

Fruit Production Mini-Series Coming to Southern Indiana

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Many gardeners want to experiment with growing fruit in their backyard. But they've been hesitant, because they don't feel they know enough, or university bulletins may not explain fruit production well enough for them.

If this describes you, I've got great news! Purdue is offering a 5 week mini-series on backyard fruit production! All current and aspiring backyard fruit growers will have the opportunity to learn from the experts about ways to increase the success and satisfaction of quality fruit production in their home landscape as well as ways to store, preserve and prepare the fruits of their labors.

This is an online videoconference class, and is being offered through the Vanderburgh, Warrick, and Knox County Extension offices. You can also view the program at home from your own computer. The classes will run every Friday afternoon, from 1 to 3 pm central time, starting March 3 and ending March 31.

In each session, you will:

- * learn about modern fruit production practices appropriate for the home landscape.
- * Learn from experts how to select varieties and kinds of fruit to meet your needs
- * Meet one or more innovative farmers and learn their secrets about fruit culture in Indiana
- * Network with others who are interested in the production of quality Indiana fruit
- * Learn about how to manage pests that reduce quality and yield
- * Learn about resources that are available to help you continue your study and to solve problems after the series is complete

The class outline will cover:

Session 1, March 3: Program overview, general fruit culture.

Session 2, March 10: Tree fruit (apples, pears, peaches, cherries): soil preparation, root stocks, training and pruning, maintenance schedules.

Session 3, March 17: Small fruit (grapes, strawberries, brambles, blueberries)

Session 4, March 24: Pest management, pest identification, IPM, weeds, insects, diseases, pesticide safety, organic fruit production.

Session 5, March 31: Harvest, storage, preservation of fruit harvest.

There is a \$25 registration fee for the entire five-week series. If you are only interested in a single session, you may attend for only \$10. There is no fee for a second person from the same home. This registration fee covers all handouts and resource materials.

Farmers who want PARP (Private Applicator Recertification Program) Credit can earn 1 hour at Session 4 on March 24. As with all PARP credits, there will be an additional \$10 fee. To earn PARP credit, you must attend the session at the Extension office.

To register, please contact the Extension office in Vanderburgh (812-435-5287), Warrick (812-897-6100), or Knox Counties (812-882-3509). You can also download the registration form from our websites, or we can email it to you.