

Horticulture

1999 "Plants of the Year" recommended for Nebraska

Looking for something new to plant in your garden or home landscape? The "Plants of the Year" program, a joint effort of the Nebraska Nursery & Landscape Association (NNLA) and the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum (NSA), has some recommendations of new or underutilized trees, shrubs and perennials that merit wider use in Nebraska.

Todd Morrissey, Assistant Director for Horticulture Programs at NSA, says the plants, which are voted on each year by members of NNLA, are chosen for their ornamental value, hardiness, ease of maintenance and availability. They are plants, he notes, "that make everyone look like a great gardener."

There has been a growing trend toward using prairie plants in the landscape. Lead plant, this year's "Perennial of the Year," is true to that trend. Dark purple flower clusters rise above the silvery green foliage in mid-summer. It is drought-tolerant and blooms heavily in a full sun

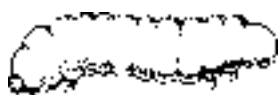
setting. J. E. Weaver, a famous prairie ecologist from the University of Nebraska, did extensive research on this wildflower, noting its landscape versatility.

Koreanspice viburnum, "Shrub of the Year," has almost unlimited landscape appeal—spring blossoms, attractive summer foliage and autumn color. This 4-6 foot shrub develops light to dark pink blossoms in late April to early May, has a spicy fragrance, pale green summer foliage and dark red fall color.

Swamp white oak, a 50' native of the eastern U.S., is "Tree of the Year". Its leaves are green above and velvety white below. It can withstand poorly drained or compacted sites and, despite its name, grows well in dry, upland soils.

For more information about the "Plants of the Year," call 402-472-2971, or write Nebraska Statewide Arboretum, P.O. Box 830715, UNL, Lincoln, NE 68583-0715. (MJM)

Watch for Squash Vine Borer



The squash vine borer is one of the most serious pests affecting squash and pumpkin vines.



Injury is caused by the caterpillars boring into the tender, lower stems of the vines or

bushes causing them to suddenly wilt a few weeks later.

Spray now to prevent loss of this year's squash and pumpkin plants, since the adults deposit eggs on the young stems and leaves. Apply an insecticide like malathion to the base of squash or pumpkin plants weekly, beginning when the vines begin to run or bush begins to grow. Follow all label directions and precautions when using insecticides. (MJM)

Powdery mildew on ornamentals

Powdery mildew is a fungal disease of many ornamentals in Nebraska landscapes. The most commonly affected species include lilac, sycamore, oak, honeysuckle, bittersweet, hydrangea, viburnum, dogwood and rose. Many annuals and perennial flowers are also affected.

The most obvious symptoms are white to gray powdery substance covering the leaves and/or stems of the plants. An overall stunted appearance to the plant can also occur. Later in the season the powdery substance may become thicker, indicating the growth of mycelium. Along

with this thicker growth, tiny, black, round fruiting bodies will appear. These bodies will rupture and expel spores that will then disperse in the wind to other host plants.

Control of this disease can be achieved by good cultural methods and use of fungicides. The cultural practices include thinning over grown plants and increasing air circulation around the infected plant material. Daconil 2787 is a recommended fungicide. Fungicides should be applied at the first sign of mildew and reapplied two weeks later. (MJM)

Vegetable gardening in the fall

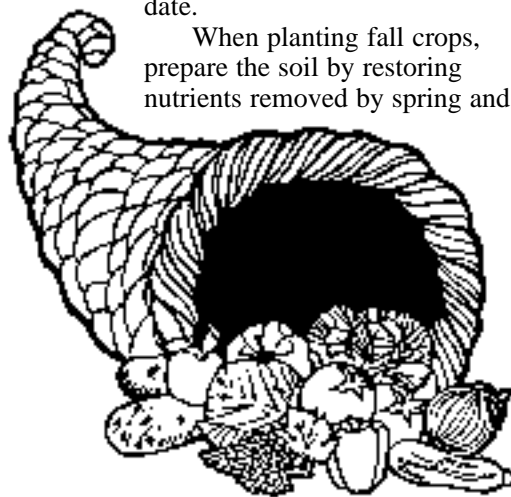
By planning and planting a fall vegetable garden, it is possible to have fresh vegetables up to and even past the first frosts. Many varieties of vegetables can be planted in mid to late summer for fall harvests. Succession plantings of warm season crops, such as corn and beans, can be harvested until the first killing frost.

