October
Garden hints from your OSU Extension Faculty

The Oregon State University Extension Service encourages sustainable gardening practices.

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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/find-us

Planning

- If needed, improve soil drainage needs of lawns before rain begins.
- To train as a Master Gardener volunteer with OSU Extension, register with your local Extension office. For additional information, visit: http://extension.oregonstate.edu/mg

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 degrees to 150 degrees Farenheit).
- 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 degrees Farenheit. 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 degrees to 100 degrees Farenheit.
- Ripen green tomatoes indoors. Check often and discard rotting fruit.
- Harvest and store apples; keep at about 40 degrees Farenheit, 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 degrees to 60 degrees Fahrenheit.
- **Western Oregon**: Spade organic material and lime into garden soil, as indicated by soil test results (if necessary and the weather permits).
- **Central/Eastern Oregon**: Prune evergreens.

**Planting/Propagation**

- Dig and divide rhubarb. (Should be done about every four years.)
- Plant garlic for harvesting next summer.
- Propagate chrysanthemums, fuchsias, and 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 and 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. For more information, see *Managing Diseases and Insects in Home Orchards* (PDF - EC 631).
- 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 degrees Fahrenheit) 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.

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Trade-name products and services are mentioned as illustrations only. This does not mean that the Oregon State University Extension Service endorses these products and services or intends to discriminate against products and services not mentioned.

For additional OSU Extension gardening information, visit: [http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening](http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening)