

# November 2009

## Garden hints from your OSU Extension Agent

Oregon State University Extension Service encourages sustainable gardening practices. Preventative pest management is emphasized over reactive pest control. Identify and monitor problems before acting, and opt for the least toxic approach that will remedy the problem.

First consider cultural, and then physical controls. The conservation of biological control agents (predators, parasitoids) should be favored over the purchase and release of biological controls. Use chemical controls only when necessary, only after identifying a pest problem, and only after thoroughly reading the pesticide label. Least-toxic choices include insecticidal soaps, horticultural oils, botanical insecticides, organic and synthetic pesticides — when used judiciously.

Recommendations in this calendar are not necessarily applicable to all areas of Oregon. For more information, contact your local Extension office at: <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/locations.php>.

### Planning

- Force spring bulbs for indoor blooms in December.

### Maintenance and Clean Up

- Service lawn mower prior to winter.
- Check potatoes in storage and remove any going bad.
- Place a portable cold frame over rows of winter vegetables.
- Place mulch around berries for winter protection.
- Cover rhubarb and asparagus beds with composted manure and straw.
- Rake and compost leaves that are free of diseases and insects. Use mulches to prevent erosion and compaction from rain.
- Protect built-in sprinkler systems: drain the system, insulate the valve mechanisms.
- Clean and oil lawnmower, other garden equipment and tools before storing for winter. Drain and store hoses carefully to avoid damage from freezing. Renew mulch around perennial flower beds after removing weeds.
- Protect tender evergreens from drying wind.
- Tie limbs of upright evergreens to prevent breakage by snow or ice.
- Trim chrysanthemums to 4 to 6 inches after they finish blooming.
- Leave ornamental grasses up in winter to provide winter texture in the landscape. Cut them back a few inches above the ground in early spring.
- **Western Oregon:** Last chance to plant cover crops for soil building. You can also use a 3- to 4-inch layer of leaves, spread over the garden plot, to eliminate winter

weeds, suppress early spring weeds and prevent soil compaction by rain.

- **Western Oregon:** Watch for wet soil and drainage problems in yard during heavy rains. Tiling, ditching, and French drains are possible solutions. Consider rain gardens and bioswales as a long term solution.
- **Western Oregon:** Take cuttings of rhododendrons and camellias for propagation; propagate begonias from leaf cuttings.
- **Western Oregon:** Prune roses to “knee-high” to prevent winter wind damage.
- **Central/eastern Oregon:** Water your newly planted perennials, trees and shrubs every 6 to 8 weeks with a deep soaking to prevent drying out, if there is no snow cover and the ground is warm enough to accept water.
- **Central/eastern Oregon:** Wrap the trunks of young, thin-barked trees (maples, aspen, ash) with paper tree wrap late in the month to prevent sunscald. Remove in April. Wrap new trees 2-3 years in a row until the outer bark has thickened.

### Planting/Propagation

- Plant window garden of lettuce, chives, parsley.
- Good time to plant trees and shrubs. Consider planting shrubs and trees that supply food and shelter to birds; e.g., sumac, elderberry, flowering currant, and mock orange.
- **Western Oregon:** Still time to plant spring-flowering bulbs, such as tulips, daffodils, hyacinths, crocuses. Don't delay.
- **Western Oregon:** Good time to plant garlic for harvest next summer, and to transplant landscape trees and shrubs.

### Pest Monitoring and Management

- Monitor landscape plants for problems. Don't treat unless a problem is identified.
- Rake and destroy leaves from fruit trees that were diseased this year. Remove and discard mummified fruit.
- Check firewood for insect infestations. Burn affected wood first and don't store inside.
- Treat peaches 4 weeks after leaf fall spray for peach leaf curl and shothole diseases.
- **Western Oregon:** Moss appearing in lawn may mean too much shade or poor drainage. Correct site conditions if moss is bothersome.
- **Western Oregon:** Bait garden, flower beds for slugs during rainy periods. Use traps or new phosphate baits, which are pet-safe.

### Houseplants and Indoor Gardening

- Reduce fertilizer applications to houseplants.

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.

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Gardening information online—<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening>