

# Horticulture 2023 Newsletter

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1712 Claflin, 2021 Throckmorton Plant Science Cntr.  
Manhattan, KS 66506 (785) 532-6173

Video of the Week: [Succulent Plants for Your Home](#)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS



### **Beekeeping Basics: How to Start Your Own Colony**

Wednesday, December 6th 12:00PM -1:00PM CST

Beekeeping is both popular and important for many reasons. Whether it's to produce your own local honey, supplement pollination of nearby plants, promote conservation, or even personal entertainment, there are many reasons to become a beekeeper. Join Ryan Engel, Golden Prairie District Horticulture Extension Agent, as he covers the equipment you will need, how to source your bees, and what it takes to establish a new colony.



Register Here!



Please register for this free Zoom Webinar at:  
[ksre-learn.com/KStateGardenHour](https://ksre-learn.com/KStateGardenHour)



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### [Kansas Turf & Landscape Conference](#)

The 73rd Annual Kansas Turf & Landscape Conference will be held on Wednesday, November 29 and Thursday, November 30 at the Hilton Garden Inn, Manhattan. The conference is an excellent way to learn about turf and landscape management, visit with old friends, network with new ones, and see all the latest products and supplies from local and national vendors.

The conference has been approved for commercial pesticide recertification hours:

1 Core hour

3A - 7 hours

3B - 7hours

GCSAA education points and International Society of Arboriculture CEUS will also be available by attending the conference.

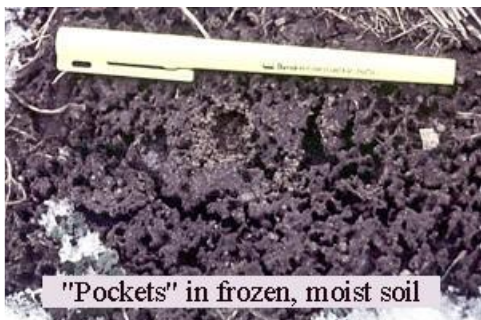
For more information, go to <https://www.kansasturfgrassfoundation.com/>

## REMINDERS

- If there are spring-flowering bulbs that you forgot to plant, plant them now. Don't wait until spring.
- Plan out next year's vegetable garden so that crops are rotated.
- Be sure lawn irrigation lines are drained.

## TURFGRASS

### Dormant Seeding of Turfgrass



The best time to seed cool-season grasses such as tall fescue and Kentucky bluegrass is September because the turf has more time to mature before spring crabgrass germination and the heat stress of summer. Dormant seeding of turfgrass is sometimes done to fill in bare spots of lawns that weren't overseeded in the fall. Dormant overseeding is done during the winter (December – February) when it is much too cold for germination.

As with any seeding program, good seed-soil contact is vital. Several methods can be used. One method is to seed when there has been a light snowfall of up to one inch. This is shallow enough that bare spots can still be seen. Spread seed by hand on areas that need thickening up. As the snow melts, it puts the seed in good contact with the soil where it will germinate in the spring.

Another method is dependent on the surface of the soil being moist followed by freezing weather. As moist soil freezes and thaws, small pockets are formed on the wet, bare soil that is perfect for catching and holding seed. As the soil dries, the pockets collapse and cover the seed.

A third method involves core aerating, verticutting or hand raking and broadcasting seed immediately after. Of course, the soil must be dry enough and unfrozen for this to be practical. With any of the above methods, seeds germinate as early as possible in the spring. There will be limitations on what herbicides can be used for weed control. Dithiopyr, found in Hi-Yield Turf and Ornamental Weed and Grass Stopper and Bonide Crabgrass & Weed Preventer, can be used on tall fescue, Kentucky bluegrass, and perennial ryegrass two weeks after germination. Other preemergence herbicides available to homeowners require that the turf be well established before application. (Ward Upham)

## ORNAMENTALS

### What is the “Wild” Shrub with the Bright Red Berries?



Red berries can seem festive at this time of year, and you may notice some adorning our shrubs in the eastern third of Kansas. They are likely one of two species of bush honeysuckle, Amur and Tartarian. Although they can provide a quick-growing screen or backdrop to the landscape reaching six to twenty feet tall, they can easily become invasive and are included on the noxious weeds list for many states.

