



Martin-Gatton
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment
University of Kentucky

JULY NEWSLETTER



2025 | Hopkins County Cooperative Extension Services

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New episodes
every Tuesday!

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Office Info

75 Cornwall Drive
Madisonville, KY 42431
270-821-3650
hopkins.ext@uky.edu

Meal Magic Facebook Live

Learn how to make Chicken Burgers! Check FB for date & time.

Facebook: Hopkins County
Nutrition Education Program



Following us online is an easy
way to keep up with Hopkins
County Extension Family and
Consumer Sciences

Amanda Dame
AMANDA DAME

*County Extension Agent for
Family and Consumer
Sciences*

Cooperative Extension Service

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension 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 expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, physical or mental disability or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Reasonable accommodation of disability may be available with prior notice. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating. Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.

THOSE LIVING WITH ALPHA-GAL SYNDROME CAN STILL LEAD NORMAL LIVES

Ticks are bad news in general, but the lone star tick brings an extra problem: it can leave behind a sugar molecule called alpha-gal that may flip a person's immune system against red meat and other products that come from mammals.

Evidence points squarely at this one species; so far, no other tick in Kentucky has been linked to the syndrome. When the tick feeds on wildlife, alpha-gal can build up in its saliva. During a bite, that sugar slips into a person's bloodstream. Because humans don't make alpha-gal, the body considers it a "threat." After that, beef, pork, lamb—anything from a mammal—can trigger the same immune response, even hours after a meal.

Reactions aren't guaranteed. Some bites never cause trouble, and larval "seed ticks" seem less risky than the larger nymphs and adults. Still, Kentucky sits near the top of the national charts for confirmed cases, so prevention and practical know-how matter. If a doctor pins down the diagnosis, the first rule is avoidance. Red meat is obvious, but alpha-gal lurks in gravies, gelatin, glycerin, certain pill coatings, a few vaccines, and even animal-derived heart valves. Dairy may or may not set someone off; it varies. Reading labels becomes routine, especially for ingredients like gelatin, glycerin, magnesium stearate, or bovine extract.

However, dropping mammal meat and avoiding other triggers doesn't leave a person with limited food options, especially high-protein foods. Poultry, fish, shellfish, eggs, beans, lentils, nuts and seeds can all stay on the menu. For example, ground turkey can fill in for hamburger, and plant-based butter can replace the real thing when baking. It may seem frustrating, but to some, sharing their time, practice and exploring new foods is helpful when making big changes to the diet. Those shifting toward a mostly plant-based diet may need a supplement for nutrients such as vitamin B12 or iron—just confirm any capsule is free of gelatin- and talk to your health-care provider or pharmacist.

THOSE LIVING WITH ALPHA-GAL SYNDROME CAN STILL LEAD NORMAL LIVES

Avoiding fresh bites helps, too. Lone star ticks favor brushy edges and overgrown paths from spring through late summer. Long pants, permethrin-treated clothing, and repellents like DEET or picaridin lower the odds. After time outdoors, inspect yourself, kids, and pets carefully and remove any ticks with fine-tipped tweezers. Unfortunately, there is currently no medication to erase the allergy once it sets in, but with steady precautions—reading every label, asking about hidden ingredients, staying vigilant about ticks—people can manage daily life, travel, and social events without constant flare-ups.

FOR MORE DETAILED GUIDANCE ON LIVING WITH ALPHA-GAL SYNDROME, SEE THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY'S PUBLICATION AT [HTTPS://PUBLICATIONS.CA.UKY.EDU/SITES/PUBLICATIONS.CA.UKY.EDU/FILES/FCS3646.PDF](https://publications.ca.uky.edu/sites/publications.ca.uky.edu/files/FCS3646.PDF).

CONTACT HOPKINS COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ALPHA-GAL AND RED MEAT ALLERGIES.

