



Country Living

Provided to you by the

OSU Extension Service Columbia County

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October 2014

Programs for you . . .

Listen to the Gardening Spot on KOHI (1600 am) radio - Every Saturday, 8:05 to 8:15 a.m.

- Oct. 2..... **Master Gardener™ Board Meeting.** 3:45 p.m., OSU Extension Classroom, St. Helens
- Oct. 4..... **Native Plant Sales.** 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Scappoose Bay Watershed Native Plant Center, Scappoose High School
- Oct. 7..... **Scappoose Bay Watershed Council.** 7 p.m., Scappoose Bay Watershed Council's office, Warren
- Oct. 14..... **Lower Columbia Watershed Council.** 7 p.m., SWCD office-35285 Millard Rd., St. Helens
- Oct. 15..... **Soil & Water Conservation District.** 7:30 p.m., SWCD office-35285 Millard Rd., St. Helens
- Oct. 18 & 19..... **The All About Fruit Show.** The Clackamas County Fairplex, Canby OR. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. A great opportunity to taste hundreds of apples, pears, kiwi and grapes. You can order a custom-grafted tree, made just for you, to be delivered in the spring. Great speakers, experts to answer all your questions, pie baking contest, exotic fruit sorbet to taste. The ID Team will try to identify your mystery apples. <http://www.homeorchardsociety.org/events/>
- Oct. 23..... **Master Gardener™ Chapter Meeting.** 6:30 p.m. Speaker will be Brian French, "Looking Up-- The Benefits of our Oldest Trees," OSU Extension Classroom, St. Helens. **The public is invited. Free.**



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Just send an email to vicki.krenz@oregonstate.edu and request to be on the Country Living email list. Include a physical address and phone number (so we can remove you from our paper mailing list and keep our email list current).



Chip Bubl

Chip Bubl, OSU Extension Faculty, Agriculture

Agriculture, Family and Community Development, 4-H Youth, Forestry, and Extension Sea Grant Programs. Oregon State University, United States Department of Agriculture, and Columbia County cooperating. The Extension Service offers its programs and materials equally to all people.

In the garden

Planting garlic

This is for a great friend who swears that this time, he is going to cut it out and put it on the refrigerator.

October is the month to plant garlic. Go to the farmers' markets in the area and buy several varieties of good-looking garlic. Get their names and put them



in labeled bags. Then pick a sunny and well-drained location (many gardeners make raised beds with or without sides) and amend the soil with 10 pounds of lime per 100 square feet. Add some fertilizer, for example, one pound of 16-16-16 per 100 square feet or its organic equivalent. Work all this in to a depth of 10-12”.

Separate the cloves from the bulbs you bought and save the largest cloves (eat the rest – what joy!). Plant the garlic spaced three to four inches apart within the row with the tops of the cloves about two inches below the soil surface. If you are planting elephant garlic, increase the in row spacing to 6 inches. The rows should be six to twelve inches apart. The larger the clove you plant, the larger the garlic bulb you will get. Label the rows with the variety names.

Cover the soil surface with compost or other light mulch and keep the bed weeded over the winter and spring.

Garlic will grow roots before it sends up tops. Some varieties come out of the ground

quickly; others might not emerge until late January. If it gets real cold (<15° F), the tops might freeze back but new tops will emerge. Yield will be reduced but you will not lose the crop completely.

Fertilize garlic again in mid-February and May with something that contains nitrogen

and sulfur. Cut the floral heads as they emerge in late May. Avoid watering the crop after June (it might be wise to plant the garlic in a part of your garden that you can keep from irrigating in the spring if you use sprinklers). Look to harvest your crop in mid-July. So simple...so good!

Compost, plants, and tough sites

Construction activity rarely leaves soils in good shape. At worst, most of the topsoil may have been removed. At best, there is major soil compaction. What are the best ways to improve degraded soils for your garden and landscape?

The answer (and no surprise for many gardeners) is compost. Compost improves water infiltration, loosens soils, stimulates biological activity, and adds nutrients. But what some interesting research done at OSU's North Willamette Research and Extension Center in Aurora revealed is that it didn't really matter whether the compost was tilled into the soil or applied to the surface with new plants installed through the compost. The amount was important. Two inches of compost applied over 150 square feet was the best amount. That is equal to one cubic foot for that area. After planting, all plots (tilled in compost, tilled without compost, no-till surface compost, and plain without compost or tilling) were mulched with 3 inches of fine Douglas fir bark.

The research group tried both standard landscape plants and some drought tolerant ones. Since the planting area was not watered after the fall planting or the following years, the drought tolerant materials fared much better. *Ceanothus gloriosus* and Rosemary “Blue Spires” were very strong performers. For more information, see *Improving Garden Soils with Organic Matter* EC 1561 from the OSU Extension publications web site <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/>

Bottom line: right plant, right place, and compost!

Lime

Ground or pelleted limestone should be put on vegetable gardens once every 3-5 years. Lime raises the soil pH (“sweetens” the soil). That makes important soil nutrients more available to plant roots and also provides calcium to the soil.

Fall is an excellent time to apply it if you are rototilling your garden or planting a cover crop. Application rate is about 100 pounds per 1000 square feet of garden. For small plots, remember that a pint = equals a pound (roughly) and is useful for knowing how much to put on small beds. Don’t lime beds that have acid loving plants like rhododendrons or blueberries.

Agricultural lime is calcium carbonate and dolomite lime is a mix of calcium carbonate (~85%) and magnesium carbonate (~15%). If you have used dolomite recently, go with plain ag lime for this cycle. Pelleted lime is easier to apply but a lot more expensive per pound. Ground lime can be spread evenly if



you apply in one direction and then go perpendicular to the first application with a second dusting.

Fall is a good time to lime because it takes 4-6 months for the lime to react with the soil and substantially increase the pH and release calcium. If you are still planting a lawn, lime should be applied before planting and then the newly seeded grass fertilized with a slow release product after the grass has germinated and grown for three weeks.

Lime can react with urea-based nitrogen fertilizers and shouldn’t be applied together. Seeds can be planted into freshly limed plots with no problem.

No rain = landscape stress

We just got the first significant rain for almost 90 days. The soil profile is almost completely depleted of moisture. It is crucial that bearing fruit trees and other garden fruit bearing plants like blueberries continue to get watered until they start showing signs of leaf color changes and impending dormancy. This warning applies to ornamental trees and shrubs as well.

A lot of native plants (adapted to this climate) have shut down early but they will usually be fine. Examples include Garry oak and Oregon ash, trees that are found widely in St.

Helens/Scappoose. Leaves that were green a month ago are now orange or brown, depending on species. Some conifers on marginal sites (shallow rooted) may show problems later from this year’s extreme dry weather. Rocky sites that cover much of St. Helens are problematic since most have only a bit of soil over solid basalt. But even deeper hill soils may show some pockets of stressed trees in the coming months.



That's the Way it Grows

Fall is Here!

I'm so excited for about the rain, I even cleaned out my rain gauge. I want to see some green again. My poor lawn, and I use that term lightly, is worse for wear. Even the clover is brown. While the temperature is still up above 70, I need to spray out the dandelions with weed killer, then I can over-seed the bare spots.

This is my favorite time of year. I love the crisp, sunny days and the falling leaves.



Everything is clean again once it rains, even the air. And I can finally stop hauling water all over my yard.

I plant pumpkins and squash in the borders each year, because they take up so much real estate in the garden. My drip hoses just won't deliver what a mature pumpkin plant needs, so I carry gallons each day to them. I also planted quite a few annuals this summer that needed watering nearly every day. I will rethink where I plant them next year, because I spent many hours each week hauling around the watering can or the hose.

As predicted, I have ripe tomatoes coming out my ears. I swear every summer I will not do it, but the next year, I plant too many plants. There are just so many varieties out there. I have to have beefsteaks and an early variety so I don't have to wait so long for that first, luscious home-grown tomato. I ran out of room for them all and ending up putting one in a pot on the patio, which resulted in a scrawny plant that had to be watered every day. The beefsteak in the border also had to be watered every day. I just couldn't get rid of it, and I'm glad I didn't, because it was a Brandywine, one of the absolute best tomatoes.

