



Hello,

We are excited to announce our new Extension Agent for 4-H Youth Development, Mary Chandler Holt! She started on April 1, 2026. She is excited to help us take care of what matters in DeSoto County by helping youth and adults reach their fullest potential and make the best better! She is originally from Byhalia, MS and comes to us from industry. She was working for Stratas Food in Memphis, TN before coming to Extension. She is a graduate of Mississippi State University with a B.S. Agribusiness. She brings a wealth of 4-H experience under her belt from participating in 4-H in-school club(s) at Rossville Christian Academy and participating in Mississippi 4-H Horse Bowl, Horse Judging and Horse Speed Events. We are so excited to have her join our DeSoto County Extension Office team! Help us welcome her to DeSoto County whenever you see her! You can reach her at [mck329@msstate.edu](mailto:mck329@msstate.edu) or 662-469-8480.

This past month we graduated 9 Master Gardener Interns who took the Mississippi Master Gardener Training Course March-April. They completed over 40 hours of education and now are charged with getting 40 hours of volunteer service now before they are "certified" Master Gardeners. We are excited to have them join our amazing group of volunteers. MG Volunteers are an extending educational arm of the university for the public throughout DeSoto County, by providing horticultural information based on university research and recommendations. Our local MG are hosting the state Master Gardener Conference April 27-29 here at the DeSoto County Agri-Education Center.

We are now in our busy season SPRING and SUMMER! Join us for a program or event because we'd love to see you. This newsletter is packed with info on upcoming things you can join us at. We are here to answer your home gardening, home lawn, home canning and freezing, and everything in between. As always if you have questions, requests, concerns, or inquires please call 662-469-8480 or email [desoto@ext.msstate.edu](mailto:desoto@ext.msstate.edu).



## New Extension Agent



Mary Chandler Holt

### Educational Information Inside:

- Asian Needle Ants
- Fire Ant Control
- Rucking 101: How to get started
- Spring Cleaning Tips for a Healthier Kitchen
- How to Avoid Ticks
- Supporting a Healthy Spring Landscape

### Upcoming Events that you don't need to miss!

- Magnolia Moves April 20-May 31
- Home Canning Workshops May 8, June 18, August 6
- Acidified Canned Foods Workshop May 4
- Lunch and Learn May 6
- District Shooting Sports Competition May 2- Good Luck 4-Hers!
- Horse Club Interest Meeting June 8
- 4-H Sewing School June 23-25
- Kids in the Kitchen June 2-4

1170 STAR LANDING ROAD W. SUITE B. NESBIT, MS 38651

# What is Magnolia Moves?

At the Mississippi State University Extension Service, we believe movement is medicine—and walking is just the beginning. Magnolia Moves Activity Challenge is an individual or team-based health and wellness program encouraging people of all ages to increase physical activity and adopt healthier eating habits.

Magnolia Moves is a brand new walking and activity program designed to show that physical activity comes in many forms: brisk hiking through the woods, tending your garden, cleaning around the house, jogging through your neighborhood, dancing to your favorite genre of music, or even doing yoga poses. Every step, stretch, and stride contributes to a healthier lifestyle—and now you can track it all in one place.

When you download the MoveSpring app it seamlessly syncs with a wide range of wearable devices, including your iPhone, Apple Watch, Apple Health, Android, Google Health Connect, Fitbit, and more. With automatic tracking, your movements and activities are captured by default, giving you a clear, real-time view of your progress and achievements. A desktop version is available as an alternative to the app.

There is no cost to join this 6-week activity program, you set the pace, and you choose the activities to participate in throughout the six weeks. Open to participants of all ages, the program invites you to connect with your community, explore creative ways to stay active, and rediscover the joys of everyday movement. By combining walking with activities like gardening, housework, running, and yoga, Magnolia Moves makes fitness accessible, practical, and enjoyable for everyone. 4-H'ers and other young people who participate in this program can count their activity hours towards our nation's highest youth honor, the Congressional Award.

The program is free, but you must register in order to join. If you have questions, email [magnoliamoves@ext.msstate.edu](mailto:magnoliamoves@ext.msstate.edu). Use organization code MSUEXT426 at signup! More info on the next page!

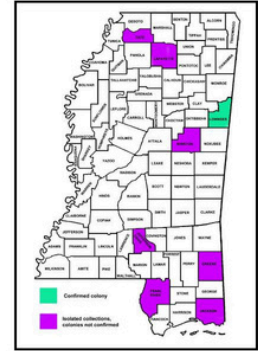
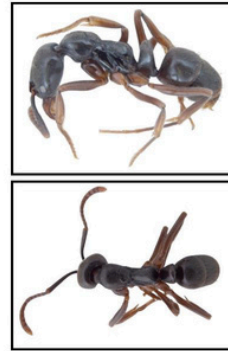
## Fire Ant Control!

