

# Horticulture 2024 Newsletter

## No. 39 September 30, 2024

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

### ANNOUNCEMENTS:



### Evergreens in Kansas

Wednesday, October 2nd 12:00PM -1:00PM CST

Plants in the landscape that can provide true year-round interest may be few and far between, but for evergreens it is an easy feat! Join Dr. Jason Griffin, K-State Research and Extension Woody Ornamentals Specialist, as he discusses which evergreens will perform best for you in the state of Kansas.



Register here!



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



Register for the K-State Garden Hour webinar series:

[https://ksu.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_IXIjvtedRu-pvfFA6Kzvwxw#/registration](https://ksu.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_IXIjvtedRu-pvfFA6Kzvwxw#/registration)



The **Kansas Forest Service's Conservation Tree Planting** Program offers tree and shrub seedlings, as well as other items for use in conservation plantings. Plantings may function as wildlife habitat, windbreaks, wood lots, timber plantations, or educational and riparian (streambank) plantings. Find out more and order trees by visiting:

[https://www.kansasforests.org/conservation\\_trees/](https://www.kansasforests.org/conservation_trees/)



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:** **Cleaning up the Garden for Fall**



You may be ready for a break from gardening but before packing away your gloves and rakes, there are a few jobs to complete to set your garden up for success next year.

## **GARDEN TO-DO**

- Remove plant debris from garden, compost healthy material
- Prepare houseplants to bring indoors
- Dig sweet potatoes before first frost

## **VEGETABLES**

### **Fall Planting: Asparagus & Rhubarb**

Asparagus and rhubarb are traditionally transplanted in mid-March through mid-April. However, they can be moved successfully in the fall if you wait until the tops have turned brown.



After frost hits and the asparagus and rhubarb tops turn brown, cut them back to the ground and prepare the soil as you would for spring planting. Dig the plants and relocate as needed. Water well and add mulch to the rhubarb so the roots do not heave out of the soil during winter. Since asparagus is planted deeper it does not require mulch.

If you are purchasing new asparagus plants, they can be planted from early October through mid-November. Begin with healthy crowns from a reputable source.

Visit these K-State resources for more information:

- Asparagus: <http://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/mf319.pdf>
- Rhubarb: <http://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/ep99.pdf>

### Peppers from the Garden

Peppers from the garden can last several weeks stored in the fridge especially if they are kept moist. They can also be frozen for longer term storage. Cut the peppers into slices or chunks and place in a single layer on a baking sheet. Freeze for one hour. This is called “flash freezing”. The pepper pieces can now be stored in a freezer bag and won’t stick together in a clump. Although frozen peppers may be soft or even mushy when defrosted, they maintain their flavor and work great for cooking.



## TURF

### Should You Let Turf Grow Tall in the Fall?



Some people believe taller grass in the winter provides insulation for the plant crowns protecting them through freezing temperatures. This practice can cause problems when the tall grass blades fall over and create a matted environment perfect for winter diseases.

The best practice for preparing turf for winter is to provide adequate care and ensure your plants are healthy. This requires action year-round including fertilizing, watering and mowing. Follow recommendations for the variety of turf you are growing, but overall, maintaining the proper height throughout the year is best.

These are the recommended mowing height ranges (in inches) for home lawns in Kansas:

Tall fescue: 2.5 -3.5  
Kentucky bluegrass: 2-3  
Buffalograss: 2-3  
Bermudagrass: 1-2  
Zoysiagrass: 1-2

It may be beneficial to adjust mowing height within these recommendations at specific times. For example, warm-season grasses may be mowed taller during late summer and early fall so they can store more carbohydrates for the winter. It may also help to reduce the occurrence of cool-weather diseases. However, the taller height should still be within the recommendation.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### Finding an Arborist



Unfortunately, part of growing plants is dealing with damage and death. For trees, this often requires professional help due to the plant size and safety concerns. Extension agents and specialists across the state get many questions each week about whether or not a tree with damage from storms or other stress can be saved. Extension agents can support homeowners by helping to identify problems with trees but when large limbs threaten to drop, especially over structures, parking and areas people are present, it's time to consult a certified arborist for advice.

Certified arborists are professionally trained and have practical experience managing trees in the landscape. The continuing education required ensures they are up to date on current techniques, problems and strategies. They also have the insurance necessary to support their decisions.

Whether you are facing tree removal or not, pay attention to your property's canopy. If you have mature trees, consider adding younger trees to the area. This will take away some of the sting as trees need to be removed allowing the younger trees to take their place. Managing the existing trees properly and choosing the right trees for your landscape are important aspects to protect your investment.

Locate a certified Kansas arborist: [Kansas Certified Arborists](#)

Learn more about why hiring an arborist is important: [Trees are Good](#)

## QUESTION of the WEEK



### Unripe remaining tomatoes

*What should I do with the tomatoes that remain on my plants but aren't ripening?*

Remaining tomatoes can be left on the vine to ripen as long as there isn't a frost in the forecast, but ripening is slow at this time of year.

Green tomatoes that are full-sized can be harvested and placed in a paper bag to continue ripening indoors. You may notice a white, star-shape on the bottom of mature green tomatoes. Green tomatoes that aren't mature will not continue to ripen, but can be used for a variety of recipes.

Tomatoes with blemishes or cracks in the skin should be discarded to avoid contaminating others. Store ripe tomatoes on cardboard trays with newspaper between layers if stacked. If possible, keep the temperature close to 55 degrees F. Check periodically for rotting and remove tomatoes as needed.



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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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