Consider picking any tomatoes showing even a small amount of color now, before heavy rains result in cracked fruit. Store the unripe fruit in a single layer on newspaper, making sure they don't touch each other. Place them in a cool room or the garage, and check them every day or two for spoilage. Many may just

ripen up for you, and even if they don't taste as good as vine-ripened, they are still your home-grown tomatoes.

I tried a new way to "preserve" my tomatoes this year. I use canned diced tomatoes in sauces and soups, but don't enjoy canning. Instead, I peeled and cored tomatoes, placed them on cookie sheets and froze them, then sealed them in freezer bags. I can just add them whole to soups and let them break down, or use them for small sauce batches.

As a result of blanching and peeling a whole ton of tomatoes, I came across a way to kill some of that persistent clover. A big pot of boiling water poured over a patch of clover will neatly dispatch it and all the little roots that would otherwise sprout. Cheap, easy and effective.

Weeds will soon be back in force, with the rain to help them along. So will fungus. Garden sanitation is important this time of year. Cut or pull dried leaves and bloom stalks and spent flowers to keep plants, crowns and rhizomes healthy.

It's also time to divide all those overgrown clumps of perennials, like day lilies and irises. If you have large clumps of spring bulbs, they will need dividing to keep them blooming well. In the fall, you can clear the dried foliage and gently dig the bulbs, trying not to spear them or slice them while digging. Damaged bulbs can rot or mold. Replant the largest of the bulbs and recycle the rest in the compost. Tiny bulbs just won't do well, and the extras crowd out the larger ones that will give you blooms next year.

Enjoy these wonderful fall days in your garden!



—Lisa M. Long
Columbia County Master Gardener™
Compost, rock and bark dust delivered; 397-2989

OCTOBER 2014

Garden hints from your OSU Extension Agent

Oregon State University Extension Service encourages sustainable gardening practices. Always identify and monitor problems before acting. First consider cultural controls; then physical, biological, and chemical controls (which include insecticidal soaps, horticultural oils, botanical insecticides, organic and synthetic pesticides). Always consider the least toxic approach first.

All recommendations in this calendar are not necessarily applicable to all areas of Oregon. For more information, contact your local office of the OSU Extension Service.

Planning

- If needed, improve soil drainage needs of lawns before rain begins.
- Register to become an OSU Master Gardener volunteer with your local Extension office: extension.oregonstate.edu/find-us.

Maintenance and Clean Up

- Drain or blow out your irrigation system, insulate valve mechanisms, in preparation of winter.
- Recycle disease-free plant material and kitchen vegetable and fruit scraps into compost. Don't compost diseased plants unless you are using the "hot compost" method (120° to 150°F).
- Use newspaper or cardboard covered by mulch to discourage winter and spring annual weeds or remove a lawn area for conversion to garden beds. For conversion, work in the paper and mulch as organic matter once the lawn grass has died.
- Clean and paint greenhouses and cold frames for plant storage and winter growth.
- Harvest sunflower heads; use seed for birdseed or roast for personal use.
- Dig and store potatoes; keep in darkness, moderate humidity, temperature about 40°F. Discard unused potatoes if they sprout. Don't use as seed potatoes for next year.
- Harvest and immediately dry filberts and walnuts; dry at 95° to 100°F.
- Ripen green tomatoes indoors. Check often and discard rotting fruit.
- Harvest and store apples; keep at about 40°F, moderate humidity.
- Place mulch over roots of roses, azaleas, rhododendrons and berries for winter protection.
- Trim or stake bushy herbaceous perennials to prevent wind damage.
- To suppress future pest problems, clean up annual flower beds by removing diseased plant materials, overwintering areas for insect pests; mulch with manure or garden compost to feed the soil and suppress weeds.
- Cover asparagus and rhubarb beds with a mulch of manure or compost.
- Clean, sharpen and oil tools and equipment before storing for winter.
- Store garden supplies and fertilizers in a safe, dry place out of reach of children.
- Prune out dead fruiting canes in raspberry
- Train and prune primocanes of raspberry
- Harvest squash and pumpkins; keep in dry area at 55° to 60°F.
- If necessary (as indicated by soil test results) and if weather permits, spade organic material and lime into garden soil.