Did you forget on Easter to spread a granular bait treatment over your entire property? We use Easter, July 4th, and LABOR DAY holidays to help you remember when to apply broadcast treatments! It's not too late! Apply bait 3 times annually to control Fire Ants! Also use a dry mound treatment product throughout the year when you notice mounds pop up. Products containing acephate work fastest and are the most effective but have a strong, unpleasant odor. Products containing deltamethrin or cyfluthrin work slower and are slightly less effective, but they don't smell bad.

This approach can reduce the number of fire ant beds in your yard by 80 to 90 percent!

Got questions? Reach out we'd love to share the research behind fire ant control to keep you and your family safe.

Mississippi State University entomologists are tracking the spread of the Asian needle ant, a non-native species expanding across the Southeastern U.S., including parts of Mississippi.



## ASIAN NEEDLE ANTS

Have you seen any Asian needle ants around your property? They've been spotted in TATE County! Here's what you need to know:

The invasive Asian needle ant (*Brachyponera chinensis*) was first reported in Mississippi in 2013. These ants are small (~1/5" long), dark brown/black, shiny, and have a single, large node on their "waist" (petiole).

First encountered in Mississippi in 2013. Besides a single confirmed colony in Lowndes County in 2025, all other collections have been isolated (D).

This ant is not aggressive and is likely to avoid contact with a person, if possible. Most stings occur accidentally. Like many other species of ants, the Asian needle ant uses its stinger to inject venom and can produce a painful, defensive sting.

Although venom from this ant has been implicated in life-threatening allergic reactions (including anaphylaxis) this is not particularly common. Individuals that know they are allergic to stings from other insects should be aware that these ants may cause a severe allergic reaction with them.

They are usually found outdoors, typically in wooded areas, often nesting under leaf litter or pine needles, as well as under old, rotting logs.

They can have large populations that out-compete, displace, or eat other insects in the area. These ants pose a substantial ecological concern where their populations are high since they impact local ecosystems. As MSU researchers continue to track the spread of the Asian needle ant, they're monitoring infested sites to document changes in native species and community composition.

For this ant (and many other pests), homeowners should relocate firewood piles away from the house, as well as rake back and remove piles of leaves or pine needles to reduce potential harborage areas.

If you think you've seen Asian needle ants, you can submit physical specimens and collection information to our MSU Extension Insect ID Lab so we can help track its spread in Mississippi! Find out more about submitting a specimen: <https://bit.ly/3QDkKAw>

**ON APRIL 20TH**

**Mississippi gets  
MOVING!**



**MAGNOLIA  
MOVES**  
Activity Challenge



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**Weekly drawings for prizes!**

**[extension.msstate.edu/magnolia-moves](https://extension.msstate.edu/magnolia-moves)**



**April 20–May 31, 2026**

**JOIN THE CHALLENGE!**

## DeSoto County Home Canning Workshop(s)



May 8

June 18

August 6

8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Cost \$30

### CONTACT US

1170 Star Landing RD W  
Nesbit, MS 38651  
662-469-8480

### Learn

- Basics of home canning
- Water Bath Canning
- Pressure Canning
- How to preserve in season produce to enjoy all year!

**Register Online!**  
[reg.extension.msstate.edu](http://reg.extension.msstate.edu)

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## Rucking 101: How to Get Started

### What is Rucking?

Rucking is simply walking or hiking with a weighted backpack. Rucking adds strength training to your cardio workout, burns more calories, and improves endurance.

### How to Get Started:

- Find a sturdy backpack.
- Add weight to it. You can use books, bricks, dumbbells, water bottles,
- or bags of sand. Wrap them in towels to protect your back against hard edges. Start light – about 10 pounds.
- Adjust the straps so the weight sits higher on your back, between your shoulder blades. You can put a ball or towel in the bottom of your pack to life the weight higher.
- Go for a walk! Start with short distances and build up as you get stronger.

### Why it Works:

- Walking uses your glutes, hips, quads, hamstrings, calves, shins, and feet. Rucking requires your back, neck, and shoulders engage to counter the weight. So rucking gives you a full body workout!
- Rucking is more intense than walking but not as challenging as running. So if you're already walking for exercise, rucking can take your physical activity to the next level while still being a low-impact exercise.
- You're combining strength training and cardio, which saves time!
- Most people ruck outside, which reduces your screen time, gets you
- out into the natural world, and connects you to your community.

