

When Kids Leave, Expirations Become Forgotten Requisites”

By Becky Greenwell
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Sometimes we tend to go through the everyday things in life as mechanically as breathing or blinking. We do things without thinking about them. We travel down the same road every day and all of a sudden, realize we are nearing our destination and don’t even remember passing certain landmarks.

There are even those days when we put ourselves on automatic pilot in the kitchen. We fixed the meal, serve it, cleaned up the kitchen, and then we realize we didn’t even sit down to eat or relax.

Time is a fleeting moment that we are either trying to catch or wishing it would hurry up and move on to the next day.

Since my children have all moved from home, I have found that my everyday routine of what once was, is now on automatic pilot. I do not have a scheduled grocery shopping day; I do not check my pantry or refrigerator to see what needs to be purchased or tossed.

Whenever I am hungry, I decide what I want to eat and go to the grocery store to purchase what I am craving. When I return, I discover there are several of these same items already in the cabinets with older items getting pushed farther back on the shelves.

Because of that oversight, I tend to have also forgotten about checking the important part of labels. Not the ones that list the amount of fat and calories or sodium and fiber, but those few little words that tell me when the item should no longer be sitting on my shelves.

Shelf life and expiration dates were never a huge priority when my kids were home because the shelf life of most of the items in my cabinet was very short. From the time the item left the shopping bag and was sitting in the pantry or refrigerator, was about the same amount of time it took for someone to be “starving to death” and eating anything in sight.

Who had time to check expiration dates? I barely knew a date was listed.

Although there was that time when my oldest son stopped by and was hankering for a really big salad loaded with all kinds of good stuff. He raided the refrigerator and found lettuce, tomatoes, ham, cheese, car-

rots, radishes, sunflower seeds, bacon bits, and enough other ingredients to pile on this salad to make any salad bar within a hundred miles look wimpy in comparison to this masterpiece.

Then came the crowning glory with his favorite dressing. Eagerly he poured his Ranch dressing out and it plopped on top of his salad. Although he didn’t accidentally pick up the Bleu Cheese dressing, he could have sworn that was what was in the bottle. That is until he checked the expiration date which was about two years earlier. How that one little bottle managed to stay pushed back in the refrigerator is a mystery. Needless to say, he was very disappointed with the results of his salad.

Nowadays, just because of that one little mishap those ungracious children check expirations on every food item in my house before they will eat it. My husband cleans out canned goods on a regular basis. I didn’t know those things expired either until the evaporated milk was as brown and thick as slow molasses. There went all my sale item bargains.

I heard a story of one mother who would buy two percent milk and pour it into an empty whole milk carton so her children would drink it. That worked well until one of them checked the expiration and it was a couple of years past the Use by date.

A friend of mine recently gave me an empty whipped topping container of her homemade chicken salad. I set in the refrigerator and noticed the Use by date of March 22, 2022. I wonder how long I can keep that container in there before my kids have a conniption fit.

I guess I better start doing a little better with my expirations instead of letting the items have longer shelf lives than was intended. Maybe I’ll be so lucky and when my expiration date comes up the Good Lord will be too busy to notice and let me go a little past my time.

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Agriculture Notes

Submitted by Katie Hughes

Mosquito Terror: Mosquitoes can ruin outdoor activities this time of year. It may seem like a never-ending battle when you’re fighting to control the pesky insects. With mosquito-borne diseases becoming more prevalent, it’s even more important to know how to take control of these pests around your home. Learning to do a few simple things could help protect you from more than the itchiness of a mosquito bite. All mosquitoes need standing water to develop through their larval stages, and that doesn’t necessarily mean a lake or pond. It also includes bird baths, kiddie pools and even discarded soda pop cans. The key to controlling them around your home is to stop them from breeding in the first place. Some things you can do include: Drain and remove trash, bottles and any debris that holds water. Recycle any unused containers that could collect water, especially old tires. Change water weekly in bird baths, wading pools, watering troughs and animal bowls. Fill in holes, depressions and puddles in your yard. Make sure your culverts and ditches are draining properly. Check and clean out clogged gutters to ensure drainage. Keep ornamental ponds stocked with fish. Fix leaky hoses and faucets. Drain water from flowerpots and garden containers. Turn over wheelbarrows, buckets and other items that collect water. Adjust tarps covering woodpiles, boats and grills to remove standing water. Encourage natural enemies of mosquitoes, such as warblers, swallows, martins and other insect-feeding birds. It’s a good idea to start these practices early in the season. Just because the mosquitoes aren’t biting yet, it doesn’t mean that they’re not developing. Sources: Michael Potter,

University of Kentucky, Entomologist

Union County Fair: Mark your calendar for the 75th Union Co Fair, Livestock Show is June 21, 2025 and Fair starts June 23-28,2025. Follow the Union County KY Fair Facebook page for more information.

Union County Fair Hay Show: Hay Show Sponsored by the Union County Cattlemen’s Association will be June 23, 2025, at the Union County Fairgrounds from 9am to 11am. This is open to Union, Crittenden, Henderson and Webster County residents and the hay must be produced and baled on the farm of the exhibitor since Aug 1, 2024. The contest is free sampling. Haylage can be done at no cost. If you are unable to make it during the show you can bring your hay sample to the Union Co Ext office the week before show from 8am-4:30pm to be enter. BUT YOUR SAMPLE MUST BE CHOPPED (HAY PROBE) AND A FULL SANDWICH BAG OF THE SAMPLE. Classes: Alfalfa less than 10% grass, Grass, Red Clover less than 10% grass, Small Grain Hay wheat, Grass Hay less than 10% legumes, and Grass legume Hay over 30% legumes. For more information contact Katie at 270-389-1400 or at katie.n.hughes@uky.edu.

