

Gardening Tips

By Wendy L. Wilber

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Vegetables

This is the time to begin your plans for your fall garden. You need to select the area for your fall garden and have the soil tested for the pH and the nutrient levels. If possible, rotate your garden to an area that has not been used in a couple of years for gardening. By rotating your crops in different locations, you will reduce the number of pests and diseases that may attack your plants, which might save your garden.

If you had a problem with root-knot nematode, wilt or root rot disease, you will need to change locations or solarize the soil in the area where that has occurred.

Select plant varieties that are resistant to nematodes or wilts. This will give you further protection for any problems that you may encounter. Look for seed packets that have capital letters "V", "F", "N", following the name of the plant. This letter indicates tolerance or resistance to wilts and nematodes.

Compost can be incorporated at a rate of 25 lbs./100 sq. ft. if you are



It is too late to prune hydrangeas now. If you prune them you will be removing the flower bud for next season.

using cow, horse, or hog manures. If you use sheep, goat, or rabbit manure apply at a rate of 10-12 lbs./100 sq.ft.

You can begin to plant your fall garden in the last half of August. Plant warm season vegetables such as lima beans, eggplants, okra, southern peas, peppers, winter squash, pumpkin and tomatoes, check the [vegetable gardening guide](#) for variety types.

Cool season vegetables that can be planted all through September include green beans, beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, collards, cucumbers, endive, lettuce, mustard greens, onions, radish, summer squash and turnips.

By planting in late August you should be able to beat the cold temperatures and have a nice harvest. You can start cool season



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vegetable transplants now for planting in September.

Fruits and Nuts

You can plant any containerized fruits or nuts now. Be sure to keep any transplants watered if they are not getting enough moisture from the rains.

Muscadine grapes will be ripening this month. If you do not have some grapes to harvest at home, go to the local grower and u-pick.

Pears are also ripening. Pick them about 6-10 days before they are fully ripe. To keep the grittiness (stone cell development) of the pears down, store the fruit at 60-70 degrees.

Fertilize blackberries soon after harvest with 10-0-10. Apply at a rate of 1/3 pound per vine. Prune the canes that produced this year back to the ground. This will insure fruiting for the next year.

Blueberries should be pruned now to generate new fruiting growth for the next year. [Pruning blueberries](#) requires the cutting out of old canes. These old canes

have little strong new wood and are not productive. On the remaining canes eliminate the twiggy growth in the top and outer area of the bushes.

Herbs

We are nearing the end of the planting season for the warm weather herbs. They include basil, chamomile, chives, Vietnamese coriander, fennel, scented geranium, lemon balm, lemon verbena, lovage, sweet marjoram, mints, Greek oregano, Mexican oregano, oregano, variegated Cuban oregano, parsleys, rosemary, sage, summer savory, French tarragon, Mexican tarragon and thyme.

Flowers

Remove old blooms (deadhead) from annuals and perennials to prolong flowering. Also remove plants that are infested with insects or plants that are phasing out.

Fertilize every 3-4 weeks to keep flowers coming. Apply 6-6-6 at 2 lbs./100 sq.ft. If you use a

slow release fertilizer apply 4-5 lbs./100 sq.ft. for new plants or 4-7 lbs./100 sq. ft. for established plants. Slow-release fertilizers do not need to be applied every month.

The only plants that grow well now are coleus, justicia, and salvia. However, you can still plant caladiums, cannas, celosia, crossandra, exacum, golden shrimp plants, impatiens, kalanchoe, nicotiana, portulaca, and vinca plants.

There are several lilies that may be planted now. They are Gloriosa lily, Hurricane lily, Aztec lily, Iris, Kafir lily, African lily, Bethlehem lily, Easter lily, Society Garlic, Spider lily, Formosan lily, Madonna lily, Pineapple lily, Regal lily, Speciosum, and Gold Banded lily.

Lawns

It is getting a little late to plant grass seed now. However you can sprig or plug in bare areas of your centipede or St. Augustine using grass from thicker areas in your yard.



It is time to get the ground ready for the fall garden.



Mowing the lawn frequently at the proper recommended height for your type of grass, helps the grass stay healthy. Centipede grass should be cut at 2-2 ½ inches, St. Augustine at 3-4 inches and Bahia at 3-4 inches high. Mowing your grass at this height allows your grass to develop deep roots and to tolerate drought stress. Let the clippings fall and remain on the ground to recycle the nutrients.



Palms showing yellow leaves can be fertilized now.

Do not blow your clipping to the curb or down the storm drain. This practice adds to nitrogen pollution in our water.

A fertilizer (8-0-8, 10-0-10, or 16-2-8) may be added to Centipede grass now. Apply at a rate of 1 lb. of actual nitrogen/1000 sq. ft.

A good portion of the nitrogen in your fertilizer should be in the slow release form. Look for the words slow release, or controlled release on the fertilizer label.

Continue checking for insect and disease problems. Determine the source of the problem before treating. Sometimes symptoms can be deceiving, and you may need a laboratory test to determine the cause.

Mole crickets, sod webworms, and chinch bugs are the **lawn pests** that we are seeing in our yards this summer. Sod webworms are caterpillars which can be seen feeding on lawns in patches. If there are quite a few, you can spray a Sevin product.

Thanks to the rainy weather, there have been more incidences of gray leaf spot showing up in

St. Augustine grass. In order to control gray leaf spot, it is recommended that you use fungicide that contains propiconazole like Banner Maxx. This product is only available at a chemical & fertilizer specialty stores.

Trees and Shrubs

You can still plant any trees and shrubs which are in containers. This is a good time to plant **palms** such as Pindo, Cabbage, European Fan, Canary Island, Washingtonia, and Lady Palms. Fertilize palms using a palm special fertilizer 8-2-12. For mature, established palms apply 5-8 pounds, palms under 8 feet apply 2-5 pounds, and newly planted palms should receive ½-2 pounds. Broadcast or band the fertilizer under the canopy of the tree but do not apply the fertilizer up against the trunk.

It is **too late** to prune camellia, azalea, oakleaf hydrangea, banana shrub, spireas, Indian hawthorne, wisteria, star and saucer magnolia, dogwood, fringe tree, redbud, and gardenia because these plants produce

flower buds on wood grown in this year's season. Be careful when pruning not to prune off developing buds. To make sure that you do not remove developing flower buds, prune within three months of flowering.

Azaleas are shallow rooted plants and will be the first to suffer from drought conditions. During July and August, azaleas are initiating flower buds for next season. If they wilt for an extended period

of time, they will lose the flower buds they are forming, reducing the number of flowers they will put on next spring.

Check for leaf spots on ligustrum and dogwoods. Also look for diseased or blighted areas on red cedar and junipers. Watch for powdery mildew on crape myrtle and dogwood.

WILDLIFE HAPPENINGS

- Black bear cubs are weaning from their mothers.
- Swallow-tailed kites begin gathering in communal night roosts before migrating.
- Purple martins and tree swallows begin to gather to migrate south for the winter.
- Yellow warbler migration begins.
- Young sea turtles are hatching so watch where you're walking on the beach.
- Gopher tortoise and turtle eggs are hatching.
- Indigo snake and other snake eggs are hatching.



Fertilize landscape plants (if needed) for the last time this year. Broadcast the fertilizer over soil surface at a rate of 1 lb. per 1000 sq. ft. and water. If applied over the top of mulch, use 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs. Many established trees and shrubs root systems extend well beyond the canopy. When you fertilize the lawn, the trees and shrubs benefit as well, so the trees and shrubs may not need additional fertilization.

If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically, please e-mail Wendy at wilbewl@ufl.edu.

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