

The Hoe Truth Newsletter

Helping You Grow! Inside this Issue

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Fall Is Time To Plant Garlic

Don't turn your back on your garden just yet. Fall is the perfect time of year to plant garlic. Garlic takes fall and winter to develop its roots. They will start to produce foliage in early spring, and you'll harvest in summer.

Garlic is part of the *Allium* genus (amaryllis family), which includes onions. Garlic cultivars are categorized as either hardneck or softneck. Hardneck varieties tend to be more "garlicky" in flavor, with a hotter or spicier profile. They produce a flower stalk, called a scape, in the late spring. Cut off the scapes to encourage the plants to grow bigger bulbs, but don't throw them away. Scapes are delicious and add a delicate garlic taste to salads, side dishes or pesto.

Softneck varieties lack a center stalk and are usually milder in flavor. The garlic you'll find in grocery stores are generally softneck varieties. They often have more and larger cloves than the hardneck varieties. Other traits that can differ between cultivars include clove arrangement, color and skin tightness.

Hardneck varieties require a long, cold winter for their dormancy period, so it's a good idea to plant both hardneck and softneck varieties. This will not only give you a range of flavor profiles, but you'll be sure to have at least one variety succeed, if the winter isn't cold enough.



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Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notificati

Plant of The Month



Perennial

Hardy in USDA Zones 4A - 9B



- ↑ Height: 4 ft
- ↔ Space: 4 ft
- ☀ More than 6 Hours of Daily Sun
- 💧 Any Amount of Moisture
- 🌸 Blooms Late Summer
- 🦌 Deer Resistant

- Native ornamental grass with arching foliage and powder blue leaves
- In fall, sprays of cream seed heads pack the top of the plant
- Excellent for filling space in the landscape
- Easy to grow in any soil
- Drought, wind, and salt tolerant
- Cut back to 6 inches in spring
- Pair with Stonecrop, Aster, Yarrow

Horticulture Webinars, FREE!

Webinar
Wednesdays

12:30pm EST/11:30am CST

Registration link:

<https://tinyurl.com/UKYHortWebWed21>

October To-Do's

Lawns

October through November is the best time to fertilize your lawn for a low maintenance approach. Apply no more than 1.5 pounds of actual nitrogen per 1000 sq. ft. This would be about 4.5 pounds of ammonium nitrate or 3 pounds of urea. Don't apply phosphorus and potassium unless your soil test has determined you need it. There is no sense in wasting money on fertilizer that your soil and plants don't need. Don't let leaves stay on your lawn very long as they can smother it out. Its better to chop them up with the mower than to let them lay whole. Raking is the best option as well as a bagger on a lawn mower.



Flowers

Dig tender bulbs before or just after a very light frost. Plants such as cannas, elephant ear, gladiolus, caladium, dahlia, and calla lilies need to be dug up to insure you have them next year. Often it's not the freezing soil that kills them because usually the soil doesn't freeze deep enough to get them. Actually it's the cold wet soil that causes them to rot. Gladiolus can actually be cured like an onion and stored in a cool dark place. Other bulbs such as caladium and dahlia do better if packed in dry peat or vermiculite in a cardboard box. Store them in a cool dark dry place where the temperature remains above freezing.

Trees And Shrubs

October is still a good time to plant many trees and shrubs. Don't fertilize them when you plant them, wait until colder weather in November or December.

Remember to keep newly planted trees and shrubs watered even after the leaves fall off. Their root systems are still growing and they need water. A tree that has a trunk 2 inches in diameter needs 15 gallons of water per week while a tree with 1 inch diameter trunk needs 10 gallons.

If you got a soil test done and you don't want to apply sulfur or lime to lower or raise your pH then you should choose plants that are tolerant to your particular soils. Arborvitae, alders, ash, bald cypress, hawthorn, hornbeam, juniper, honey locust, swamp white oak, sycamore, willows, and redbud are all tolerant of high pH's or those above 7.

Dogwoods, most evergreens, some oaks, hollies, azaleas, and rhododendrons prefer pH's below 7 or even down to 4 or 5.



October To-Do's

Vegetables

Harvest winter squash when the rind is hard. This means it is very difficult to penetrate it with your finger nail. Don't allow them to be exposed to frost, they won't keep as long. Store them in a cool place above freezing and out of direct sunlight.

Harvest pumpkin when they turn the color they are supposed to be meaning deep orange usually. Like winter squash the rind should be hard. Make sure to leave a portion of the stem attached to the pumpkin. This will help it keep longer.

