

FREE! Home Gardening Classes

Backyard Fruit: Fruit Tree Pruning

Feb 26, 2025 06:00 PM

Join UT Extension Washington County Agriculture Agent Adam Watson to learn how to prune your fruit trees to improve yields and enhance fruit quality.

In-person Location: Jonesborough Farm Bureau Basement Meeting room 1103 Boones Creek Rd, Jonesborough.

Zoom webinar registration: <https://tiny.utk.edu/fruittreepruning>

In-person Registration: <https://tiny.utk.edu/inpersontreepruning>



Backyard Fruit: Pruning Berries: Blackberry, Raspberry, Blueberry

March 3, 2025 6:00 PM

Join UT Extension Washington County Agriculture Agent Adam Watson and learn how to prune your berries to improve yields and enhance fruit quality.

In-person Location: Jonesborough Farm Bureau Basement Meeting room 1103 Boones Creek Rd, Jonesborough.

Zoom registration: <https://tiny.utk.edu/berrypruning>

In-person Registration: <https://tiny.utk.edu/inpersonberrypruning>



Backyard Fruit: Pruning Grapes

March 11, 2025 6:00 PM

Join UT Extension Washington County Agriculture Agent Adam Watson and learn how to prune your grapes improve yields and enhance fruit quality.

In-person Location: Jonesborough Farm Bureau Basement Meeting room 1103 Boones Creek Rd, Jonesborough.

Zoom registration: <https://tiny.utk.edu/grapepruning>

In-person Registration: <https://tiny.utk.edu/inpersongrapepruning>



Plant Identification Apps, Are They Accurate?

If you're looking for a recommendation on a plant identification phone app Michigan State University



Extension has been evaluating apps for several years. According to their findings, [*Plant identification? There's an app for that—actually several!*](#), the PictureThis app was accurate overall 73% of the time. Luckily its available in a free version, but per MSU *"the app is quite persistent in advertising the paid version, which some students found off-putting"*.

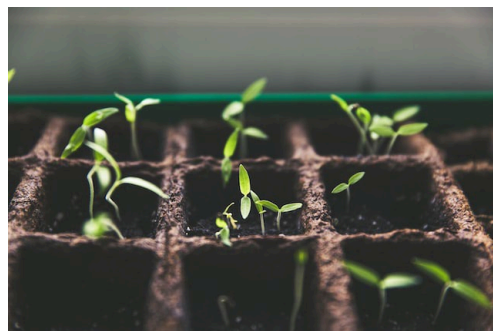
Even this top performer had weaknesses correctly identifying vegetative grass (or grass-like) weeds and evergreen trees and shrubs with 57 and 59% accuracy, respectively. Clearly, even this top performing will get it

The Trusty Trowel-February 2025

wrong sometimes. Make certain to examine the characteristics you see in the specimen and compare those to the suggested identification to confirm accuracy.

Timing of Transplants

There is a temptation to try to start earlier than we should and grow larger transplants. I'd like to discourage you from that. When we talk about the size of transplants we're really talking about the age; the longer a transplant grows the bigger it gets. Research has shown that while older/larger transplant reach harvest sooner they don't result in higher yields. Younger/smaller transplants perform just as well in terms of yields, but that occurs later simply due to being younger.



The difficulty is that as the transplant gets larger it is more of a challenge to grow in most home environments. The transplant will need a larger container to prevent it from becoming rootbound, more fertilizer, more water and in general more area to grow in. It's not that a home gardener cannot provide all these extras, only that it is more taxing on your resources.

The chart below gives production details for common transplants used in the garden. Keep in mind that for several of these crops they can also be direct seeded into the garden with success, so transplanting is not always a necessity. In our area, the frost-free date is around May 15th; for warm season crops we would count backwards from this date to determine when to start transplants.

Vegetable	Approximate growing time (wks)	Germination temperature (F)	Growing Temperature (F)	Conditions for hardening
		<i>Cool Season</i>		
Broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower	5 to 7	70°	60 to 65°	50 to 55° for 10 days
Lettuce	4 to 6	70°	60 to 65°	Reduce temperature and moisture
		<i>Warm Season</i>		
Cucumber and squash	2 to 3	75°	65 to 75°	Reduce moisture
Eggplant	6 to 8	75°	70 to 75°	Reduce moisture
Pepper	7 to 9	75°	70 to 75°	Reduce moisture
Tomato	5 to 7	75°	65 to 75°	Reduce moisture
Watermelon and muskmelon	3 to 5	80-85°	75 to 85°	Reduce moisture

For questions about your home and garden please feel free to contact me, Adam Watson, Agriculture Extension Agent watson@utk.edu.

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References made to commercial products or brand names is with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement is implied. Be sure to read and follow all pesticide label instructions.

Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and resource development.
University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating.
UT Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

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