



Horticulture Newsletter

September 1, 2026

KANSAS STATE
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Horticulture and
Natural Resources

Video of the Week:



There are many vegetables that can be planted in the fall garden that can bring color and fun to your dinner plate. Whether its from leafy greens, stems, or roots, bright colors can come from a variety of fall planted vegetables. [This week's video covers colorful fall vegetables](#), and provides some examples of uniquely colorful varieties to try planting in the vegetable garden this fall:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=54Ph-1oHx6g>

Announcements:

September K-State Garden Hour:

Join us tomorrow, Wednesday, September 2, 2026, for the next K-State Garden Hour webinar on "Garden Renewal - How to Divide and Transplant Like a Pro". Most perennial plants will benefit from being divided every three to five years. This process promotes both flowering and healthy plant growth, while also multiplying successful plants. Join us to learn how to effectively propagate plants from your garden, creating healthy transplants to replant and expand your garden, or to share with others. The presentation will be live from Noon to 1pm. Register to join us live, or view the recording afterwards online at: <https://ksre-learn.com/KStateGardenHour>

#KSTATEGARDENHOUR

K-STATE GARDEN HOUR

Garden Renewal: How To Divide & Transplant Like A Pro

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

Rejuvenate your garden and give it a fresh start. Dividing and transplanting plants is a critical skill to promote plant growth and maintain a healthy landscape. Join Travis Carmichael, Lyon County Horticulture Agent, as he shares tips for the best timing, tools, and techniques to ensure your landscape plants thrive. This webinar is perfect for gardeners looking to rejuvenate their spaces and share plants with others.

Register Here!

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

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Garden Calendar:

- Plant lettuce, spinach, radishes, and other leafy greens. Direct sow into the garden by planting seeds slightly deeper than normal to help reach cooler soil temperatures.
- Continue to harvest vegetables.
- Dig and divide peonies, or plant new peonies.
- September is the most important month of the year for fertilizing Tall Fescue and Kentucky Bluegrass lawns.
- Core aerate cool season turfgrass.
- Hand-pick bagworms to reduce future populations in the area.
- Collect seeds from marigolds, zinnias, and cosmos.
- Take photos of successful plant combinations.

Vegetables:

Tips For A Successful Fall Vegetable Garden:



With establishment of the fall vegetable garden well under way, here are some tips and tricks to use to help increase the success of your fall garden.

Fertilize At Planting: For garden spaces used for spring and summer vegetable production, consider mixing some additional fertilizer into the soil before planting. In general, 1 to 2 pounds per 100 square feet of a low-analysis, all-purpose garden fertilizer should be sufficient to produce a successful fall crop. Do not over fertilize, as large amounts of fertilizer may damage young plants.

Follow Up With Fertilizer: Additional fertilization may also be needed as the plants continue to grow later in the season. Cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, collards, kale, lettuce, mustard, spinach, and turnip greens will all benefit from additional fertilization. Apply approximately 4 tablespoons of a high-nitrogen fertilizer per 10 feet of row about 2 weeks after transplanting or 4 weeks after seed sowing. This will help ensure lush growth before winter.

Wait To Add Organic Matter: While adding organic matter is an excellent garden practice, do not add large quantities before fall planting. This may increase the rate at which soils dry out. Instead, save adding organic matter to the soil for later in the fall.

Use Transplants: Soil temperatures are often very warm when trying to establish cool season vegetables. Consider starting some seeds indoors in mid-July, and transplanting plants outside into the garden at the appropriate time and as the weather begins to cool.



Adjust Direct Seeding: When direct seeding into the garden, plant seeds slightly deeper than they would be for a spring garden. This places seeds into a slightly cooler soil and helps to make more moisture available to the seed. It is also advisable to plant more seed than necessary in the fall to ensure an adequate stand develops. Simply thin out excess plants after seeds germinate.

Cool The Soil: Help to further cool the soil by applying a 3 to 6 inch layer of mulch over the planting area a couple of weeks before planting. Pull back the mulch at planting. To help further cool plants and the soil, place a shade cloth over the growing area, such as on a low tunnel.