Educational programs of the Kentucky 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 expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, or physical or mental disability.

Did You Know?

The Second Continental Congress unanimously adopted the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. The Library of Congress notes that marked an official announcement of the colonies’ separation from Great Britain, but it would be awhile before celebrating American independence on July 4 became commonplace.

According to the LOC, it was not until the conclusion of the War of 1812 that festivities celebrating American independence became the norm. Curiously, even though

the War of 1812 officially concluded in 1815, Congress did not pass a law making Independence Day a federal holiday until 1870. Since then, Americans have celebrated July 4 in numerous ways. Backyard barbecues and community fireworks displays are popular ways to celebrate the holiday. Some even experience life-changing moments on July 4, when the country still holds naturalization ceremonies at which many individuals officially become U.S. citizens.

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

4-H News

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY • COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
By
ANNETTE BUCKMAN
COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT FOR 4-H

Get Fired Up Safely For Grilling Season

If backyard barbecues are on your summer agenda, it’s time to fire up the grill and get cooking! Grilling outdoors can live up your summer social events with tasty food and fun, and it can also provide a nice break from your regular meal routine. However, safely mastering the art of barbecuing requires careful practice and attention.

In 2022, roughly 5,400 emergency room visits were attributed to charcoal and gas grill accidents, according to data released by the Consumer Product Safety Commission. Follow these grilling safety guidelines to keep grilling injuries from spoiling your next cookout.

- Use grills outside only. Even small grills can create fire hazards and release potentially fatal carbon monoxide when used indoors.
- Keep the grill away from the house and any flammable materials. It should also be a safe distance from deck railings and overhanging tree branches.
- Use the right lighter fluid for your grill. Store it away from heat and out of child reach.
- Establish a child- and pet-free zone. Children and pets should be supervised by someone other than the cook and kids should stay three feet away to avoid burns.

- Clean the grill well before use. Built-up grease and fat can contribute to fires.
- Don’t overload the grill. Excess fat dripping on the flames can cause major flare-ups.
- Keep a spray bottle filled with water nearby. It can be used to douse small flare-ups without ruining the food.
- Never leave your grill unattended. Charcoal grills can stay hot for hours after use.
- ¶ Never add lighter fluid after the flame has been lit. If the flame gets too low, add dry kindling.

If you use a gas grill, follow these additional safety precautions:

- Make sure the lid is open before lighting it. This prevents flammable gas from being trapped in the chamber, which can cause an explosion.
- If you smell gas and the flame is off,

turn the gas off.

- If you smell gas and the flame is on, get away immediately. This is a sign that there is a leak. Call the fire department and stay away from the grill.

Kentucky 4-Hers are invited to put their grilling skills to the test at this year’s Kentucky 4-H Poultry Barbecue Contest, to be held on July 27 at the Hardin County Extension Office. The contest is open to all Kentucky 4-Hers who register with their county agent in advance. No qualifying events are required, and participants do not need to have a poultry project to participate.

To learn more about barbeque safety tips or to register for the contest, contact the Union County office of the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service.

Union County 4-H Fair Activities

4-H Livestock Shows:

On Saturday, June 21st, at 9:00 a.m. - Market Hog Show, 10:00 a.m. – Heifer & Steer Show; 11:00 a.m. – Goat Show. 4-H Rabbit/Poultry Show - (Gate Opens 4:30 p.m.)

On Monday, June 23rd, - Rabbit Show starts at 6:00 p.m. Poultry Show starts at 6:30 p.m.

Country Ham Breakfast Saturday June 28th

It is that time of year again! Please be on the lookout for our 2025 Country Ham Project participants to be selling tickets to the 21st Annual Union Coun-

ty 4-H Country Ham Breakfast. Tickets will be sold at \$15.00 each and will help provide funding for the country ham participants to attend and compete at the State Fair in August. You can buy your tickets in advance or at the door the morning of breakfast. The breakfast will take place at the John A. Arnold Convention Center at 8:00am on June 28th.

Follow Us On Facebook!

To keep up with all the fun events happening in the Union County 4-H Program follow Union County 4H on Facebook for all the latest news, events, and information about 4-H. There you will find interesting articles related to youth/4-H and much more!

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The University of Kentucky Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment news and communications team provides monthly Extension Exclusives in the categories of Horticulture, Agriculture and Natural Resources, 4-H and Family & Consumer Sciences.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Union County Fiscal Court is accepting applications for a Full-Time Groundskeeper position at Moffit Lake.

Applications can be picked up and turned in at the Union County Judge/Executive's Office located at 100 West Main St., Morgantown, KY 42437. They may be obtained via email by emailing jill.hunley@unioncountky.gov or on the County's website at www.unioncountky.org. Applications will be accepted until June 20, 2025.

The Union County Fiscal Court is an Equal Opportunity Employer: All applicants are considered for employment without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status, or disability. 6/18c

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Union County Fiscal Court is accepting applications for a part-time Museum Events position.

Applications can be picked up and turned in at the Union County Judge/Executive's Office located at 100 West Main St., Morgantown, KY 42437. They may be obtained via email by emailing iiii.hunley@unioncountky.gov or on the County's website at www.unioncountky.org. Applications will be accepted until June 20, 2025.

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