



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

## Extension Notes

[carter.ca.uky.edu](http://carter.ca.uky.edu)

**AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES**

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### **Orchids Make Popular Houseplants**

Orchids have become increasingly popular as houseplants. One orchid you are likely to encounter is the Phalaenopsis, or moth orchid. It gets its name from the shape of the flower that resembles a moth in flight.

Moth orchids thrive in medium light. A window with southern exposure is ideal. You will notice that the pot is filled with a bark-type potting mix. In nature, these plants grow on trees, so they need a potting medium that is light and well drained—regular potting soil is not appropriate. The roots are fleshy and covered with a white spongy material. They may grow into the potting mix, around the pot or simply out into the air. This is natural and healthy for the plant.

Water plants thoroughly once the soil has become light and dry. Allow some water to flow through the pot at each watering—be sure to remove the inner pot to the sink when you are watering and allow the pot to thoroughly drain before you place it back into the outer (often decorative) pot. You may also water by placing a few ice cubes on the surface of the potting medium a couple of times each week, just be sure that the plant does not sit in water for more than a few hours. Liquid fertilizer can be applied with the water every two or three applications—follow label directions for how to dilute the fertilizer.

Plants may flower for many months, and individual flowers may last for several weeks. Do not cut the flower stalk back after flowers fade because in a few months it may branch to form additional flowers. Small plantlets may arise on the flower stalk. These plantlets can be potted up, but they will need to grow for a couple of years before they will flower.

For more information on orchids and other houseplants, please contact the Carter County Cooperative Extension Service. Educational programs of the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, or physical or mental disability.

### **Upcoming Events:**

- **Produce Best Practice Training** – March 9<sup>th</sup> @ 6:00 PM via Zoom. Call 474-6686 to register.
- **Extension Council & District Board Meetings** – March 14<sup>th</sup> @ 10:00 AM
- **Private Pesticide Applicator Training** – March 20<sup>th</sup> @ 2:00 PM – Call 474-6686 to register.
- **Farmer's Market Vendor Training** – March 20<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30 PM - This annual training is required for anyone who plans to accept Senior, WIC, & Double Dollar vouchers at the Carter County Farmer's Market in 2023. Immediately following the training, we will have a planning discussion for marketing ideas and events for the 2023 season.