In early October, sow sets of Egyptian tree or multiplier onions.

Harvest carrots before a heavy freeze.

Apply a fresh layer of mulch or leaves over the garden if you didn't sow a cover crop. This will protect your soil during the winter and add nutrients for next years crop.



Autumn Leaves Are Treasures, Not Trash



The hot dry weather experienced throughout much of the area in late summer is bringing an early leaf drop to many landscape plants. But even under the best weather conditions, the shorter, cooler days of autumn signal deciduous plants to begin their color change and eventual leaf drop. For some, this marvel is overshadowed by the chores of raking and disposing of leaves.

What's needed here is an attitude adjustment! Autumn leaves don't have to become trash. On the contrary, they easily can be turned into valuable soil-enhancing organic matter. There are several ways to manage tree leaves at home.

Green-thumbed gardeners have long known the value of recycling plant material. Dry leaves can be plowed or tilled under in the vegetable or annual flower bed in fall to provide a source of organic matter. Shredding the leaves first will speed the breakdown so that the leaves will not be visible by spring. Be sure to mix the leaves into the soil, rather than leaving them on top through the winter, to avoid keeping the soil too cold and wet to work in the spring.

Tree leaves can be recycled directly on the lawn. Use your power mower or shredder/vacuum to break dry leaves into smaller pieces. A mulching blade on the mower will speed this process, but even a standard blade will do an adequate job. For large leaves, such as maple and sycamore, it may take several passes to get a finely shredded product. Once the leaves are pulverized, they will break down quickly. A fall application of nitrogen fertilizer (about 1 pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet) will help speed decomposition of the leaves and also will benefit the grass plants.

Fall leaves also make great composting ingredients, especially when mixed with green trimmings and grass clippings. Again, the smaller the pieces, the faster they'll break down, so shred or chop dry leaves before adding them to the compost pile. If you don't have green trimmings or grass clippings, add a source of nitrogen to the leaves, such as commercial fertilizer or dry cow, horse, sheep, or poultry manure. The nitrogen is needed by the microorganisms that break down the carbon in plant materials. Add a sprinkling of soil or finished compost to introduce a source of the microorganisms, and water just enough to moisten. The compost will heat up in the center as it breaks down. Stir the contents occasionally to add air and allow for uniform heating. Generally, the more often you turn the pile, the faster you'll get a finished product. Compost is ready to add back into the garden when it looks uniformly dark and crumbly. Compost improves soil aeration, moisture retention and drainage, and nutrient-holding capabilities.

Last, but not least, shredded leaves can be used as a winter mulch to protect tender perennials through the coming harsh weather. Shredding the leaves will help prevent them from packing down as they get wet and smothering the plants that they are supposed to protect. To provide winter protection, apply a 3-to 6-inch layer of shredded leaves over the top of tender perennials after several hard freezes. The goal of winter mulch is to keep plants dormant through the winter, so it must be applied after the ground is cold and plants are fully dormant. The timing of application will vary from year to year with the weather, but most years will be appropriate sometime between the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. Rosie Lerner, Purdue University

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Country Ham and Broccoli Grits

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 pound fresh broccoli florets
½ cup minced onion
¾ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes

2 cloves minced garlic
4 cups 1% milk
1 cup uncooked quick grits
1 cup 2%, shredded cheddar cheese

6 ounces country ham, cut into ½ inch pieces
1 large egg, beaten
Salt and pepper to taste

1. Preheat oven to 375°F.
Coat 13x9x2 inch baking dish with cooking spray. **Heat** olive oil in a frying pan. **Sauté** broccoli, onion, garlic and red pepper flakes until vegetables are tender. About 5 minutes. **Set aside.**
2. Heat milk to a boil in a large saucepan. Slowly, **whisk** in grits. **Reduce heat** and stir continuously until thickened. **Reserve** 2 tablespoons of the cheese.
3. Remove from heat, stir in

ham, broccoli mixture, cheese, egg, salt and pepper. **Mix** until well blended. **Pour** into prepared baking dish.

4. Sprinkle with reserved cheese. **Bake**, uncovered for 30 minutes, or until top is set and lightly puffed.

Yield: 16, ½ cup servings.

Nutritional Analysis: 120 calories, 3.5 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 25 mg cholesterol, 370 mg sodium, 13 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 4 g sugar, 9 g protein.

Buying Kentucky Proud is easy. Look for the label at your grocery store, farmers' market, or roadside stand.

