

Horticulture 2025 Newsletter No. 19 October 21, 2025

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

K-State Garden Hour

Wednesday, November 5, 12:00 (noon) – 1:00 PM CST

Register to attend this free live webinar at the following link: [K-State Garden Hour](#)



Climate Resilient Gardens

Wednesday, November 5th 12:00PM -1:00PM CST

Gardening in a changing climate can be a challenge. Join Pam Paulsen, Reno County Horticulture Agent, to explore practical methods to grow gardens that are resilient to tough growing conditions. Some of these methods include native and adapted plants, soil improvement, efficient use of water and nutrients, and attracting beneficial insects.



Register Here!



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





Kansas Turf & Landscape Conference

The 75th Annual Kansas Turf and Landscape Conference will be held on **December 3 and 4 (Wednesday and 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 7 hours

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

Download a copy of the program, get exhibitor information or register online at:

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

Register before November 21 to receive a discounted rate.

GARDEN TO-DO

- Check soil temperature at our [Weather Data Library](#). Spring flowering bulbs can be planted as long as the soil temperature stays above 40 degrees F.
- Harvest tomatoes/peppers before frost
- Water lawn and landscape as needed even as the temperature cools
- 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.

VEGETABLES

Cool-Season Vegetable Hardiness

Don't be fooled by the term "cool-season". Not all cool-season crops will tolerate the winter in Kansas without protection. Semi-hardy crops such as Chinese cabbage, collard, mustard and radishes, can survive light frosts. However, when temperatures drop into the 20s, they will start to show signs of damage.

Cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, carrots and other hardy vegetables will survive temperatures into the low 20s before showing damage.

Row covers can be used to protect your cool-season garden. Learn more about season extension from the [Kansas Garden Guide](#).



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. Carved pumpkins have a much shorter shelf-life, sometimes only a few days up to one 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

Perennial Garden Clean-Up

If you're feeling the urge to tidy up the perennial garden keep a few things in mind. Ornamental grasses and some herbaceous perennials can be left intact to provide seasonal interest. Dried foliage brings texture and color to the otherwise barren landscape while also insulating the plant crown. Wildlife can benefit from seed heads left to develop on the plant.

If your plants had disease/pest issues during the growing season that plant material should be removed and disposed of to prevent spreading. Dried ornamental grasses near structures can present a fire hazard so removing the above ground growth is recommended in this scenario.



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.



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. This can provide insulation for the crown. Regardless of fall maintenance practices, garden mums should not be allowed to dry out during winter. If there has not been any rain or snow, it may be necessary to apply supplemental water.

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 planted in September, but no later than October 15 to give seedlings enough time to develop sufficient roots. 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. With proper maintenance year-round, the dense lawn restricts light from reaching the soil and prevents 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

Caring for Plants Indoors

If you moved sensitive plants indoors recently you may be wondering, now what??? Hopefully you were able to transition your plants to the indoors, but if not, they may go through a period of shock. Symptoms may include: yellowing leaves, dieback and wilt. Some plants won't survive the shock if it is extreme. Others will recover over time and with proper care. Here are some tips for providing the best conditions possible to get your houseplants through the winter.



Water and Fertilizer

Whether indoors or out, the amount of light decreases into fall and winter resulting in slower plant growth. This means the fertilizer and water needs will decrease. Only provide water when the soil is dry about one-inch deep. Fertilizer can be applied at $\frac{1}{4}$ the recommended rate in November and again in February. Plants in smaller containers often require water more frequently but less fertilizer because they have less soil. This varies based on species so do your homework and research individual plant needs.

Temperature

Temperature is another important factor for growing plants indoors. If the temperature drops below 50 degrees F, leaves of more sensitive plants may begin to yellow. Keep this in mind if you adjust the thermostat during times when nobody is home such as vacations. Avoid placing plants near heat vents where the temperature is inconsistent.

Humidity

Relative humidity is the amount of moisture in the air. When the humidity is lower, plants release more water from the leaves. Many common indoor plants prefer high relative humidity. To increase the relative humidity, you can create a microclimate by grouping plants closer together. Another option is to place a shallow container below each plant and fill it with water. Elevate the container by placing some gravel in the saucer so the plant isn't soaking directly in the water. Misting plant leaves is often recommended, but is not a practical strategy to effectively increase humidity.

Light

Indoor plants should receive bright, indirect light either from a window or grow lights. Avoid placing plants too close to windows that are drafty. Some indicators that your plants are not receiving enough light include:

- Elongated internodes (space between leaf/stem unions)
- Pale color on new leaves
- Dieback of older leaves



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 extensive. This photo shows 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: hortsupport@ksu.edu.

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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