

# Horticulture 2024 Newsletter

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### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

#### Hort Newsletter Fall-Winter Schedule

For the months of November through February, the Hort Newsletter will switch to monthly distribution. You can expect a summary of the month's gardening topics the first Monday of each month during this time.

The **74th Annual Kansas Turf & Landscape Conference** will be held on December 4 & 5 (Wednesday & Thursday) 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, visit:

<https://www.kansasturfgrassfoundation.com/>

### VIDEO OF THE WEEK:

#### [Evergreens in Kansas](#)

(K-State Garden Hour)



Learn which evergreens will perform best in Kansas.

## GARDEN TO-DO

- Pay attention to the forecast and harvest tomatoes/peppers before frost
- Provide water to lawn and landscape as needed even as the temperature cools

## VEGETABLES

### Keep your Pumpkins Longer



Pumpkins that are harvested before they fully ripen will rot more quickly than those harvested at peak maturity. A mature pumpkin will have a hard rind that is solid in color. The pumpkin should also make a hollow sound when thumped. Mature pumpkins will have a waxy coating which protects them from drying out.

After harvesting, keep your pumpkins cool and out of direct sunlight to increase longevity. Carved pumpkins have a much shorter shelf-life, sometimes only a few days up to a week before noticeable rotting occurs. To extend the life of carved pumpkins clean the inside thoroughly, removing all seeds and loose string. Soak the inside of the pumpkin in a 10% bleach-water solution for several hours. Avoid using a real candle inside the pumpkin since the heat will speed up rotting. Pumpkins have a high-water concentration, so if there's a freeze in the forecast, bring your jack-o-lanterns inside.

## FLOWERS

### Storing Summer Bulbs through Winter

Summer flowering “bulbs” typically do not survive the winter if left in the ground. Though commonly lumped into the category of “bulbs” canna and calla lilies are actually grown from rhizomes. Caladiums and tuberous begonias are tubers. Gladiolas grow from corms and dahlias are tuberous rooted plants. Each of these plants is sensitive to cold weather and usually don't survive if left in the ground through winter.

After the foliage has turned brown from frost, dig up the entire plant including the root structure. Store them in a protected area for about one week. Once dry, clean the soil off the roots and package them individually in a soilless mix. Store through winter in an area that remains as close as possible to 40 degrees F. Caladiums should be stored at 50-60 degrees F.



## TURF

### Why Late Lawn Seedings Often Fail



Planting lawns in late fall lowers the success rate of the seedlings because the roots are not established enough to survive the winter weather. The repeated freezing and thawing of the soil can push out the young seedlings. This is called “heaving” and causes the exposed seedlings to dry out and die.

Tall fescue seed should be established in September, but no later than October 15 to give seedlings enough time to develop sufficient root growth. Planting after this date may be

successful, but it is less certain. Newly planted lawns should be watered through fall. Even established lawns will benefit from having moist soil going into winter.

### Control Broadleaf Weeds in Lawns in Late October-early November

The best defense against common turfgrass weeds is a dense, healthy lawn achieved by proper maintenance year-round. A dense lawn restricts light from reaching the soil preventing weed seeds from germinating. Homeowners who choose the right grass species and then maintain it properly are less likely to have serious issues with weeds.



If weeds do pop up in small areas, manual removal is recommended. For taproots, such as dandelions, use a tool to help pry the deep root from the soil. In some cases, chemical removal may be warranted to keep the lawn healthy and prevent the problem from spreading.

The next step for weed control, after proper lawncare, is weed identification. If you don’t know what weed(s) you’re trying to control, you won’t be able to develop an efficient plan. This time of year, the common weeds are dandelions, henbit and chickweed. Treating the area when the weeds are small will provide the best control. For any chemicals applied, always read and follow the label carefully. Only apply chemicals on a day that is wind-free and at least 50 degrees F.

For help identifying weeds in your lawn and developing an action plan for controlling them, contact your local Extension agency.

KSRE publication: [Weed Control in Home Lawns](#)

## MISCELLANEOUS

### Moths and More Moths

We've received reports of an abundance of moths in and around homes. Two species commonly found this time of year are the green cloverworm and army cutworm moths.

Green cloverworm moths are small and gray-black/brown with dark, mottled markings on the wings. The wingspan is about one-inch and when folded, the wings make a triangular shape. At rest, you may notice snout-like mouthparts protruding from the head. Green cloverworm larvae are typically not able to overwinter in Kansas, so the fact that the moths are present now does not indicate an infestation is likely next year.



Army cutworm moths, sometimes referenced as miller moths, vary in color and patterning. Females are mostly gray; males are primarily brown. When disturbed, the wings drop scales leaving behind a dusty substance. Miller moths migrate to Kansas this time of year to lay eggs which hatch in fall and early winter. On warmer winter days, larvae will feed on available hosts, burrowing back into the soil as temperatures drop. However, K-State Entomology specialists do not see this to be a major problem homeowners should be concerned with due to the short season and minimal damage.

The larvae of these moths are common crop pests. Moths are a pest primarily due to their attraction to lights at nighttime. They are able to fit into tiny crevices making it difficult to exclude them. Rest assured, as the temperature drops, the number of moths will decrease as well.

## QUESTION of the WEEK



### Can our tree be saved?

*We had to have a large limb removed from this tree after it experienced damage from a storm. Can the remainder of the tree be saved?*

We receive questions regularly about whether or not a damaged tree should be removed or saved. This is not surprising since most homeowners recognize the value trees bring to their landscape and the time required for a tree to reach maturity. In most



cases, your Extension agent is going to recommend contacting a certified arborist to evaluate the safety of the remainder of the tree, especially if it is in an area where there are frequently people present or if structures are nearby. Safety is the priority.



Trees can be resilient if the damage is not too extensive. This photo shows pretty extreme damage. Even if this is a resilient tree, the large wound puts the tree under stress making it susceptible to diseases and pests. If the tree is not in an area where it is causing a risk to nearby structures or people there's nothing wrong with giving it a chance to survive. If it is a safety risk then removal is the best option. With either decision, consider planting a replacement as soon as possible to fill in the canopy over time.

For tree recommendations, visit K-State's Horticulture Resource Center. You can find a link to [Recommended Plants](#) for a variety of landscaping situations.

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For questions or further information, contact your local extension agency. This newsletter is also available on the World Wide Web at:  
<http://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/info-center/newsletters/index.html>

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