Planting/Propagation

- Dig and divide rhubarb. (Should be done about every 4 years.)
- Plant garlic for harvesting next summer.
- Propagate chrysanthemums, fuchsias, geraniums by stem cuttings.
- Save seeds from the vegetable and flower garden. Dry, date, label, and store in a cool and dry location.
- Plant ground covers and shrubs.
- Dig and store geraniums, tuberous begonias, dahlias, gladiolas.
- Pot and store tulips and daffodils to force into early bloom, indoors, in December and January.

Pest Monitoring and Management

- Monitor landscape plants for problems. Don't treat unless a problem is identified.
- Remove and dispose of windfall apples that might be harboring apple maggot or codling moth larvae.
- Rake and destroy diseased leaves (apple, cherry, rose, etc.), or hot compost diseased leaves.
- Spray apple and stone fruit trees at leaf fall to prevent various fungal and bacterial diseases. Obtain a copy of "Managing Diseases and Insects in Home" (EC 631) from your local Extension office.
- Control lawn weeds while they are small. Hand weeding and weeding tools are particularly effective at this stage.
- If moles and gophers are a problem, consider traps.

Houseplants and Indoor Gardening

- Early October: Reduce water, place in cool area (50-55°F) and increase time in shade or darkness (12-14 hours) to force Christmas cactus to bloom in late December.
- Place hanging pots of fuchsias where they won't freeze. Don't cut back until spring.
- Check/treat houseplants for disease and insects before bringing indoors.





The Grapevine
 News for Columbia County Master Gardeners™
www.columbiacountymastergardeners.org



October 2014

Deadline for THE GRAPEVINE - All materials will need to be into the OSU Extension office no later than the 20th of each month.

President's Corner

Greetings! The hot summer weather just keeps coming - it has been a full time job trying to keep up with the watering. Our yard has suffered from neglect because of the demands of the garden.

I guess this is just a way of life here, talking about how dry it has been and before we know it, complaining because the rain never stops.

So much seems to be early this year - even the pumpkins turned orange in August. We got together with Ross and his wife and did our first cider pressing. We'll be doing another batch in a couple of weeks - early but the apples are weeks early this year.

This has been a bad year for apple maggot and coddling moth. I try to stay organic with Surround (a fine clay spray) but have had limited success with it this year. There are organic sprays that are available which contain Spinosad. Next year I will combine one with the Surround because it also prevents sunburn. Happy Gardening!

--Dennis Snyder

Mason Bees with Ron Spendal

The New Bug Crew presents Ron Spendal, **November 13**, 6 p.m. at the Columbia County OSU Extension classroom. Like most of us, Ron sets out Mason Bee nests every spring. Last year he set out 650 cocoons and collected around 3,500 at the end of the season. This past spring he set out 3,450 cocoons at 10 farm sights in Washington County. He has designed a nesting block that allows him to observe the habits of the bees and a bleach-less method to wash mites off the cocoons in the fall. The last couple of years he has increased his interest to include other solitary nesting bees and wasps.

Ron will begin his presentation with Mason Bees and conclude by presenting some of the highlights of his research the last couple of

Calendar: At-A-Glance

- || Oct. 2... Board Meeting, 3:45 p.m. Extension office
- || Oct. 23. Chapter Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Speaker: Brian French, *Looking Up--The Benefits of our Oldest Trees*, OSU Extension Classroom, St. Helens

..... **No Demo Garden and Planning meetings until March 2015**

years. He will have plenty of time to answer question so if you or a friend have any questions about Mason Bees please join us.

--Deb Brimacombe

Total Produce Donations from the St Helens and Scappoose MG Gardens

The two competing gardens are neck and neck in donations to the Food Bank: as of September 25th, St. Helens is ahead with 2579 pounds, while Scappoose is weighing in at 2450 pounds.

--Deb Brimacombe



Turn in Your Volunteer Log Sheet!