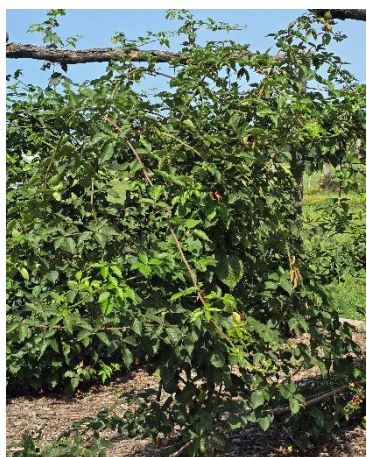
Watering: Frequent irrigation will likely be required when establishing the fall garden, especially in high temperatures late July to early September. Prior to planting, wet soil thoroughly to a depth of 10 to 12 inches deep to cool and hydrate the root zone. When watering to promote seed germination, consider applying a light sprinkling of peat moss, vermiculite, or compost directly over the seed to limit soil crusting. Seed germination can also be accelerated by soaking seeds overnight before planting.

Season Extension: Finally, consider additional strategies for extending the growing season. There are a number of techniques available, ranging from adjusting planting locations to modifying the environment with mulches and row covers. [Visit the Kansas Garden Guide](https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/kansas-garden-guide_S51.pdf) for more information on season extension and other fall gardening tips (chapters 8 and 9): https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/kansas-garden-guide_S51.pdf

Fruit:

Pruning Raspberry & Blackberry Canes After Harvest:

Both raspberry and blackberry plants are perennials. While the entire plant may live for many years, each raspberry and blackberry cane is only biennial, meaning that each cane only lives for two years.



The first-year canes are called primocanes and grow rapidly, but do not produce fruit. The second-year canes, called floricanes, are the canes that produce flowers and fruit. Shortly after producing fruit the floricanes die and need to be pruned out.

As raspberry and blackberry harvest concludes for the summer, it is an important maintenance step to remove dead canes from raspberry and blackberry plants. These dead canes often serve as a harbor for insects and disease, underscoring the importance of pruning out dead canes. When canes have finished fruiting and die, cut the canes as close to the ground as possible. Do not leave above ground stumps that may harbor disease. Be sure to remove the dead canes and all pruning waste from the area to minimize the likelihood of insect and disease spread.

Although pruning out dead canes may sound simple enough, there are various types of raspberries and blackberries and each are pruned differently, including some that are tipped during the growing season. [Visit our Raspberries and Blackberries publication](https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/download/raspberries-and-blackberries_MF720) to learn more about how to prune brambles to maximize fruit production: https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/download/raspberries-and-blackberries_MF720

Turf:

Lawn Seeding Is Best Done In September

Fall is the ideal time to plant cool season lawns in Kansas, including tall fescue and Kentucky bluegrass lawns. While there is a range of planting dates for both turf types, September is an ideal month to take action planting or overseeing lawns.

At this time of year, many factors favor successful lawn seeding. Soil temperatures are warm, which favors rapid seed germination. Air temperatures begin to cool down, placing less stress on newly emerging seedlings. Cooler temperatures also limit weed growth for crabgrass and other summer weeds when compared to spring seeding. Rainfall chances often increase in the fall as well, helping to support the establishment of new lawns with less supplemental water. These factors all make the fall an ideal time to plant new grass seed.

For planting cool season turfgrass from seed, the planting window ranges from late August to mid-October in Kansas. In late August, grass seed will germinate very quickly, however, more supplemental water is often required as weather conditions can still be hot and dry. Newly germinated grass seed cannot be allowed to dry out, and so only those with good irrigation systems usually plant this early. For most of Kansas, mid-September is a good date to aim for. Grass seed will still germinate quickly, however, less supplemental water is required for establishment. For Kentucky bluegrass lawns, planting should be done before early October. For tall fescue lawns, planting should be completed by October 15th.



It is important to ensure that new grass seed is planted before these early to mid-October deadlines to allow time for establishment before winter. Grass seed planted after these dates can still be successful, however, the success rate goes down the later the planting date is. The challenge with these late planting dates is not the cold temperatures, but rather the limited root systems on newly established seedlings that are prone to desiccation (drying out). The freezing and thawing of soils heave poorly rooted grass plants out of the ground, causing them to dry out and die. Keeping plants watered will help maximize root growth before freezing weather arrives.

