The landscape in winter may seem bare, but enjoy the beautiful branch structure and bark of woody plants. Notice the birds too. Some gardening tips for the winter include:

* Ornamental trees and shrubs that flower before June 1 should be pruned immediately after flowering. Some examples include:
  * Trees: redbud, magnolia, flowering dogwood, crabapples, hawthorns, hollies, and flowering pears, cherries, and plums.
  * Shrubs: forsythia, mock orange, azalea, bridalwreath spirea, common lilac, hollies, and thunberg spirea.
* Trees and shrubs flowering after June 1 should be pruned in winter or spring before new growth begins. Some examples include:
  * Trees: golden rain tree and sourwood.
  * Shrubs: glossy abelia, butterflybush, beautyberry, hills of snow hydrangea, peeghe hydrangea, crepe myrtle, and oakleaf hydrangea.

(See the back of this page for more pruning information)

* If you apply animal manure (cattle, hog, chicken) to the garden area, apply it in the fall and till it into the soil. This allows microbes in the soil to break down pathogens in the manure that cause foodborne illnesses.
* The best time to fertilize most trees and shrubs, if they need it, is the late fall after they are dormant. To help you remember the timing, plants are usually dormant after Thanksgiving.

Enjoy the holiday season!

TIPS FROM ANNIE

UPCOMING EVENTS

**December 10**
8:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.
Commercial Turf & Ornamental Pesticide Training
Daviess County Extension Office
Call to register

**December 11**
8:45 a.m.—12:00 p.m.
Agricultural Lenders Conference
Daviess County Extension Office

**December 19**
5:30 p.m.—7:00 p.m.
Pumpkin Production in KY Webinar
Daviess County Extension Office

**December 23 — January 1**
Daviess County Cooperative Extension Office closed for the holidays. We will reopen January 2 at 8:00 a.m.

**January 6-7**
2020 Kentucky Fruit and Vegetable Conference
Embassy Suites Hotel
1801 Newtown Pike
Lexington, KY 40511
for more information and to register, visit:
https://www.uky.edu/hort/node/2110

**January 23**
1:30 p.m. and repeated at 5:30 p.m.
Getting the Most from Your Vegetable Garden Including Raised Beds
Daviess County Extension Office

**February 6**
5:30 p.m.
Commercial Vegetable Production Meeting
Daviess County Extension Office
Call to register
PLANNING YOUR SUMMER VEGETABLE GARDEN

ELAINE WILLIAMS, EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER

Here it is near Christmas, and you are thinking about wrapping presents, decorating your home, and wondering how many guests you will be having for Christmas Dinner. But it is not too early to start thinking about your summer vegetable garden! What do I need to do first? What vegetables should I pick for my space, and where should I buy my seeds and plants?

Your plan should only consist of vegetables that your family will eat. One of these favorites may include the heirloom tomatoes, which may be purchased from the Green River Area Extension Master Gardeners Association plant sale held every April at the Munday Center on West Second Street. Another vegetable might be summer squash or green beans, depending on if your garden spot will be large enough. The list can be endless depending on the size of your garden and the appetite of your family.

It is an opportune time to browse through those seed catalogs that you have on hand and mark the vegetables that appeal to you and your family. The next thing to do is to plan your garden out on paper. Draw a scale model of your garden and start placing the plants on the page. “Tall plants such as sweet corn, tomatoes, and pole beans should be planted on the north or west side of the garden where they will not shade smaller vegetable crops. However, summer lettuce should be grown in a partially shaded area if possible” (“Home Vegetable Gardening in Kentucky,” UK ID-128, p. 3).

Finally, the closer the vegetable garden is to your back door, the more you will use it, according to “Home Vegetable Gardening in Kentucky.” I think this is true because I would be more inclined to water and pick my vegetables if they were close to the house. If you have any additional questions about planting your vegetable garden, you may contact the Daviess County Cooperative Extension Office at 270-685-8480 to ask for materials on vegetable gardening. You could also visit the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension website, www.ca.uky.edu. So, kick back in your recliner and order those seeds!