2015 Election of Officers



The Columbia County Master Gardeners nominating committee presented at the September meeting a list of candidates for the 2015 year; nominations were also made from the floor. In October a ballot will be mailed out to members to vote. You will have the option to either mail in the ballot, drop it off at the Extension office or bring it with you to the October meeting. We of course would prefer you take the time to attend the meeting and bring your ballot with you! We will count the votes at the October meeting and welcome our new officers at that time!

The natural (sort of) world

Asian ladybird beetles fight rough

Many of you have experienced the fall aggregation of box elder beetles, luster flies, and ladybird beetles. Of these, only the ladybird beetle is non-native. It was

introduced for aphid control about 40 years ago in the United States. There is a ten year longer history in Europe. They are from Asia and are called the

Harmonia ladybird. They entered Columbia County in the early 1980s. Their populations quickly grew. Unlike our gentle native ladybird beetles, this species doesn't leave in the fall and hibernate in rocky mountain cracks and fissures. Residents reported collecting multiple 5-gallon buckets of them as they tried to bed down in garages, attics, and sheds for the winter. The picture shows the huge range of spot numbers and color options found in this species. Got to the newsletter on-line to get the full impact of the picture.

But in the ladybird beetle world, there is a dark story. They eat the eggs of other ladybird species. But when *Harmonia* showed up, she ate their eggs but the preyed upon ladybird species could not eat her eggs without serious consequences.



At first, the working hypothesis was that the foul smelling compound in their blood (called hemolymph) put the predators off. This smell is known to all of you that have squished them, either unintentionally or on purpose. Rather, the *Harmonia* hemolymph is laced with tiny fungal parasites in the *Nosema* family.

Another *Nosema* causes a terrible bee disease. So the *Harmonia* lives with these microbial time bombs and passes them to anything that tries to eat it. Not fair. But the populations of the *Harmonia* are expanding while those of our native ladybirds are declining.

There are a few bright sides. Most summers, there are fewer tree aphids. Second, *Harmonia* populations do tend to ebb and flow so something must be working them over to a certain extent. Finally, that compound that makes the hemolymph smell so foul might actually result in drugs to treat both human tuberculosis and malaria.

Lampreys

There is a great article on lampreys in the Winter 2014 issue of *Terra*, an OSU publication. They still can be found in Columbia streams in much reduced numbers and have been declining throughout the Columbia river system. See <http://oregonstate.edu/terra/2014/01/survivors-from-the-depths-of-time/>

Farm and livestock notes

The web soil survey

The NRCS on-line soil survey is a great tool for learning a bit about your land. You can reach it at:

<http://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/HomePage.htm> or simply type “Web Soil Survey” into your web browser. Follow these steps to learn the soil types on your land, measure various fields, and find all sorts of other neat pieces of information:

- ❖ Once you get to the Web Soil Survey site, click on the green “Start WSS” button.
- ❖ Under the Quick Navigation bar on the left, click on “address”
- ❖ Type in your address in the box that appears and hit “enter”.
- ❖ An aerial map of your property will appear
- ❖ There will be a row of icons just on top of the photo on the left
- ❖ The first one from the left allows you to zoom in on the photo. Click it and then click on the red dot on the map. Each location click brings it in closer. On smaller parcels, you want to be at 100 or two hundred feet to draw your “Area of Interest” (AOI).
- ❖ The second one from the left allows you to zoom back out and each click on the red dot moves the picture back out.
- ❖ You describe the “Area of Interest” by drawing either a rectangle or a polygon around it.
- ❖ To draw a rectangle, you click on the rectangle icon that is second from the right in the line of 8 icons. Once you

have clicked it, move your cursor to a corner of what you want to describe and click the cursor and move the cursor outward and a rectangle will be drawn as you move.

- ❖ For an irregular shaped area use the polygon tool and click and release at each corner and then click again, etc.
- ❖ When you have connected a shape, click the mouse and the shape will appear on the map
- ❖ The click on the soil tab on the top and the soil type and description will appear along with the acreage measurement of the shape you have drawn in a box on the left.
- ❖ Click on the soil name and you will get a data box with lots of information about that soil type.
- ❖ Note that some rectangles (or polygons) may contain more than one soil type within it.

