

New Crop Opportunities Newsletter

Summer 2008

New Crop Center's funding extended another three years

The New Crop Opportunities Center has received a Special Grant from the USDA that will support research and Extension activities through May of 2011. The grant will fund a dozen new research projects, five involving horticultural crops and seven dealing with specialty grains.

Horticulture research projects include: Examining Market Demand for Raspberry and Blackberry Value-Added Products; Developing an Optimized Organic Production System to Control Cucumber Beetles in Cucurbits; Increasing Irrigation Water Use Efficiency in Vegetables and Small Fruits Using Automated Pulsed or Microdrip Irrigation Systems; Hydrangea Macrophylla for Cut Stems for the Florist Trade; and Sustainable Pest Management for Japanese Beetles and Green June Beetles Impacting Grape Production.

Specialty grains research projects include: Testing Novel Soybean Varieties; Continued Evaluation of Corn Hybrids for Ethanol Production; Ethanol and Electricity Potential of Switchgrass in Kentucky; Optimizing Variety Selection and Planting Patterns for Mechanically Harvested Edamame Production in Kentucky; Further Evaluation of Flax and Development of Chia as New High-Value Grain Crops for Kentucky Farming; Organic Grain Cropping Systems Research Initiative; and Soft White Winter Wheat in Kentucky: Impact of Seed Coat Color Genes on Added Value and Resistance to



Mycotoxin.

Work on these projects is beginning with the 2008 growing season.

New Crop Center research among highlights at twilight tour, field day

The UK Department of Horticulture is sponsoring a twilight tour in Lexington at the Horticulture Research Farm on Thursday, July 31. The twilight tour will begin at 5 p.m. and last until dark.

New Crops research to be featured at the field day includes a Tomato Pulsed Irrigation Study to Reduce Water Use; Weed Management in Organic Mixed Vegetables; Organic Pest Control, Equipment and High Tunnel Production; Organic Apple Production; *Hydrangea* Field and Tunnel Production; Japanese Beetle and Green June Beetle Studies; Thornless Blackberry Pulsed Drip Irrigation; and Strawberry Slug Studies.

Other crops to be featured include grape training systems and canopy management; greenhouse operation; All-American flower varieties; All-American vegetable trials; vegetable IPM; and pumpkin, specialty melon, muskmelon, and fresh market tomato variety trials.

Concurrent tours will be repeated until dark. Speakers will remain at their stops to discuss

their work in more detail with tour participants between wagon stops. Tours will start at the research center parking lot. Cold drinks and specialty melons will be provided.

The Horticulture Research Farm is located on the south side of Lexington approximately one block west of the intersection of Man O' War Boulevard and Nicholasville Road (U.S. 27). After turning onto Man O' War from Nicholasville Road, take a left at the first stop light (Emmert Farm Lane).

For more information, contact Pam Compton at (859) 257-2909 or pscomp1@uky.edu, or John Strang at (859) 257-5685 or jstrang@uky.edu.

The Robinson Station All Commodity Field Day will be held on Thursday, September 25, 3 miles south of Jackson, KY. Activities in the morning include a Farmers Market workshop, with tours taking place in the afternoon. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m., with the morning workshops scheduled to begin at 10. Horticulture and Plant and Soil Science field research tours will run from 3:30 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. New Crops research included on the tours will be *Hydrangeas* for cut flowers on the horticulture tour, and sweet sorghum production in Kentucky on the Plant and Soil Science tour.

The field day will also feature a Robinson Forest Research Tour, which will include a demonstration of low-tech shiitake mushroom culture.

For more information, go to <http://fp1.ca.uky.edu/robinsonstation/All%20Commodity%20Field%20Day%202008.htm>

Crop profile contact list updated

If you or your clients have questions concerning any of the one hundred-plus crop profiles available on the New Crop Opportunities Center Web site, a list that includes at least one contact per profile has been updated and is available at <http://www.uky.edu/Ag/NewCrops/training/specialists08.pdf>. The list of profiles has grown considerably since this list was first created and offered at the Guiding the Producer to New Crop Opportunities trainings in late 2005.