For 10 reasons to get moving, check out this article from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/physical-activity/features/10-reasons-to-get-moving.html>



## DOVE FIELD PLANNING:

FROM SITE SELECTION TO SEASON SUCCESS  
DARRIN HARDESTY, MDWFP BIOLOGIST

# MAY 7, 2026



STARTS AT 5:30 P.M.  
TATE COUNTY EXTENSION  
205 FRENCHS ALLY  
SENATOBIA, MS



CALL 662-562-4274 TO REGISTER FOR THIS WORKSHOP  
RSVP BY MAY 1<sup>ST</sup> @ 5PM

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# WESTERN HERITAGE

*Hands on History Education*



## INTEREST/SAFETY MEETING MAY 7, 2026 @ 6:30 PM

Shooting Sports meets the study of the American Frontier

THE 4-H WESTERN HERITAGE PROJECT IS A COMBINATION OF SHOOTING SPORTS AND THE STUDY OF THE AMERICAN FRONTIER FROM 1860-1900. MEMBERS DRESS IN AUTHENTIC CLOTHING, DEVELOP A NINETEENTH CENTURY PERSONA BASED ON HISTORIC RESEARCH, AND COMPETE IN A TARGET SHOOTING CONTEST USING PERIOD-CORRECT FIREARMS.

### THREE COMPONENTS OF THE CONTEST

1. SHOOTING USING PERIOD CORRECT FIRE ARMS
2. PERSONA INTERVIEW
3. WRITTEN EXAM

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## Acidified Canned Foods for the Farmers Market



# MAY 4 9 AM

REGISTER NOW



1170 Star Landing RD West  
Nesbit, MS 38651

For disability accommodation, please contact Lara Angel at 662-469-8480 or email [lara.angel@msstate.edu](mailto:lara.angel@msstate.edu)



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## Supporting a Healthy Spring Landscape

April & May is an ideal time to focus on pollinators and wildlife in North Mississippi, as bees, butterflies, and birds become more active. Pollinators are crucial for producing many fruits and vegetables, and planting native species can support them by providing food and shelter. Recommended native plants include:

- Black-eyed Susan (attracts bees and butterflies)
- Coreopsis (provides spring nectar)
- Purple Coneflower (popular with native bees)
- Bee Balm (loved by various pollinators)
- Milkweed (essential for monarch butterflies)
- Oakleaf Hydrangea (blooms in late spring)

Leaving flowering plants and minimizing pesticide use during bloom times helps protect pollinators. Supporting pollinators also benefits wildlife by creating habitats. Small plantings can significantly impact local ecosystems. For assistance with planting and care, it's a good time to contact the local MSU Extension office.



DESOTO COUNTY MASTER GARDENER



## Lunch and Learn

Wednesday May, 6th

12:15pm - 1:15pm

1170 Star Landing Road W Nesbit, MS

**GUEST SPEAKER:**  
DUSTY DIXON

**TOPIC:**  
SEED, SOIL, & BLOOMS  
ANNUALS & PERENNIALS THAT THRIVE IN NORTH MS

**COST:** \$10 A MEAL WILL BE PROVIDED

**RSVP REQUIRED BY CALLING:**  
DESOTO COUNTY EXTENSION  
AT 662-469-8480



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## Spring Cleaning Tips for a Healthier Kitchen

Spring is the perfect time to reset your kitchen for healthy eating habits! Here are some tips and tricks for creating an environment that supports positive choices.

### The Fridge & Freezer:

- Clear out all expired foods, especially condiments and sauces.
- Wipe down shelves and drawers with food-safe cleaners.
- Organize food so healthy choices are front and center.
- Create a healthy snack section of the fridge so fruits and veggies are ready to grab and go.
- Replace expired condiments with low-sugar and low-salt options.

### The Pantry:

- Declutter your space to make food prep more enjoyable.
- Wipe down counters and appliances with food-safe cleaners. Keep a bowl of fresh fruit on the counter for easy access. Move less healthy snacks to a cabinet or hard-to-reach place.

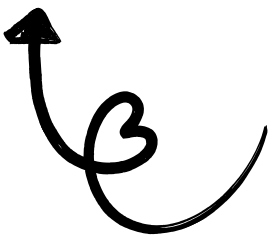
### The Counters:

- Remove all expired items.
- Check dry goods for pantry pests, such as open containers of pasta. Wipe down shelves with food-safe cleaners.
- Restock the pantry with healthy options, such as low-salt canned goods, whole grains, and minimally processed foods.
- Don't forget to check your spices!

For more healthy eating tips, check out this article from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/features/healthy-eating-tips.html>



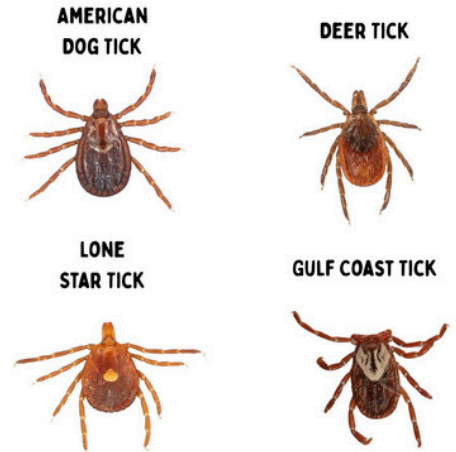
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We are  
**#BEYOND READY**  
for you to  
**JOIN 4-H!**  
**4-H ENROLLMENT IS OPEN!**

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## HOW TO AVOID TICKS



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It's important to protect yourself from ticks. Ticks can carry diseases and being bitten by a diseased tick isn't something you want to risk.

