Colors of Coleus

Coleus, *Plectranthus scutellarioides*, is a colorful annual plant found in the mint family. Coleus plants are grown for their vibrant foliage shapes, colors and patterns. Although they do produce flowers, their flowers are often regarded as insignificant in comparison to their attractive leaves. They make great bedding plants in a landscape but also do well in containers. These beautiful plants are often planted in shady areas outdoors, but new varieties on the market known as “Sun Coleus” seem to do well if planted in brighter conditions.

Oftentimes, coleus plants can become long and leggy especially as they come into bloom. To promote a bushier, well-branched appearance, pinch off shoots and flower buds.

Sad to see your coleus killed off by frost? Don’t worry, you have a couple of options when it comes to saving your coleus. If your coleus is in a container outdoors, you can move it indoors where it can overwinter until spring. Place your coleus near a bright windowsill and water it when the soil feels dry to the touch. Coleus actually makes a great houseplant! Pinch off shoots occasionally to continue promoting a more bushy plant. If you don’t have the space to move a mature coleus plant from the outdoors into your home, you also have the option of taking a cutting from the mother plant. Coleus cuttings root easily. They can be started in water or can go straight into a pot with potting mix and kept moist. Eventually, these cuttings will become new plants that you can either keep indoors as a houseplant or place outside once danger of frost has passed in the spring. Either way, you can save your beloved plants and enjoy them both in your home and in your garden for the next year!
Hens and Chicks

The plant genus *Sempervivum* (meaning always living) is what houses the popular succulent known as “Hens and Chicks.” How did this succulent receive its name? It is due to the number of offsets (Chicks) produced from the mother plant (Hen). These succulents are visually spectacular due to their beautiful rosette shapes in colors of blue, green, and red. *Sempervivum* succulents may also go by the name “Houseleeks.”

These plants are considered a type of succulent due to their ability to store water in their fleshy tissues in times of drought. With that in mind, if you are growing these fun succulents in a container or in the garden then they really don’t need a ton of water in comparison to other outdoor plants. Allow the soil to dry out between waterings and be sure to plant them in well-drained potting mix. Because Hens and Chicks are a type of a succulent, they do prefer to be in brighter conditions receiving several hours of sunlight a day.

Hens and Chicks have very shallow roots so they do not need to be planted in a very deep pot. Instead, plant them in a wide, shallow container where they have room to spread. These succulents are pretty low maintenance plants that really only need watered on occasion and hardly ever need to be fertilized.

A wonderful characteristic of these succulents is that they are considered perennials and so are winter-hardy to Western Kentucky. They will stop actively growing and rest during the winter months but new growth and new baby chicks will start popping back up in the spring and summer.

Hens and Chicks can be propagated easily by division and then given out as a wonderful gifts to family and friends. If you or someone you know is a beginner at growing succulents, then try starting with Hens and Chicks first. They are very easy-to-grow plants that can be quite rewarding to watch as they grow and very difficult to actually kill.

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*Don’t forget to enter your items or just stop by and visit this year’s Hopkins County Fair! The fair will be held July 23-27 at the Hopkins County Fairgrounds.*

*For more information, visit [www.hopkinscountyfair.com](http://www.hopkinscountyfair.com)*
Each year, several counties across the state of Kentucky participate in the University of Kentucky Bedding Plant Trials. This trial garden typically consists of new varieties of flowering annuals that have just come out on the market. The goal of the trials is to see how well these flowers perform in a garden or landscape setting. The results of these trials can be extremely helpful in telling consumers which flowers have performed well or poorly in the Kentucky climate. By knowing this information, consumers can then make the decision as to whether they may want to purchase these plants for their own home garden.

For the trial garden, there are usually 20 different varieties of annual bedding plants that are evaluated. There are 10 plants per variety, for a total of 200 plants. The trial gardens for Hopkins County can be found at the Hopkins County Extension Office (see picture above) where the flowers are planted, maintained, and evaluated by our wonderful Master Gardener volunteers. Our volunteers will weed, plant, water, mulch, and occasionally deadhead flowers as needed.

They evaluate the plants on an evaluation sheet once a month from June to October on a 0 to 5 rating scale (see below).

**Rating Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>plants dead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>rough-still alive, no color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>minimal flowering, faded foliage, significant pest damage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>some flowering, may have noticeable pest damage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>almost full color/foliage - may have limited pest damage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>full color/foliage no pest damage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By the end of October, the evaluation forms are turned in from all of the counties. The data from the evaluations are collected and analyzed and then sent back out to the counties in an official report. This report gives a great summary of which flowers performed well and not so well.