Other resources are available online for agents, including a list of Extension Agents and Associates as resources for a variety of new crops, a list of Kentucky grower associations, and the publication Personal Inventory Questions for a New Crop Enterprise, compiled by Tim Woods, Associate Extension Professor in Agricultural Economics, and former Extension Associate Matt Ernst. To access these resources and others, go to www.uky.edu/ag/newcrops/guiding.html

If you would like a list of growers in Kentucky who are willing to talk to other growers about trying a specific crop, please contact me at (859) 257-1477 or cgcass0@uky.edu.

KDA plans Marketing Conference

From Marketing Matters, a publication of the KDA's Office of Agriculture Marketing and Product Promotion

The first-ever Kentucky Direct Marketing Conference hosted by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture will be held November 13-14. Seminars will be facilitated by the KDA and will focus on helping producers find ways to increase market share, improve product quality, and grow their customer base. Tentative topics include farmers markets, Internet marketing, the Good Agricultural Practices program, and community supported agriculture or CSAs. The keynote speakers will hold nationally recognized credentials. Save the date — more information will follow in the August issue of Marketing Matters and on <http://www.kyagr.com/marketing/plantmktg/index.htm>.

Southern SAWG to Chattanooga

From Southern SAWG Newsletter Volume 4, No. 7, and www.ssawg.org

After three consecutive years in Louisville, the Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group Practical Tools and Solutions for Sustaining Family Farms Conference is moving. The event will be held January 21-24, 2009, at the Chattanooga Convention Center in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

The conference will offer a number of one and a half-day pre-conference intensive courses, which will begin on Wednesday morning, January

21. There will be half-day pre-conference courses and field trips on Thursday afternoon, January 22. The general conference will be held on January 23-24 and will offer several tracks of conference sessions, a trade show, silent auction, video show, and a Taste of Tennessee dinner.

The conference will feature sustainable production and direct marketing information for horticultural and livestock producers, enterprise management, farm policy education, and community food systems development trainings.

One of the day and a half pre-conference courses will deal with farm financial decision-making. Southern SSAWG has received funding from the USDA Risk Management Agency's Small Sessions program to support the course, which will be taught by growers Jim Munsch and Alex Hitt. The course will focus on the market and the product for horticulture and livestock enterprises.

If you have program ideas for the conference, send them to Jean Mills, Conference Coordinator, at jean@ssawg.org.

The full conference program and additional details will be available online at <http://www.ssawg.org> the first week of October.

Upcoming events

July 31 - Department of Horticulture Twilight Tour, Horticulture Research Farm, Emmert Farm Lane, Lexington. 5 p.m. until dark.

September 6 - Pawpaw Workshop, Kentucky State University Research Farm, Frankfort. Sponsored by Kentucky State University, The Pawpaw Foundation, and The Ohio Pawpaw

Growers Association. Contact Kirk Pomper at (502) 597-6174, or kirk.pomper@kysu.edu, or go to <http://www.pawpaw.kysu.edu/pawpaw/2008workshop.htm>

September 25 - UK College of Agriculture Robinson Station All Commodity Field Day, 130 Robinson Road, Jackson. For more information, go to <http://fp1.ca.uky.edu/robinsonstation/All%20Commodity%20Field%20Day%202008.htm>

November 13-14 - Kentucky Direct Marketing Conference, sponsored by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture. Additional information as it becomes available at <http://www.kyagr.com/marketing/plantmktg/index.htm>

January 5-6, 2009 - Kentucky Fruit & Vegetable Conference & Trade Show, Embassy Suites Hotel, Lexington, KY. Contact John Strang at (859) 257-5685 or jstrang@uky.edu

January 12-14, 2009 - Mid-States Horticultural Expo (MSHE). Kentucky Fair & Exposition Center, Louisville. Sponsored by Kentucky Nursery and Landscape Association, Tennessee Nursery and Landscape Association, and Southern Nursery Association. Contact: SNA (Show Management) (770) 953-3311; fax, (770) 953-4411; or mail@mshe.org. Or see <http://www.mshe.org>

January 21-24, 2009 - Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group Practical Tools and Solutions for Sustaining Family Farms Conference, Chattanooga Convention Center, Chattanooga, Tennessee. For more information, see <http://www.ssawg.org/>