th.

CLOSED

The Nicholas County Courthouse will be closed on Monday, January 19th in observance of the Martin Luther King Holiday and will resume to normal business hours on Tuesday, January 20th.

Request for Proposals Nicholas Co. Board of Education Certified Athletic Trainer Services

The Nicholas County Board of Education is now accepting proposals from qualified entities to provide Certified Athletic Trainer services for Nicholas County High School (NCHS). Proposals will be accepted for the period of July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2028 by and through the Nicholas County Board of Education, to include Certified Athletic Trainer services for NCHS, who will provide coverage per specifications listed in the Request for Proposals (RFP) document, made available by and through Nicholas County Board of Education. Contact Finance Director, Tyler Duncan, at the Nicholas County Board of Education Office at 395 W. Main Street, Carlisle, KY 40311, (859) 289-3770, for the Request for Proposals (RFP) document with complete specifications. Proposal deadline is Friday, February 13, 2026, at 12:00 p.m. EST. Proposals will be opened and reviewed on Friday, February 13, 2026, after the deadline, and will be presented to the Nicholas Co. Board of Education at the school board meeting on Monday, February 16, 2026, at 6:00 pm. The Nicholas County Board of Education reserves the right to reject any or all proposals.

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