For an in-depth tutorial of planting or overseeding your cool season lawn, visit our K-State Garden Hour webinar recordings. [Watch the "Fall Lawn Care \(Part 1\) - Planting and Overseeding Your Tall Fescue Lawn" webinar recording](https://youtu.be/7zw8WrY19Qk?si=kKt36Kib9GZT0pQI&t=42) to review all you need to know about planting cool season turfgrass in the fall, including seed selection, site preparation, and planting tips: <https://youtu.be/7zw8WrY19Qk?si=kKt36Kib9GZT0pQI&t=42>

Prevent Winter Weeds In Early September:



The same conditions that make fall an ideal month to plant grass seed, also create conditions that are ideal for winter weed growth. While most winter weeds begin to grow in the early fall months, they often lie unnoticed until spring. Warm springtime temperatures and regular rainfalls create abundant growth in these winter weeds, but by then, limited options for control remain.

The most effective approach to stop annual winter weeds, such as henbit, chickweed, little barley, and annual bluegrass, is to be proactive. This not only means through a dense, healthy lawn, but also through the use of pre-emergent herbicides.

Most winter weeds will be best controlled with a pre-emergence herbicide applied in early to mid-September, before weed seeds germinate. In southern Kansas or in wet falls, weed preventers may need to be applied as early as late August.

Pre-emergent products that contain the active ingredients prodiamine (Barricade) or dithiopyr (Dimension) will be effective against most weeds, including henbit and chickweed. Weed preventers with other active ingredients, such as isoxaben, pendimethalin, benefin, or indaziflam may also be available. These weed preventers may be more effective against specific weeds, but also often require multiple applications to be most effective.

While pre-emergent herbicides are effective at preventing weed seed growth, most will also prevent desirable grass seeds from germinating as well. This means that if you plan to overseed or plant a new lawn from seed, it will not be safe to apply most pre-emergent herbicides for winter weed control. There are a few pre-emergent herbicides that are an exception to this rule and can be applied when planting grass seed or slightly after. When planting grass seed, look for products with the active ingredients siduron (Tupersan) or mesotrione (Tenacity). Otherwise, wait until grass seeds have germinated and have been mowed at least three times, then target small weed seedlings with a selective, broadleaf herbicide in late October to early November.

With any pre-emergent or post-emergent product used for weed control, be sure to carefully read the product label. Pay special attention to the amount of time needed between application and overseeding, the list of weeds it effectively controls, and other timing information. Most pre-emergent products will need watered in after application to be effective.

Even with a fall pre-emergent herbicide application, some spot treatments may be needed the following spring. However, prevention is generally easier and more effective than trying to eliminate mature weeds. Continue to have proper mowing heights, fertilization schedules, and irrigation practices to help turfgrass further compete with weeds and reduce reliance on herbicides.



Trees & Shrubs:

Pear Leaf Rust Visible On Callery Pears:

If you have noticed bright yellow to orange spots developing on the leaves of Callery pear trees this summer, you are likely not alone. The culprit is likely a leaf disease called rust. More specifically, this is a type of cedar-hawthorn rust.

The disease first appears in late spring as small yellow-orange spots on the upper leaf surface. Leaves, flowers and young fruits are all susceptible. As the season progresses, these spots enlarge and may coalesce. By late summer, heavily infected leaves may shed prematurely from the tree (especially in hot, dry weather) prompting concern.



Fortunately, pear leaf rust is primarily an aesthetic problem on ornamental Callery pears. While severe infections may cause some premature leaf drop, the disease rarely threatens the overall health or survival of an established tree. For this reason, treatment is unnecessary, especially this time of year.

As the disease name suggests, cedar-hawthorn rust requires two hosts to complete its life cycle: a summer host and a winter host. In the summer, cedar-hawthorn rust may infect hawthorns, apples, crabapples, pears, quince, or serviceberry. These trees all drop their leaves in the winter months, however, requiring a separate winter host, nearby junipers (often called cedars).

