

October Garden Guide

- * Plant spring flowering bulbs.
- * Cut down stems and foliage of herbaceous perennials after two or three hard frosts and when leaves begin to brown.
- * Dig and bring in cannas, dahlias and gladiolus. Dry, clean and store in a cool location free from frost.
- * After several hard frosts add mulch to your perennial flower garden. A one-inch layer of straw or chopped leaves will help conserve soil moisture and protect the root system.
- * When deciding on new trees or shrubs to plant around your home, remember to select varieties that will fit the location when they are at their mature height. This will greatly reduce pruning and other maintenance in the future.
- * Pick bagworms from evergreen shrubs. This will eliminate the spring hatch from overwintered eggs.
- * Remove leaves from lawn to reduce lawn problems. Compost or shred and use them for mulch.
- * Fall is the time to control certain broadleaf weeds in the lawn, such as white clover, dandelion and ground ivy.
- * Make a note of any particular productive or unsatisfactory varieties of vegetables that you planted this year. Such information can be very useful when planning next years' garden.
- * Remove any diseased or insect-infested plant material from your garden, it may harbor over-wintering stages of disease or insect pests. If you leave this plant material in your garden, you are leaving diseases and insects which will begin to reproduce again next spring and add to next years' pest problem.
- * Cure pumpkins, butternut and hubbard squash at temperatures between 70-80 degrees Fahrenheit for two or three weeks immediately after harvest. After curing, store them in a dry place at 55-60 degrees Fahrenheit.
- * Use dried herbs to make fragrant wreaths and dried flower arrangements.
- * Clean up the orchard and small fruit plantings. Sanitation is essential for good maintenance. Dried fruits or mummies carry disease organisms through the winter to attack next years' crop.

* Nut trees are a fine addition to the home landscape. They may accent the house, provide shade in the summer and even become a food source.

* Christmas cactus need special care now to get its beautiful flowers this December. Buds will form at 50-60 degrees Fahrenheit or if the plant is exposed to at least 13 hours of complete darkness each night.

* Fall is an excellent time for taking soil samples in your lawn and garden. Soil tests will measure the pH of the soil, organic matter content and the levels of some of the major elements required for plant growth, such as phosphorus and potassium.