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Food and Environment  
Cooperative Extension Service

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## What's inside

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## Coming up

**Oct. 26** - University of Tennessee Organic Crops Field Tour, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. EDT, Knoxville. [Click here](#) for details.

**Nov. 10** - MarketReady Producer Training Program, Shelby County Extension Office, Shelbyville, KY. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. EST. For details and registration information, [click here](#).

**Nov. 14-16** - Kentucky Small, Limited Resource, Minority Farmers Conference, Frankfort, KY. For details, [click here](#).

**Nov. 16** - Getting Market-Ready for Wholesale webinar, noon to 1 p.m. EST. Speaker: Dr. Tim Woods, University of Kentucky. Brought to you by The Ohio State University Direct Marketing Team. For more information, [click here](#).

# Southern Ohio growers see steady pumpkin demand

By Matt Ernst, independent writer

Producers in the Southern Ohio Growers Cooperative report steady regional wholesale pumpkin demand this season.

The co-op formed in 2016. "Eight co-op members planted approximately 100 acres of pumpkins this season, but about 12 or so were lost due to the flooding along the Scioto River the last week of June and first week of July," said Brad Bergefurd, Ohio State University Horticulture Specialist and Scioto County Extension Educator, in Portsmouth.

Ohio ranks second in pumpkin plantings, behind Illinois. Ohio farmers planted 6,700 acres of pumpkins in 2016, harvesting 6,200. Planted acreage in Ohio for 2017 is similar, according to acreage reported to the USDA Farm Service Agency.

The eight-member co-op supplies wholesale buyers and a regional distribution center. "The co-op only plants what it has contracted for sale before the season," Bergefurd said. "Prices were similar to 2016 but we saw lots of additional interest from buyers. I think the co-op could have shipped as much as twice the volume harvested."

Co-op members saw good yields for the season, Bergefurd said, up to 12 tons per acre. That came despite excessive early moisture and downy mildew pressure. "Pumpkins really sized up at harvest, too, with strong handles," he noted. Regional buyer demand seems especially strong for specialty pumpkins, including warty varieties, Bergefurd said.

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LEXINGTON, KY 40546



Disabilities  
accommodated  
with prior notification.

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The eight member farms also cooperatively purchase inputs: bins, chemicals, and some seed. Pumpkins are sorted and packed on each farm. Members sometimes deliver loaded bins to a central farm for loading out semi-trailers.

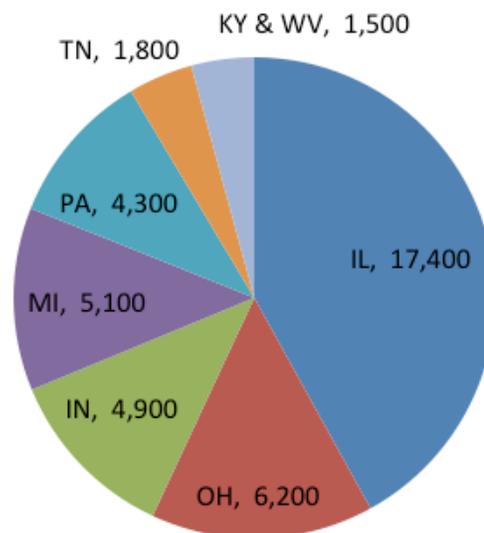
The co-op has allowed its member farms to expand into wholesaling. "Everyone involved has other crops and are usually selling pumpkins through some kind of direct market channel," Bergefurd said.

Farms are in five counties: Pickaway, Pike, Scioto, Jackson and Adams. Cameron Way, of Way Farms in Pike County, is co-op president. "This is a new opportunity that seems to be meeting a market demand in the region. The co-op is focusing on pumpkins now, but it left 'pumpkin' out of the co-op name, to consider adding other crops in the future," said Bergefurd.

States in the eastern Corn Belt have seen pumpkin acreage steady to growing in the past two years, according to USDA. Illinois, with its large processing pumpkin industry, is the national acreage leader, harvesting more than 17,000 acres in 2016. Michigan and Indiana each harvest about 5,000 acres. Pennsylvania harvested 4,300 acres in 2016.