SOURCE: HEATHER NORMAN-BURGDOLF, DEPARTMENT OF DIETETICS AND HUMAN NUTRITION ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

KING ARTHUR BAKING COMPANY

HOPKINS COUNTY FAIR

Baking Contest

CANCELLED

Cupcakes & Cookies

Prizes

For a copy of the rules, please contact the Hopkins County Extension Office, 605 E Arch Street, Madisonville, KY 42431, or call 270-821-7200.

Prizes are as follows:

- First place: \$50 gift card
- Second place: \$25 gift card
- Third place: King Arthur Tote Bag

All gift cards are to King Arthur Baking Company.

Drop off the finished product at the Fair:

Tuesday, August 5, 2025

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Ballard Center
605 E Arch Street
Madisonville, KY 42431

For more information, contact the Hopkins County Extension Office at 270-821-7200.

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LEXINGTON, KY 40546

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ADULT HEALTH BULLETIN



JULY 2025

Download this and past issues
of the Adult, Youth, Parent, and
Family Caregiver Health Bulletins:
[http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/
content/health-bulletins](http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/content/health-bulletins)

Hopkins County
Extension Office
75 Cornwall Drive
Madisonville, KY
42431
(270) 821-3650

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC

WHAT IS ALPHA-GAL SYNDROME?



Alpha-gal Syndrome (AGS) is a severe allergy that can happen after a tick bite. It causes allergic reactions when people eat red meat or use products derived from animals, such as cows, pigs, or deer.

Ticks carry a sugar molecule called alpha-gal, which is also in red meat. When the tick bites, it can transfer a small amount of alpha-gal into the person. In some people, this causes an immune response. The immune response triggers an allergic reaction each time the person comes into contact with alpha-gal in the future. It can happen when they eat red meat, such as beef, pork, or venison, or come into contact with products made from other parts of those animals, including dairy products, gelatin, or beauty products.

In the United States, Lone Star ticks are the most common transmitters of alpha-

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gal to humans. While it is possible for anyone to be bitten by a tick and have a reaction, adults react more commonly than children.

The best way to avoid getting AGS is to avoid tick bites! If you are going into areas of dense trees or shrubbery, use tick spray or wear tick-proof clothing. If possible, stay out of tall grass and thick woods, and walk in the center of trails.

After coming in from outdoors, check your skin, clothes, and pets for ticks. Take a shower and look for ticks on your body and always remove any ticks right away.

If you develop symptoms of a food allergy after a tick bite, contact your doctor. Make sure to tell them about your tick bite, to help them see if your illness may be related. It is important to get medical treatment for food allergy symptoms, even if the symptoms happen several hours after eating.

Get emergency medical treatment if you have symptoms of a serious allergic reaction. If you have trouble breathing, called anaphylaxis, or a constricted airway, rapid pulse, are feeling dizzy or light-headed, drooling, not able to swallow, or have full-body redness and warmth.

In order to diagnose you, a doctor may ask about your symptoms, medical history, and daily habits, take a blood sample for alpha-gal

antibody testing, or recommend allergy testing to confirm or rule out other potential allergens.

If you are diagnosed with AGS, see an allergy doctor, known as an allergist, for help. They specialize in treating allergic reactions and can help develop a plan to help you cope with your diagnosis. They can also refer you to other health-care specialists, such as a dietitian, mental health therapist, or home health service if needed.

Other recommendations for people living with AGS include avoiding eating red meat (beef, pork, lamb, deer, rabbit), and avoiding other potential sources of alpha-gal from animal products such as dairy products, gelatin, and certain beauty products. Read labels carefully to avoid trigger products. Talk to a doctor before taking any new medicine or vaccines. It is also important to avoid new tick bites, as they can make the allergy worse.