If you would like more information on the trial garden or would like to tour the garden, please contact the Hopkins County Extension Office at 270-821-3650.
**Farmers Market Squash Sauté**

- **2 cups** whole grain rotini pasta
- **3** boneless chicken breasts
- **1 tablespoon** olive oil
- **2 medium** zucchini, diced
- **4 medium** carrots, peeled and diced
- **2 medium** yellow squash, diced
- **2 garlic cloves**, minced
- **2 tablespoons** fresh chopped basil
- **¾ cup** light Alfredo sauce
- **2 tablespoons** shredded Parmesan cheese

Cook pasta according to package directions. Roast chicken breasts at 400 degrees F to an internal temperature of 165 degrees F, about 25-35 minutes. Dice chicken into bite sized pieces. In a large sauté pan, add olive oil, zucchini and carrots. Sauté until slightly cooked. Add yellow squash and garlic and sauté until all vegetables are tender. Remove from heat and stir in basil, diced chicken and pasta. Add Alfredo sauce and toss until ingredients are evenly coated. Reheat by tossing the ingredients in the sauté pan for 3-5 minutes over medium heat. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and serve.

Yield: 8, 1 cup servings

**Nutritional Analysis:** 230 calories, 7 g fat, 2.5 g saturated fat, 40 mg cholesterol, 210 mg sodium, 27 g carbohydrate, 4 g sugars, 18 g protein.

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**Creamy Cucumber and Chicken Salad**

- **½ pound** chicken breast
- **1 tablespoon** fresh lemon juice
- **1 cup** slivered almonds
- **½ cup** nonfat plain Greek yogurt
- **3 ounces** reduced fat cream cheese
- **2 tablespoons** Dijon mustard
- **½ teaspoon** sea salt
- **1 tablespoon** ground black pepper
- **2 tablespoons** fresh chopped dill
- **2 medium** cucumbers, chopped
- **1 cup** dried cranberries
- **8** lettuce leaves

Marinate chicken breast in lemon juice for one hour. Remove chicken from marinade and chop into bite sized pieces. Sauté in preheated non-stick skillet until thoroughly cooked and no longer pink in the center. Set aside to cool. Toast slivered almonds on low heat in a non-stick skillet until fragrant. Set aside to cool. In a large mixing bowl combine yogurt, cream cheese, mustard, salt, pepper and dill. Add chicken and toss. Add cucumbers, cranberries and almonds to chicken mixture. Toss to coat. Cover and chill in refrigerator for 1 hour. Spoon salad into washed and dried lettuce leaves. Serve cold.

Yield: 8 servings

**Nutritional Analysis:** 210 calories, 10 g fat, 2 g saturated fat, 30 mg cholesterol, 290 mg sodium, 19 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber, 14 g sugars, 12 g protein.
Upcoming Events

June 19: Growing Sage, Mint and Lavender, Noon
June 24: Planting for Pollinators, 5:30 p.m.
July 17: Growing Basil, Oregano and Thyme, Noon
July 22: Check-in for Home and Garden exhibit items at the Hopkins County-Madisonville Fair, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
July 29: Air Plants Galore, 5:30 p.m.*
August 26: Grow Your Own Terrarium, 5:30 p.m.*
August 28: Cilantro, Parsley and Chives, Noon
September 25: Marjoram, Savory and Dill, Noon

You MUST RSVP for all classes. *Space is limited to 20 participants.

For more information or to RSVP, call the Hopkins County Cooperative Extension Office at 270-821-3650.

Follow us on Facebook!

Hopkins County Horticulture
Hopkins County Farmers Market
Master Gardeners, Pennyroyal

Hopkins County Farmers Market is now open for business!

10:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Wednesdays
7:30 a.m. to noon on Saturdays

Located on Arch Street, near the Fairgrounds.

Interested in becoming a Master Gardener volunteer or Farmers Market vendor? For more information, contact the Hopkins Co. Extension Office at 270-821-3650.

Kentucky Extension Master Gardener
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 the Fall 2019 Master Gardener Class. The class will be held from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. on Monday evenings from September to December. If you are interested in joining the class, call the Extension Office at 270-821-3650.

University of Kentucky
College of Agriculture, Food and Environment
Cooperative Extension Service