Cool season crops, such as broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, kohlrabi, leaf lettuce, radishes, spinach, turk kale and collards grow during the cool fall and withstand light frosts. Planting is the key to successful fall garden

To determine the plant a particular vegetable for the latest harvest, you need to know the average date of the first hard freeze. For Lancaster County, it is approximately

October 10th. You also must know the number of days to maturity for the variety of vegetable you plan to grow. Count the days back from the frost date to figure your planting date.

When planting fall crops, prepare the soil by restoring nutrients removed by spring and



summer crops.

A light layer of compost or a small application of fertilizer will prepare the soil for another crop. Dry soil may make

working the soil difficult and inhibit seed germination during the midsummer period. Plant fall vegetables when the soil is moist after a rain or water the area thoroughly the day before planting. It may also be beneficial to soak the seeds overnight before planting.

An organic mulch will help keep the soil cool. Mulching between the rows can decrease soil drying. Irrigate when necessary so plants have sufficient moisture during the warm days. Some of the best quality vegetables are produced during the warm days and cool nights of the fall season.

Look ahead to the fall garden, which offers its own satisfaction through its prolonged harvest of fresh vegetables, savings in food costs and the knowledge that you are making full use of your gardening space and season. (MJM)

Water use in the landscape

Every time you turn a faucet, an important natural resource, water, goes down the drain. Unfortunately, more water than necessary. This check list will help you conserve water for lawn and garden use. Try to add these water conservation tips into your landscape and vegetable gardens. A few simple changes in your daily routine can conserve some of this important resource and help to avert waste.

* Mulch shrubs, perennials, annual flowers and vegetable plants to retain moisture in the soil longer. Use shredded leaves, grass clippings or chopped bark around the plants. Mulching also

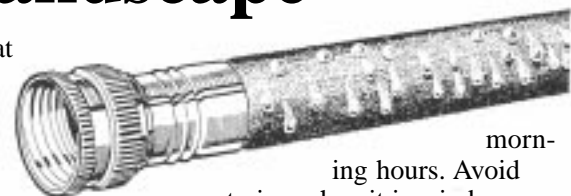
controls weeds that compete with garden plants for water.

* Vegetables that require more water should be grouped together in the garden to make maximum use of water applications.

* Collect rain water in a barrel or large bucket from down spouts. Use it to water container plants.

* Use a drip irrigation system in your gardens. This method uses 25 to 50 percent less water than hose or sprinkler methods.

* Water the lawn during the



morning hours. Avoid watering when it is windy or during the hottest part of the day. To avoid over watering, keep track of the time by setting a timer or alarm clock.

* When purchasing plants or developing a new landscape, select low water use plants.

By making these simple changes, you can pull the plug on unwise water use and help to conserve this precious resource. (MJM)

1999 July/August Garden Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Remove faded flowers from annual plants	2	3
4	5	6	7 Check garden plants for spider mites	8	9 Plant fall garden	10
11	12 Control squash vine borer	13	14 Prune suckers on maple tree	15	16	17
18	19	20 Check tomatoes for blight	21	22 Store extra seeds	23	24
25	26	27	28 Apply grub control	29	30 Divide iris	31
1	2 Keep garden well watered	3	4	5 Pull weeds	6	7
8	9	10 Cut herbs to dry	11	12 Control bean leaf beetle	13	14
15	16	17	18 Pick flowers to dry or press	19	20 Stop fertilizing roses	21
22	23 Control yellow nut sedge	24	25 Overseed tall fescue	26	27	28 Festival of Color, Mead
29	30 Divide peonies	31				

Many of us need reminders. That is the purpose of this calendar. Check the calendar each month and follow the recommendations if they are necessary in your landscape situation. (MJM)