

Gardening in November

Plant: Ryegrass can still be over-seeded if you haven't gotten around to it already. Ryegrass can also be planted around new construction to stabilize the soil until time to sod in the spring. Go ahead and remove those tender annuals even if they still look okay and plant winter annuals. For sun plant pansies, violas, calendula, stocks, snapdragons, dianthus, and ornamental kale and cabbage. For shade consider cyclamen and primula. Continue dividing and replanting perennials such as daisies, iris, coneflowers and day lilies. Finish planting most of your spring bulbs this month. Remember, hybrid tulips and hyacinths go in a paper or net bag (or nylon stockings) in the vegetable drawer in the refrigerator until late December or early January. Don't place apples, pears, or other fruit in the drawer with the bulbs. Close proximity to fruit may cause the bulbs to bloom abnormally. November and December are good months to plant trees.

Fertilize: Fescue and ryegrass with a high-quality high-nitrogen fertilizer early in the month. Water deeply after applying. Fertilize winter vegetables and pansies with a high-nitrogen water soluble food. Feed houseplants monthly.

Get Ready: Our first average freeze date is Nov. 15, but that first freeze could come earlier. Be ready to bring tender tropicals indoors. If you have a winter garden of greens, you may want to plan how you are going to protect these plants during those brief below-freezing spells this winter so you don't have any "down time" while the plants recover from the freeze. Frost cloth draped over hoops made of flex tubing or PVC pipe works well. Anchor the cloth to keep it in place in case of stiff breezes. Eliminate grass and weeds from new garden spaces by spraying with a glyphosate only herbicide early in the month.

Check: Clean and sharpen pruners and clippers. Replace damaged blades. Clean and disinfect other gardening tools as you finish using them.

Garden Tip:

After the asparagus foliage turns golden, cut back to about 5".

Use shredded leaves as mulch or add to compost. Amend your garden soil now. You can apply unfinished compost, shredded leaves, vegetable trimmings, etc to your garden plot and fork it in lightly. This allows the material to compost completely before time to plant. Composting material can use up the available nitrogen, creating a less fertile soil for a time. This is why it is important to amend the soil well in advance of planting. A sprinkle of an organic source of nitrogen, such as blood meal, poultry manure, or alfalfa meal will help the compost break down faster. Once the bed is prepared, add a layer of mulch to keep the weeds out.

Submit questions to the Extension office at 903-5983-7453 or email to fanninmastergardener@gmail.com.