

# October 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

- If needed, improve soil drainage needs of lawns before rain begins.
- Register to become an OSU Master Gardener volunteer with your local Extension office. For more information, check: <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/pdf/em/em8723.pdf>

### 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 raspberries.
- **Western Oregon:** Harvest squash and pumpkins; keep in dry area at 55° to 60°F.
- **Western Oregon:** If necessary (as indicated by soil test results) and if weather permits, spade organic material and lime into garden soil.
- **Central/eastern Oregon:** Prune evergreens.

### 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 Orchards* (EC 631) from your local Extension office or online.

If moles and gophers are a problem, consider traps.

- **Western Oregon:** Control fall-germinating lawn weeds while they are small. Hand weeding and weeding tools are particularly effective at this stage.

### 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.
- **Western Oregon:** Check/treat houseplants for disease and insects before bringing indoors.

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>