Ticks are present year-round, but are most active during warmer weather. As you're out and about this summer, consider these steps to help prevent you and your loved ones from being bitten by a tick:

Ticks live in grassy, brushy, or wooded areas. If possible, avoid these areas.

Wear high-top boots with long pants tucked into the boots. If you don't have boots, tuck your pants into your socks. Tuck your shirt into your pants and spray any exposed skin with a DEET-based repellent. You can also spray permethrin on your clothes to help deter ticks.

When you get indoors, shower and check for ticks.

Ticks can be carried into your home on your clothes. Throw your clothes in the dryer for 10 minutes to kill any ticks that may be on the clothes. If you need to wash your clothes, wash with hot water, as cold and medium temperatures will not kill ticks.

What should you do if you find a tick on your skin? Grab a pair of fine-tipped tweezers and pull the tick upward in a steady, even motion off your skin. Promptly wash your hands and disinfect the bite.

What do you do with the tick? Do not crush the tick with your fingers! It's recommended to place it in rubbing alcohol, flush it down the toilet, or place it in a sealed bag. Watch for a rash or fever after being bitten. This may occur several weeks after the bite. If either occur, please see your doctor.



# 4-H Cooking Kit

*April-June*

**Sign-Up Now!**

Pickup Dates:  
April 21  
May 26  
June 30

Cost \$40  
Questions? Call 662-469-8480



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# 4-H Sewing School

June 23-25, 2026 For ages 10+



10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
1170 Star Landing RD W  
Nesbit, MS 38651

Cost \$50 check or money order.  
Payment reserves spot.

Mississippi State University is an equal opportunity institution. For disability accommodation, please contact Lara Angel at 662-469-8480.

Space is limited. Once this session fills up an afternoon session will be released.

## DeSoto COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE

# KIDS IN THE KITCHEN

KIDS WILL LEARN SIMPLE, HEALTHY FOODS THEY CAN MAKE THEMSELVES! JOIN US!



June 2, 3, 4  
9:00am-Noon  
1170 Star Landing Rd. W.  
Nesbit, MS  
662-469-8480

Cost \$50  
(Check or Money Order)  
Payment reserves spot  
RSVP by May 29



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# DESOTO COUNTY HORSE CLUB INTEREST MEETING



- ✓ June 8, 2026
- ✓ 4:00PM
- ✓ DeSoto County Extension Office  
1170 Starlanding Rd West  
Nesbit, MS

Calling all 4-Hers who are interested in horses. Come learn all about the informative and hands-on Horse Club. Horse ownership is not required!




Contact Us → Mary Chandler Holt 662-469-8480 mck329@msstate.edu



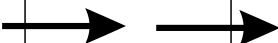
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# APRIL 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
12	13 <b>Archery Practice @ 6 PM (AEC)</b>	14 <b>Air Rifle/Pistol Practice @ 6 PM (AEC)</b>	15 <b>MG Monthly Meeting</b>	16	17 <b>Lucky Leaders 4-H Club</b>	18 <b>Shooting Sports .22 Rifle/Pistol &amp; Shotgun</b>
19	20 <b>Magnolia Moves Kicks Off</b> <b>Archery Practice @ 6 PM (AEC)</b>	21 <b>Air Rifle/Pistol Practice @ 6 PM (AEC)</b> <b>Pick-Up 4-H Cooking Kit</b>	22	23	24	25 <b>Shooting Sports .22 Rifle/Pistol &amp; Shotgun</b>
26	27	28	29	30		
						

# MAY 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2 <b>District 4-H Shoot</b>
3	4 <b>Acidified Canned Foods Workshop</b>	5 <b>Master Urban Homesteader</b>	6 <b>Lunch &amp; Learn Olive Branch Library Program with Lara @ 10 a.m.</b>	7 <b>Western Heritage Interest Meeting Dove Field Planning Master Urban Homesteader</b>	8 <b>Home Canning Workshop</b>	9
10	11	12 <b>Master Urban Homesteader</b>	13 <b>MG Board Meeting</b>	14 <b>Master Urban Homesteader</b>	15 <b>Lucky Leaders 4-H Club</b>	16
17	18	19 <b>Master Urban Homesteader</b>	20 <b>MG Monthly Meeting</b>	21 <b>Master Urban Homesteader</b>	22	23
24/31	25	26 <b>Pick-Up 4-H Cooking Kit</b>	27 <b>4-H Congress</b>	28	29	30
						

AEC - Agri-Education Center