



Farm News

By: Tom Mills
County Extension Agent
for Agriculture

Cleaning Float Trays

The greenhouse and float transplant production systems offer many advantages to tobacco transplant producers. However, a disadvantage of the float system is that it provides an ideal habitat for the development and spread of transplant diseases due to the constant presence of water. Therefore, a key to success with these production systems is keeping the pathogens causing diseases out of the systems.

A diligent sanitation program is a MUST! The media and water being used should be pathogen-free. All equipment and tools that come in contact with the system should be pathogen-free. That means either new trays must be properly washed and sanitized.

What is available to disinfect trays? Steam, methyl-bromide fumigation, chlorine bleach, and quaternary ammonium chloride salts are available in Kentucky.

STEAMING the trays has been the

most effective disinfectant, but, the cost is high and some items are damaged by steaming. Most studies indicate that the trays need to reach at least 160 degrees F for 30 minutes, but this method presents problems for farmers in developing equipment to meet the temperature and time required.

FUMIGANTS: Methyl bromide with 1% chloropicrin has been almost as effective as steam in some of the tests. It provides excellent control of Rhizoctonia and other fungi on the surface of the tray. It will greatly reduce the level of Pythium, but has not been as effective as steam or proper bleaching in reducing Pythium, probably because a significant amount of Pythium is found embedded in the tray. It is important to have an air-tight plastic seal, to pre-wet the trays, and to avoid large stacks of trays. Methyl-bromide is

heavier than air, so it sinks;

therefore, best results occur with long, short stacks rather than tall, deep stacks. We have found little control is provided at the low rates, so use the maximum labeled rates (3 lbs/1000 cubic ft.). Certain types of styrofoam trays appear to be more easily damaged with this chemical. Pay special attention to ALL label precautions related to safety.

CHLORINE BLEACH solutions have given a high level of control. Just dipping the trays in the solution and allowing them to dry is not highly beneficial. We have found little benefit to using more than 10% solution. Without proper aeration and post-washes, salt residues can cause serious problems, especially with older trays that tend to soak up more material.

Bleaches work best when the trays are washed with soapy water, then dipped several times into clean 10% solution (1 gal/9gal water), followed by covering them with a tarp or plastic to keep them wet overnight (24-48 hrs) with the bleaching solution. Afterwards, the bleach solution should be washed from the trays with clean water or water plus a Q-salt listed below, followed by aeration to eliminate the chlorine and salts. Worker safety issues are also important with bleach. It is important that the bleach solution remain below pH 6.8 and that new solutions be made up every 2 hrs, or whenever it becomes dirty, whichever comes first. Organic matter will remove the active ingredients quickly.

Q-SALTS (Quaternary ammonium chloride salts): These are marketed under such names as Greenshield, Phusan, and Prevent as solutions containing 20% ammonium chloride. Many growers are using them, but the effects are not as positive as some believe, based on UK testing. The greatest benefit is in the final

wash and on exposed surfaces in the greenhouse. In all UK tests, Q-salts have always provided some control, as compared to using soap washes only, but have always been inferior to any of the above mentioned methods.

Bottom Line: Remove as much soil from the trays by using soap and water or high pressure washes. Completely soak the trays in 10% bleach solution and cover with plastic for 24-48 hours, followed by washing and airing. Turn trays on their side for best air movement. Trays which are damaged allowing large amounts of last years soil media to remain in crevices are candidates for being disposed of. Sanitation is very important. As trays are used more, more disease problems occur.

For producers with DIST 4 meters, an annual calibration is recommended. Contact the Extension Office if you would like to check your meters' accuracy. **CORN PRODUCERS MEETING:** A multi-county Corn Producers Meeting will be held Tuesday, March 21, 6:30 a.m. at the Loudon Community Center. Please register by calling the Extension Office at 256-2403 by Friday, March 17, if you plan to attend.

Rockcastle Extension Homemakers Sponsor Tell-A-Friend Program

By: Hazel Jackson
County Extension Agent for
Family and Consumer Science



This Spring, the Extension Homemakers members in Rockcastle County will be contacting other women in the community to encourage them to get a mammogram. The Extension Homemakers have partnered with the American Cancer Society (ACS)

in sponsoring the Tell-A-Friend Program.

Tell-A-Friend is an American Cancer Society program conducted among friends and acquaintances. Trained volunteer callers contact five friends or other women they know to encourage them to get a

mammogram. This strategy is called "peer counseling" because the volunteers are contacting other women much like themselves. It is also a strategy that has been tested and shown to work!

Breast cancer is the second leading cancer-related death among women in the United States (after lung cancer), and the most frequently diagnosed non-skin cancer among US women. Rockcastle County has a higher than average rate of late stage breast cancer when compared to the state average.

Finding breast cancer early is currently the best way to control it, and a mammogram can find a cancer several years before it might be felt by a woman or her health care provider. Many women, age 40 or older, have still not ever had a mammogram, and many more do not get them annually, as recommended by the American Cancer Society.

The Extension Homemakers goal is to provide encouragement and support through Tell-A-Friend, for 120 women to get screened.

For more information on the Tell-A-Friend Program locally, call the Extension Office at 256-2403. Mammograms are available by contacting the Rockcastle Hospital at 256-2195 or the Health Department at 256-2242.

For other questions related to cancer, you may call the American Cancer Society toll-free at 800-ACS-2345.

Brenda Saylor receives Paraprofessional Award

Brenda Saylor, Food & Nutrition Assistant, received the Wilderness Trail Area 1999 Paraprofessional Award at the Area Assistant Appreciation day on March 11. Brenda has been an Assistant since 1989 with the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). The Paraprofessional Award is presented each year to an outstanding assistant, based on success with clients.

The EFNEP program is operated in

Rockcastle County through the Cooperative Extension Service. Assistants, Brenda Saylor and Patsy Morgan, provide education on food preparation and basic nutrition to more than 100 low income families in the county through home visits. They also teach youth in the county about basic nutrition through school programs and summer youth activities. For more information on the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program, contact the Extension Office at 256-2403.

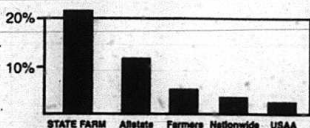


Brenda Saylor, Food & Nutrition Assistant, receives the Wilderness Trail Area Paraprofessional Award from Louise Moore, Area Extension Specialist for Food & Nutrition.

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Wolf Creek Racing Presents Spring Sling 2000

Saturday, March 25

MUD RUN

Figure 8 Race

Dirt Drags • ATVs • Trucks • Jeeps • Buggies • 2WD • 4WD • Stock
Open and Modified Classes -- KIDS TOO!

Must be entered to run before Noon! \$5 Admission

Also, Sunday, March 26

The Eastern United States Hare Scrambles Series
Motorcycles & ATVs Wood's Racing Classes for Everyone

For More information, Call 878-7173

Racing Starts at 12 Noon
For more info (606) 256-9222

From I-75, Exit 59 S on 25 to 1004, Left 3 miles to 1912, Left 1 mile, right on Wolf Creek Rd. 1 mile to track

Gospel Meeting

March 19-22

First Christian Church

160 West Main Street @ Lovell Court

Mt. Vernon, Kentucky

Larry Atkin, Evangelist

Roanoke, Virginia

Special Guest

Sunday Night, March 19

6:30 PM

Concert by

David Creech

6:45 PM Monday-Wednesday

Shawn Burdette, Heaven's Harmony

Robin Parkerson in concert