The bush varieties of honeysuckle leaf out earlier than many other plants in the spring and remain into late fall. The long growing season supports vigorous growth each year enabling it to fill the woodland understory. Left ignored bush honeysuckle will spread quickly and creates competition for native woodland wildflowers and shrubs.

Hand pulling bush honeysuckle can be effective when the plants are small if the ground is wet. For larger plant chemical control is likely necessary. Cutting the stems to the ground without chemical application will result in vigorous resprouting. Research has shown one of the most effective methods for controlling bush honeysuckle is cutting the branches to the ground and spraying the cut stems immediately with concentrated (20%-50%) glyphosate (i.e., Roundup). Foliar applications of glyphosate or Crossbow (2, 4-D + triclopyr) in late summer and fall can also be effective especially if applied on young plants though damage can be caused by overspray onto nearby plants. Follow all label instructions when using pesticides. (Cynthia Domenghini)

## MISCELLANEOUS

### Compost Pile Maintenance



With colder weather, decomposition is still taking place, it just slows down. The interior of the pile is warmer than the edges so aerating the compost heap by turning it is not recommended as this will cool down the whole pile. If desired, you can put a layer of straw or even a tarp over the pile to capture the heat from the pile. You may notice the compost pile freezing and thawing during the cold season. Though decomposition may not be efficient during that time, this process actually does help to break down the materials and provide more surface area for bacteria to do their job

when the weather warms up again.

Adding food scraps to the compost pile can cause issues since it will not decompose very quickly. This can cause odors and attract pests to the heap. To avoid this, as you add food waste add a layer of dried leaves as well to maintain the carbon to nitrogen (green to brown) ratio. Also, be sure to bury the food scraps several inches into the compost heap. When the weather warms up, thoroughly turn the pile to incorporate the food scraps.

Smaller compost heaps do not generate as much heat as larger piles, so if you are heading into winter with a pile smaller than one cubic yard you may consider limiting the amount of food scraps you add during the winter months. (Cynthia Domenghini)

### Poor Drainage in Garden Areas



Poor drainage in the garden can result in waterlogged soil and consequently not enough oxygen for the plant roots. Interestingly, plants will be limited in how much water they can take up and will suffer as they become stressed.

Soil compaction, grading and erosion are some of the conditions that can lead to drainage problems in the garden. While some of these problems may require digging a drain or culvert to re-route water, soil drainage can be improved by incorporating organic matter.

Organic matter can help improve water retention, aeration and nutrition in the soil. Peat moss, rotted hay, tree leaves and compost are some options of organic matter. Incorporate two to four inches of organic matter into the existing soil as deep as possible. Otherwise, the plant roots may have difficulty penetrating across the barrier created between the organic matter and the old soil. (Cynthia Domenghini)

### Champion Trees of Kansas

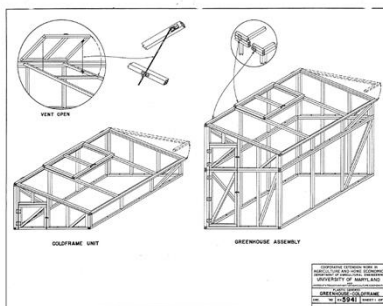


Champion Trees of Kansas is a program put on by the Kansas Forest Service to identify the largest trees within each species in our state. This is part of a larger nationwide effort to preserve historic trees and increase awareness for natural beauty.

Trees that are candidates for becoming a champion must be measured and assigned points for their height, circumference and canopy size. Volunteers are trained to gather these measurements and report them to the forest service to nominate a tree.

To learn more about volunteering to measure and nominate a tree and to see current Champion Trees of Kansas visit: [https://www.kansasforests.org/discover\\_kansas\\_forests/championtrees.html](https://www.kansasforests.org/discover_kansas_forests/championtrees.html). (Cynthia Domenghini)

### Building Plans



If you're looking for a project check out this site by North Dakota State University: <https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/extension-aben/buildingplans/>.

Engineers at Land Grant Universities have worked together to develop an extensive list of building plans within a variety of categories. Some plans included that may be of interest to our readers are: cold frames, hotbeds, propagation frames, vegetable cellars, greenhouse benches, fruit driers and many more. To

access most of the horticulture-related plans visit “Crops” or “Miscellaneous” on the Building Plans landing page. Please note the disclaimer at the bottom of the page and follow proper safety guidelines. (Cynthia Domenghini)

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<http://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/info-center/newsletters/index.html>

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