REFERENCE:

<https://www.cdc.gov/alpha-gal-syndrome/about>

Written by: Katherine Jury,
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Edited by: Alyssa Simms

Designed by: Rusty Manseau

Stock images: Adobe Stock



FOOD PRESERVATION RENTALS

 Cooperative
Extension Service

\$50 DEPOSIT REQUIRED*

***REFUNDED WHEN
EQUIPMENT IS RETURNED**

**Get your chef hat on and
embark on a flavor-packed
journey of preserving your
own food starting today!**



THREE
DAY
RENTALS



Available Equipment

**Pressure Canner
Boiling Water Canner
Canning Tools
Dehydrator**



270-821-3650



**HOPKINS COUNTY COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION OFFICE**

MONEYWISE

VALUING PEOPLE. VALUING MONEY.

JULY 2025

Nichole Huff, Ph.D., CFLE | Assistant Extension Professor Family Finance and Resource Management | nichole.huff@uky.edu

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: INVESTING FOR EVERYONE

Benjamin Franklin is credited with saying, "A penny saved is a penny earned." But is this principle true? In today's economy, not necessarily. If we put a penny (or dollar) under a mattress, it may be worth less than a penny (or dollar) tomorrow or next year. Because of inflation, goods and services usually cost more in the future than they do today. This is why even people who are good at "saving" can fall behind financially. Investing your money is one way to battle inflation.



GROW YOUR MONEY

Saving is not investing. Investing is a way to make your money grow. Once you have an emergency fund in place for unexpected expenses, you should consider investing any extra money. Invest as much as your "risk tolerance" will allow. The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) defines risk tolerance as *"an investor's ability and willingness to lose some or all of an investment in exchange for greater potential returns."* There is risk involved when investing, but with research and careful choices, your money should grow steadily over time.

COMPOUNDING INTEREST

Anyone who has had a revolving balance on a credit card knows that for an item that originally cost \$100, you could pay back more than \$100 with interest. Credit card companies take advantage of compounding interest by charging extra for every purchase not paid off in full each statement. Then, they charge you interest on top of that interest, sometimes daily! This illustrates the principle of **compounding interest**, which is why getting out of debt can be hard. However, when investing, compound interest is a great thing! It helps your money grow faster. Learn more at ukfcs.net/MoneyWise2-23

Cooperative Extension Service

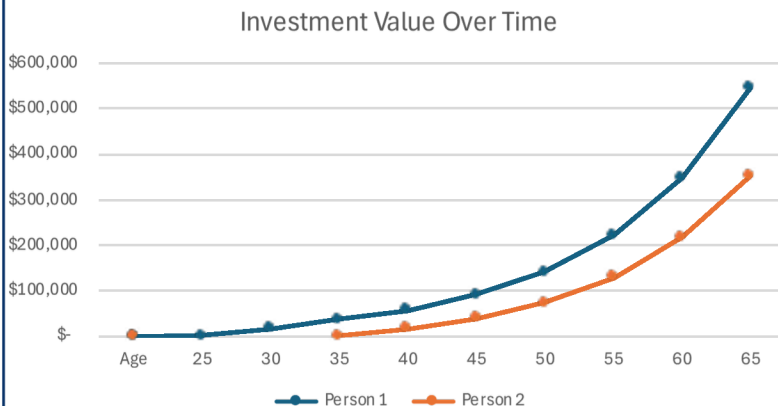
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MANY PEOPLE THINK THAT TO INVEST YOU NEED THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS, WHICH IS A MYTH



NOTE: Both investors contribute \$2,000 per year once they start investing. The example assumes a 9% fixed rate of return, compounded monthly. Reference: Investor Protection Trust. *The Basics of Saving and Investing: Investor Education 2020*. <https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/commerce/documents/securities/posts/The-Basics-of-Savings-and-Investing.pdf>

CAN I AFFORD TO INVEST?

Many people think that to invest you need thousands of dollars, which is a myth. You can invest as little as a dollar a month. Almost anyone can open a brokerage account. This account is like a savings account but with a brokerage company allowed to sell “holdings” like stocks, bonds, mutual funds, and Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs). The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission offers a beginner’s guide to investing at <https://www.investor.gov/introduction-investing>.