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BASIC RULES BEFORE STARTING TO PRUNE

The following general guidelines apply to most plants in your garden:

1. Study your plant from all angles before you make any cuts.

2. The first order of business is to remove all dead, diseased, insect-ridden, storm-damaged, and winter-killed wood.

3. Once this is done, you can spot undesirable branches: crossovers, suckers, sprouts, branches that are too low or too long. These should be removed.

4. Never leave stubs. All cuts should be made back to or just above some growing point, preferably to some outward growing point. If you always prune to some growing point, you won’t go too far wrong. New growth will continue to originate from cut areas.

The worst time to prune is at bud break in the spring. The tree or shrub is using all of the stored energy from the last season to develop the leaves. At this time the injuries are much worse. Never prune frozen branches.
During the holiday season, mistletoe commonly come to mind for holiday decorations. Dr. Ward Gauthier, University of Kentucky Extension Plant Pathologist, describes mistletoe and why we use it.

Once autumn leaves have fallen, mistletoe becomes highly visible on large trees throughout Kentucky. *Phoradendron*, the scientific name for Kentucky’s most common variety of this parasitic plant, means tree thief. These small leafy plants are commonly found on twigs and branches of many hardwood species in the southern United States.

Mistletoe steals water, mineral elements, and food from tree hosts, hence the name. Mistletoe use in holiday traditions has roots in pagan times. The appearance of a live parasitic plant while the host tree appears dead due to winter dormancy led some to believe mistletoe mysteriously held the life of the tree during winter. Druids harvested mistletoe in a special rite, never allowing the plant to touch the ground, and then hung it in their homes for good luck.

Our modern-day mistletoe holiday tradition likely originates with a mythological Norse goddess of love and beauty. Frigga, whose son was restored from possible death by mistletoe, was thought to bestow a kiss on anyone walking beneath one. Today, when two people meet under the mistletoe, tradition suggests they must exchange a kiss for good luck.

*Phoradendron* has simple, fleshy green leaves arranged oppositely on the stem. Stems are short and more branched than host trees, so mistletoe often appears as a spherical bunch of dense vegetation. These bunches may be a foot or two in diameter and are located high in the tree where sun exposure is greatest.

Mistletoe berries range from white to straw-colored to light red. Birds eat the fruits, reportedly toxic to humans and animals, then deposit the seeds onto branches where they germinate and penetrate the next host tree. Mistletoe commonly appears in open-grown trees where birds tend to roost, thereby less frequently in forest trees.

Generally, mistletoe causes minimal damage, although they can be harmful to stressed trees. Mistletoe can be removed from landscape trees by pruning.
Ice and Snow on Trees and Shrubs

William Fountain, Ph.D, University of Kentucky Department of Horticulture

When tree or shrub branches bend over, resist the urge to go out and knock the ice or snow off. Woody plants tolerate a certain amount of bending. Most trees suffering this type of stress seem to do a fair job of restoring their form. When the ice first forms on the branches, the stems are not yet frozen. As temperatures drop after branches have bent over, water in the xylem vessels freezes. Xylem, also known as “wood”, is responsible for the upward conduction of water and mineral elements from the soil to the stems and leaves. Removing the weight of ice quickly allows the branch to spring back up, ice inside the frozen xylem shatters, rupturing the cell walls. Breakage of the xylem vessels is aggravated even more by the vigorous shaking needed to get the ice to fall off. While the plant may spring back into a more upright habit, the plant pays the price in the hot, dry summer months that follow. With many of the xylem vessels shattered, the plant is unable to move enough water from the roots to the foliage. Leaf scorch and twig death results. However, in situations where a bent over stem is almost certain to break, it is better to damage some of the xylem rather than to allow the central leader of a tree to break.