On junipers, the disease overwinters as tiny galls. These galls take 18 months to 20 months to mature. At that time, when rainy spring weather conditions occur (April and May), the galls release orange, jelly-like tendrils. This gelatinous mass releases spores which travel through the air and infect foliage of their summer hosts. Once infected, the disease develops as spots on the leaf. Mid-summer spore producing tubes develop on the underside of the leaf that transmit the spores back to the juniper. By late summer, the reinfection of Juniper trees is completed.

Once rust symptoms are visible on pear leaves, control measures are no longer effective for that growing season because the infection has already occurred. At this time of year, many rust spots have already developed spores to return the disease to juniper trees for the winter.

Fungicide applications in the spring should only be considered by growers who are growing pear trees with edible fruit.

[Visit our Pear Leaf Rust Fact Sheet](https://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/horticulture-resource-center/common-pest-problems/documents/Pear%20Leaf%20Rust.pdf) to learn more about cedar-hawthorn rust on pear trees: <https://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/horticulture-resource-center/common-pest-problems/documents/Pear%20Leaf%20Rust.pdf>



Miscellaneous:

Yellow Garden Spiders:



We are at that time of year when people start noticing the yellow garden spider, *Argiope aurantia*, an orb-weaving spider, in landscapes, gardens, unmanaged areas in grasslands, and along roadsides and fencerows.

Yellow garden spider females are 1/2 to 1.0 inch (1.2 to 2.5 centimeters) long, with black and yellow markings on the abdomen, and a silvery cephalothorax (see image on the left), which is the fusion of the head and thorax associated with spiders.

Another species in Kansas is the banded garden spider, *Argiope trifasciata* (see image on the right), which does not have markings on the abdomen, but black transverse lines are typically present.

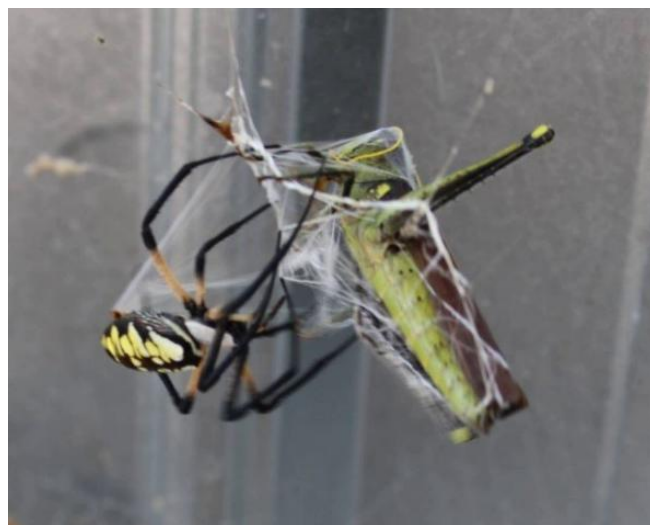
A yellow garden spider female is usually suspended with the head pointed downward in the center of the web that has vertically crossed zig-zag bands (image below, left).

A female produces an egg sac in the fall that may contain between 400 and 1,200 eggs. The egg sac is brown and usually suspended within the web (image below, right), which protects the eggs inside from predators and temperature extremes. The female dies after producing the egg sac. Spiderlings overwinter in the egg sac and then emerge (eclose) from the egg sac in the spring.



Yellow garden spiders are active in the morning and at night, creating webs that are attached to trees, shrubs, or weeds. They generally build webs in open areas with tall weeds or herbaceous plants, instead of inside the canopy of trees and shrubs or inside shelters.

Yellow garden spiders detect prey on their webs by sensing vibrations as prey attempt to escape. Prey may include annual or dog day cicada (*Tibicen pruinosus*) and June beetle (*Phyllophaga* spp.) adults. However, grasshopper adults are the primary food source captured on webs. After an adult grasshopper is captured on the web, a yellow garden spider will wrap the grasshopper in fine silk (see image on the right), a process called walking or rotational swath. Once the grasshopper is secured, the yellow garden spider will bite and inject a toxic venom that kills the grasshopper. The injected venom liquifies the internal organs, which allows the yellow garden spider to easily consume the grasshopper.



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For questions or additional information, contact: hortsupport@ksu.edu

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