That’s it. There is more to explore, but this should get you started.

Sheep shape of things to come

We tend to think of breeding efforts and the more molecular “genomics” research as basically plant based. But nothing could be further from the truth. By decoding the sheep genome, we will make faster progress on understanding the nature of internal parasite resistance and reducing serious and largely untreatable sheep diseases like Ovine Progressive Pneumonia (OPP), scrapie, and others. Sheep fit western Oregon pastures so well and should be more widely raised.



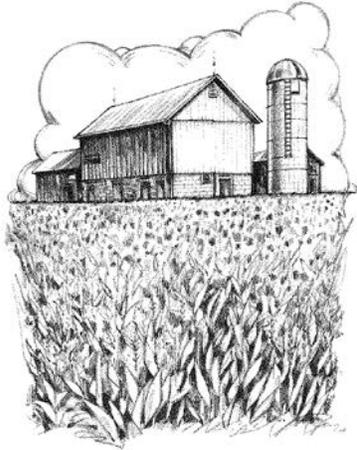
Larger scale farming and unintended consequences

Here are a few to mull over:

As farmers in the Midwest grew more corn to meet the ethanol mandates and demand, more “marginal” land has been cleared and farmed.

Often, this reduced tree cover, former CRP acres, and/or other less intensively farmed areas. As the percentage of cropland increased, the insect pest populations increased and the insecticide use increased on all the land that was being farmed. So adding the new acres actually increased costs (dollars and environmental) on all the acres in an area. Some farm-scale cropping diversity combined with leaving some natural areas intact is generally a good thing.

Large crops of corn, wheat, and soybeans need a lot of trains to deliver them to their ultimate destinations, especially those crops that are being exported. Most of the white winter wheat grown in Oregon and Washington is exported to Asia. Farmers are having trouble getting “track time” to move their crops. Why? The tracks are clogged with oil trains moving to ports and refineries all over the U.S. There is a real risk of losing significant portions of those crops due to inadequate grain elevator storage capacity, the coming winter weather, and the rail tie-up. In Washington, a long-established “cold train” of refrigerated cars has transported apples back to the east coast. That service has ended because the track time that is being allocated to oil transport. The crop is



now being trucked back to those markets, adding to the farmers’ costs.

Weaning management

October is the traditional time in western Oregon to work the cow/calf herd. This includes vaccinating, weaning, and if not already done, castrating and dehorning.

This is clearly a stressful month for both mom and offspring. Weather in October can add to the stress. Wet and cold days sap calves’ energy. As this is written, we have had some 30-degree differences between the daily high and low. These conditions can cause pneumonia or related respiratory illnesses, particularly in calves already stressed from weaning and/or castrating.

Common sense steps to reduce weaning risks include:

- Castrate and dehorn at birth or well before weaning
- Get the calves used to supplementary feed before weaning and provide them with ample feed and water after weaning.
- Keep the calves on the familiar pasture and move the cows. Use “fenceline” weaning if possible. This has the cows on one side of the fence and the calves on the better pasture on the other side of the fence.
- Watch the calves closely for any sign of problems and be ready to treat promptly.
- Consider vaccinating next year a month before weaning.

Treat both cows and calves for internal and external parasites. Contact your vet for specific recommendations.

2015 Master Gardener™ classes to be offered in St. Helens



The OSU Master Gardener™ class will be offered in St. Helens starting on Monday, January 5th and meeting every Monday through mid-March. The classes will meet from 9:00 am until 4:00 p.m. with an hour break for lunch. The programs will be held **St. Helens Public Library** in St. Helens. Topics to be covered will include vegetable gardening, insect identification, botany for gardeners, plant problem diagnosis, growing fruits and berries, lawn management, weed identification and management, pesticides safety, and plant propagation. Cost of the series will be \$75.00. Students completing the class will be expected to pay back about 60 hours on community horticultural projects. For more information or to register, contact the OSU Extension Office in St. Helens at 503 397-3462 or email either Chip Bubl (chip.bubl@oregonstate.edu) or Vicki Krenz at (vicki.krenz@oregonstate.edu).



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