Tennessee harvests 1,800 acres and Kentucky pumpkin acreage ranges between 1,000 and 1,500 acres. West Virginia reported about 250 acres in

## 2016 Pumpkin Acres Harvested\*



Graphic by Matt Ernst

\*Represents >60% of total U.S. plantings. Source: USDA/NASS, Center for Crop Diversification (KY/WV estimate)

the last Ag Census.

Pumpkin production continues to meet steady to growing consumer demand for the fall ornamental market. Pie pumpkins and other edibles are also seeing sustained demand in Kentucky and neighboring states, according to auction and farmers market reports.

*Matt Ernst is an independent agricultural writer, under contract with the CCD, and former UK Extension Associate.*

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## KY Proud produce growers, buyers invited to Lexington meeting

*From the Kentucky Department of Agriculture*

FRANKFORT — Kentucky Proud fruit and vegetable producers and buyers are invited to a meeting November 8<sup>th</sup> aimed at helping participants make connections that will generate business opportunities.

The meeting is scheduled for 9 a.m.-2 p.m. EST at the Fayette County Cooperative Extension Service office, 1140 Harry Sykes Way, Lexington. The

meeting is sponsored by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA) and the Kentucky Vegetable Growers Association.

"The Kentucky Proud program brings people together to form mutually beneficial partnerships that increase sales and create jobs," Agriculture Commissioner Ryan Quarles said. "We encourage Kentucky Proud members to take advantage of this opportunity to meet face to face and look for

**Continued on Page 3**

# CCD resources update: 2017 KY blackberry budgets are here!

They're here! The 2017 Kentucky Blackberry Cost and Return Estimates (ID-149) are now available online. This publication includes information for thorny, thornless erect, and thornless semi-erect blackberries. To access the publication visit <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/id/id149/ID149.PDF>.

Other publications updated this month include [Romaine Lettuce](#) (CCD-CP-116) and [Root Crops](#) (CCD-CP-117). An update of our Vegetable and Melon budgets is nearing completion. The 2017 budgets will be available in two versions - one for large-scale production, and one for small-scale production.



## Continued from Page 2

ways that they can work together.”

The meeting is targeted to fruit and vegetable producers looking to sell their products wholesale in any quantities. Invited buyers include representatives of Kroger, Houchens, Walmart, Whole Foods, Good Foods Co-op, Fresh Thyme, ValuMarket, Piazza Produce, Creation Gardens, Crosset Company, and processors seeking local products. The program includes producer training and market and production news from Tim Woods, John Strang, and Bryan Brady of the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment.

Lunch will be provided for participants who pre-register.

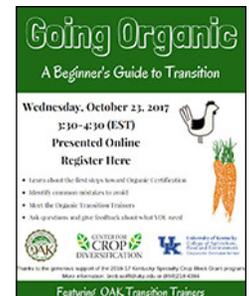
Buyers may pre-register by contacting Roger Snell, farm-to-retail liaison for the KDA, at [roger.snell@ky.gov](mailto:roger.snell@ky.gov). Farmers may pre-register by contacting Joel Wilson of the Kentucky Vegetable Growers Association at (606) 305-8762.

## OAK, CCD team up for webinar on organic transition process

The Organic Association of Kentucky (OAK) and the Center for Crop Diversification are offering a webinar entitled “Going Organic - A Beginner’s Guide to Transition” on Thursday, October 26<sup>th</sup>, from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. EDT. The webinar, which will feature OAK transition trainers, will enable you to:

- Learn about the first steps toward Organic Certification
- Identify common mistakes to avoid
- Meet the Organic Transition Trainers
- Ask questions and give feedback about what YOU need

To register, [click here](#). For more information, contact Brett Wolff at [brett.wolff@uky.edu](mailto:brett.wolff@uky.edu) or (859) 218-4384.



# KDA Hemp Program now taking applications for 2018

*From the Kentucky Department of Agriculture*

FRANKFORT — Agriculture Commissioner Ryan Quarles announced on October 17<sup>th</sup> that the Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA) has opened the application period for Kentuckians wishing to participate in the state's industrial hemp research pilot program for the 2018 growing season.