Check with your employer to see if they offer a retirement plan such as a 401(k). If they do, start contributing as much as you can each pay period. Your employer can take this amount from your pay and put it into a brokerage account for you. Many companies also “match” contributions up to a certain amount. This means that for every dollar you put in, the company also adds a dollar. This is free money! Try to maximize this amount each year. There also can be tax benefits depending on the type of account you have.

Once the money is in your brokerage account, you can decide what to buy (e.g., stocks, bonds, annuities). Try to learn as

much as you can about the products you are buying, but don’t wait to start investing. There are investment professionals who can help you figure out which purchases are less risky. Make sure your investment portfolio is diversified. That means you should invest in a variety of different things so you have more “eggs” in your “basket.” On average, inflation has been 3.51% each year since 1950, so you should aim to earn at least 3.51% or more on your investments (<https://www.officialdata.org/us/inflation/>).

SLOW AND STEADY

Once you start investing, use the “buy and hold” strategy to sit back and watch your money grow over time. If you earn 9% interest (assuming a strong market), your money will double in 8 years! Then it will double again in the next 8 years, and so on. The sooner you invest, the sooner that can happen. So, whether you can invest \$5 a month or \$5,000, just get started. Your future self will thank you.

REFERENCE:

Office of Financial Readiness. *Investing Basics: Bonds, Stocks, Mutual Funds and ETFs*. <https://finred.usalearning.gov/Saving/StocksBondsMutualFunds>

Written by: Barbara Breutinger | Edited by: Kelly May and Alyssa Simms | Designed by: Kelli Thompson | Images by: Adobe Stock

Nichole Huff, Ph.D., CFLE | Assistant Extension Professor Family Finance and Resource Management | nichole.huff@uky.edu

HOPKINS COUNTY BARN QUILT PAINT PARTY

BY: Liz's Barn Quilts

AUGUST 20, 2025



From 9a.m. - 3p.m.



25 Mahr Park Drive,
Meeting Room A
Madisonville, KY 42431

2'x2'=\$130

3'x3'=\$190

4'x4'=\$270

Prices include:

- All supplies*
- Boards primed & ready to paint
- Lunch**

*Board, brushes, paint, etc.

** Please advise if you have special dietary needs.

PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN DRINK, HAIRDRYER, & .94" FROG TAPE.

Sorry, **NO** refunds on missed event - alternative arrangements will be available.



DEADLINE TO PAY & RSVP: JULY 20, 2025

CALL (270) 821-3650 TO RSVP.

Let us know which design you want and what size sign. Paint colors can be decided day of event.

*Want to Paint a Barn Quilt but Don't Have Space for It?
Take a look at our volunteer opportunity on the back!*

BARN QUILT PAINTING CLASS AUGUST 20, 2025

Help Us Bring the New Extension Office to Life with Your Creativity!

Join us for an incredible opportunity to make a meaningful impact in our community! We are excited to announce a Barn Quilt Painting Class at the Extension Office on August 20th. This is your chance to engage in a delightful artistic experience while contributing to a stunning barn quilt square that will be proudly exhibited in one of our meeting rooms!

Don't miss this opportunity to showcase your talent and brighten our space!

If you're eager to participate and create your very own barn quilt square for the new Extension Office, please **contact us at 270-821-3650 for further details.**

Become a Master Gardener



Kentucky Extension
Master Gardener

Master Gardener Class Orientation



Tuesday, July 29th



5:30 p.m.

Hopkins County
Extension



75 Cornwall Drive,
Madisonville



Reserve Your
Spot Now! Call
270-821-3650

Are you interested in becoming a Master Gardener volunteer?

Master Gardeners are a group of trained volunteers who provide education and outreach in the community in programs relating to gardening and horticulture.

The Hopkins County Extension Service is now accepting applicants for a fall 2025 Master Gardener Class that will be Tuesday evenings from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. starting in September.

To learn more about the program and to participate in the fall class, please attend a mandatory orientation on Tuesday, July 29th at 5:30 p.m.