

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.

K-State Garden Hour Wednesday, November 6, 2024 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

Register to attend this free webinar here: <https://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/consumer-horticulture/garden-hour/>



Rabbit, Mole, & Deer Mitigation

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

The presence of wildlife such as rabbits & deer can pose many potential problems for home gardeners, depending largely on which plants have been chosen for a landscape. Join Dr. Drew Ricketts, K-State Research and Extension Wildlife Management Specialist, as he discusses the plant life best for avoiding these issues, as well as other nuisance animal mitigation techniques.



Register Here!

Please register for this free Zoom Webinar at:
ksre-learn.com/KStateGardenHour



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:
Winter Garden Prep
(Recorded K-State Garden Hour)



Learn which gardening tasks can help your landscape throughout the winter and prepare for the growing season to come.

GARDEN TO-DO

- Apply late season nitrogen application to lawns in November.
- Dig cannas, gladiolas, dahlias and other tender bulbs for winter storage.
- Control for winter annual weeds such as henbit and chickweed as well as dandelions in the lawn.

FLOWERS

Garden Mums



Garden mums (*Chrysanthemum sp.*) that have finished flowering can be cut back to two to three inches. Apply a layer of mulch over the top for protection through the winter. It is also okay to leave the top growth intact through winter. This can provide insulation for the crown. Regardless of fall maintenance practices, garden mums should not be allowed to dry out during the winter. If there has not been any precipitation in the form of rain or snow, it

may be necessary to apply supplemental water.

MISCELLANEOUS

Sharpen Garden Tools



While there are fewer tasks to do in the garden it's a great time to prepare tools for the next growing season. This includes cleaning and sharpening. Tools that are properly maintained will last longer and work more efficiently. Pruner blades can be cleaned with a scouring pad or use warm soapy water. If the blade needs to be sharpened this can be done with or without taking the pruners apart using a file or whetstone.

Digging tools should also be cleaned regularly. Don't forget to dry them completely to prevent rust. The blade can be sharpened, as needed using a hand file or electric grinder but ensure you maintain the proper angle.

For more details visit our KSRE publication: [How to Clean and Sharpen Garden Tools](#).

Leftover Pumpkins



Pumpkins make lovely decorations but when the season comes to an end, they can become a wasteful problem. After Halloween many people toss their pumpkins and gourds into the garbage where they are later routed to the landfill. The lack of oxygen in the mounds of garbage prevents organic matter from breaking down. Consequently, the pumpkins contribute to the problem of

overflowing landfills.

If you're not able to compost in your own yard, look for a communal location. Many cities have a site where green waste can be discarded. In Kansas there are arboretums and other sites that specifically accept pumpkins in November. They will take care of the composting for you to minimize landfill waste.

Some farms accept pumpkin donations after the season to use as a feed source for their animals. However, if you treated your pumpkins, such as with bleach, wax or paint, they should not be fed to animals due to the risk of toxicity. Check the restrictions for pumpkin donations to protect the health of the animals.



QUESTION of the WEEK



Storing Dahlia Tubers through Winter

What is the best soilless medium to store dahlia tubers through the winter? Last year I stored them in shoeboxes in vermiculite in the unfinished part of our basement but two-thirds of them shriveled up.



According to the American Dahlia Society, coarse vermiculite is a great soilless media for overwintering dahlia tubers. The finer textured vermiculite seems to hold too much moisture close to the tubers.

The goal during winter storage is to keep the tubers cool (above freezing, below 50 degrees F) and allow moisture exchange between tubers and media. Warm temperatures promote growth. Freezing temperatures will ruin the tubers.

If tubers are not dry before they head into storage they may rot. Inspect the tubers periodically during winter and remove any that are showing signs of rot so the problem doesn't spread.

Store dahlia tubers in a container that will retain moisture and prevent shriveling. Plastic bags are commonly used. Some growers recommend sealing the bags tight while others recommend allowing air to escape by poking some holes in the bags. The consensus seems to be that in areas with humid winter weather, air transfer is necessary so the bag should not be sealed. In areas of dry winter weather, seal the bags tight. For more information visit the [American Dahlia Society](http://www.americandahlia.org/).

(Photo credit: American Dahlia Society)

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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>

The web version includes color images that illustrate subjects discussed. To subscribe to this newsletter electronically, send an e-mail message to hortsupport@ksu.edu listing your e-mail address in the message.

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