"I am proud to report that our program participants grew more than 3,200 acres of hemp this year, the most ever under the industrial hemp research program," said Commissioner Quarles. "My vision is to expand and strengthen our research pilot program to put industrial hemp on a responsible path toward commercialization. Our increased production and processing is welcome news for the industry."

Industrial hemp is one of several alternative crops, including hops and kenaf, that have made headway in Kentucky's agricultural economy in recent years. In 2017, Kentucky's farmers planted 3,200 acres of hemp, up from 2,350 acres in 2016, 922 acres in 2015, and 33 acres in 2014, the first year of the program. In addition to 194 grower participants, 48 hemp processors are conducting research as part of the KDA program.

Applications may be downloaded from the KDA website at [kyagr.com/hemp](http://kyagr.com/hemp). Grower applications must be postmarked or received by November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017, at 4:30 p.m. EST. Processor/Handler applications are preferred by November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017, with a final deadline of June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018.

The KDA is also opening a public comment period for preliminary draft regulations governing the industrial hemp research pilot program. Earlier this year, the Kentucky General Assembly passed Senate Bill 218, tasking the KDA with promulgating administrative regulations for the program. Once the process is complete, program rules will be found in administrative regulations, as the law prescribes.



Photo by Matt Barton, UK Ag Communications

Tractors with cutters and conditioners harvested UK industrial hemp research plots at the C. Oran Little Research Farm in 2016.

Department officials ask that interested members of the public submit their comments in writing by October 31<sup>st</sup> so that the agency can consider those comments prior to filing the regulations with the Legislative Research Commission later this year. The draft administrative regulations will be used as the policy to guide the program in 2018.

The draft regulations are available at [kyagr.com/hemp](http://kyagr.com/hemp). Written comments may be submitted by mail to KDA Hemp Program, 111 Corporate Drive, Frankfort, KY 40601, or by email to [hemp@ky.gov](mailto:hemp@ky.gov) with "Hemp Reg Comments" in the subject line.

KDA operates its industrial hemp research pilot program under the authority of state law (KRS 260.850-260.869) and a provision of the 2014 federal Farm Bill (7 U.S.C. § 5940) that authorizes state-managed hemp pilot programs.

# Roadside Farm Market Program enrollment is now open

*From the Kentucky Farm Bureau website*

The Certified Roadside Farm Market Program is celebrating its 23<sup>rd</sup> year as a valuable service to Kentucky Farm Bureau's farm market owners.

As you know, markets certified through this program are identified by a sign with the cornucopia logo and are listed in the Certified Roadside Farm Market Directory. The program provides collective advertising, promotional items, educational and tour opportunities, and other marketing benefits with the intent to increase the net farm income of our member markets.



As an additional benefit, the Kentucky Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company has a Business Owner's Policy (BOP) designed to help meet the unique needs of roadside farm markets. The customizable BOP provides a package of property and liability coverages to help cover risks in-

volved in your commercial, non-farm operations. This policy could include many of the unique exposures roadside farm markets might experience.

All of these services are available to members for an annual fee of only \$350.00. A discount rate of \$275.00 is available to those who enroll by November 17<sup>th</sup>. First- and second-year members are offered a special rate of \$325.00, with a discount rate of \$250.00 for those who apply by November 17<sup>th</sup>. Eligibility requirements may be found on the Certified Roadside Farm Market Program Guidelines page at <https://www.eiseverywhere.com/home/rfmenrollment18/627330/>. To enroll in the program, [click here](#).

The deadline to guarantee your inclusion in the 2018 Roadside Farm Market Program is December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

If you have questions about program enrollment, please contact Mrs. Fran McCall, Commodity Specialist and coordinator for the Roadside Farm Market Program, at 502-495-5000, ext. 7238, or [FranMcCall@kyfb.com](mailto:FranMcCall@kyfb.com).

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*Christy Cassady*

Christy Cassady, Extension Specialist

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