If ice and snow removal is absolutely necessary, it is always better to use cold water from a water hose to melt the ice than to shake the branch. In most situations, water from a hose is warm enough to melt some of the heavy load. Never use hot water because it will damage the plant you are trying to protect. Small shrubs often recover rapidly if broken branches are simply pruned to the ground and allowed to sprout back.

Recycle fresh-cut Christmas trees by taking them to the Northwest District Fisheries Offices at 1398 Hwy 81 N, Calhoun, KY for them to use for fish habitat. Another option is to leave it curbside for city sanitation pickup. Be sure to check their requirements.

IT’S TIME TO WINTERIZE!

Protect your rain barrel from freeze damage

- Disconnect it
- Empty it
- Open spigot
- Store it upside down or indoors

Over the summer your rain barrel captured an average of 700 gallons of rainwater!

This reduced the load on storm sewers and helped conserve drinking water.
Leaves provide nutrients to your lawn, organic matter to your soil and beneficial carbon to your compost pile.

Don't Kick Them to the Curb

...but leaves left in the street clog storm drains, cause flooding, and contribute to nutrient pollution in our streams.

Mulch 'em, Mow 'em, Mix 'em in the compost and keep them out of the storm sewer system!

If you have not already done so, please “like” the Daviess County Cooperative Extension Facebook page at:
www.facebook.com/daviesscountyextension/
We have daily posts related to all areas of Cooperative Extension.

For exclusive gardening information and how-to videos, also visit and “like” the Facebook of the Green River Area Extension Master Gardener Association at
www.facebook.com/graemga/
**CABBAGE ROLLS**

12 cabbage leaves
1 pound lean ground beef
1 cup cooked brown rice
1 (15 ounce) can tomato sauce
1 teaspoon garlic salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1/2 teaspoon dried basil
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
1/2 cup chopped onion
1/4 cup chopped green pepper
1 teaspoon sugar
1 tablespoon cornstarch

Cover cabbage leaves with boiling water. Let stand until leaves are limp, about 4 minutes. Drain. When cool, trim away excess ridge on leaf for easier rolling. Mix beef, rice, 1/2 cup tomato sauce, garlic salt, pepper, basil, oregano, onions, and green pepper. Put 1/3 cup in each leaf, starting at leaf end; roll, tucking in the sides. Place seam side down in a 9-by-11-inch baking dish. Mix remaining tomato sauce with the sugar, pour over rolls. Cover and bake at 350 degrees F for 1 hour. Remove cabbage rolls from baking dish, pour juice in a saucepan. Mix cornstarch and water; stir until mixture boils, cook 1 minute. Serve sauce with cabbage rolls.

Yield: 6 servings, 2 rolls each

Source: [www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov)

**Nutritional Analysis:** 190 calories, 4 g fat, 1.5 g saturated fat, 40 mg cholesterol, 550 mg sodium, 24 g carbohydrate, 6 g fiber, 9 g sugar, 18 g protein

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**Ilex verticillata**

*Common Name: Winterberry ‘Red Sprite’*
*Type: Deciduous shrub*
*Family: Aquifoliaceae*
*Zone: 3 to 9*
*Height: 2.5 to 3 feet*
*Spread: 2.5 to 3 feet*
*Bloom time: June to July*
*Bloom Description: Dull white*
*Water: Medium to wet*
*Maintenance: Low*
*Suggested Use: Hedge, rain garden*
*Fruit: Showy*
*Other: Winter interest*
*Tolerate: Erosion, clay soil, wet soil, air pollution*
*This female plant requires a male pollinator such as I. verticillata ‘Jim Dandy’ to produce the attractive red berries.*

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Buying Kentucky Proud is easy. Look for the label at your grocery store, farmers’ market, or roadside stand.

Annette Meyer Heisdorffer, Ph.D.
Extension Agent for Horticulture Education — Daviess County