

Horticulture

Plant a Tree

Good trees generally grow slowly, so they should be the first plants to be placed on the property. Trees are the basis of good design, and so their location has more influence than that of any other plant.

Trees provide shade during the summer, protection from winter winds, protection from the noise of nearby street traffic, screening from the outside and elimination of undesirable vistas, and they add a sense of security and comfort. Trees can be used to modify heat and cold, as well as, to complement and develop natural beauty.

When trees are used near architectural structures, they can bridge the gap between the buildings and the ground on which they stand. Trees also can divert attention, hide unwanted views, balance sloping ground, and provide accent and a center of interest.

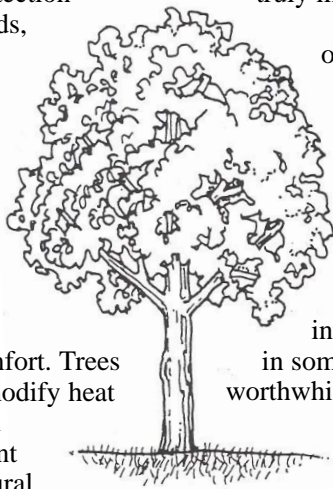
Probably no other natural feature can provide such a changing array of interest throughout the whole year. The lush, tender green of the early

spring blends into the development of leaves and foliage to a rich, harmonizing mass of green. In the spring, flowers of certain trees have an inspiring quality and are followed by the fruit and seed production. These multiple forms of growth are truly miracles of nature.

As trees mature, other qualities become evident. The differences in branching systems become more pronounced. Texture and color in bark give year-round interest. Autumn color in some species makes worthwhile a whole year of waiting to see their glowing hues.

During extended winter periods, trees stand dramatically silhouetted against sky, earth, and buildings.

Most large growing trees should be planted at least 30 feet from the house, depending on the shape of the tree. Small trees should be at least 15 to 20 feet apart. To help you select a tree for your landscape, ask for fact sheet, Landscape Trees for Lancaster County, FS-282. (MJM)



What day is Arbor Day?

Arbor Day, the tree planter's holiday, started more than a century ago in Nebraska, is still going strong today. In January 1872, J. Sterling Morton proposed to the State Board of Agriculture a tree planting holiday be observed in Nebraska on April 10, 1872. He proposed the holiday be named Arbor Day and its purpose, "to urge upon the people of the state the vital importance of tree planting." His efforts were successful and more than a million trees were planted in Nebraska on the first Arbor Day.

In 1885, Arbor Day became a legal holiday in Nebraska, to be observed on Morton's birthday, April 22. Since 1989, Nebraska has celebrated Arbor Day on the last Friday in April. Tree planting is as important now as it was to our grandparents. In fact, it is even more important now since many trees must be planted to keep up with the loss of trees and forests to land clearing, fire, and urban development. By replacing these trees we can be sure we will always have forests and trees for our future. Trees provide shelter from the wind and sun, wood products, wildlife habitat, and more pleasurable surroundings for recreational activities. Many

rural families have always planted trees each year around their ranch or farm to protect soil, livestock, and family.

Perhaps the most important aspect of Arbor Day is its emphasis on the future. In the words of J. Sterling Morton, "Other holidays repose on the past. Arbor Day proposes for the future." We learn to plant trees to show our hope for the future and our concern for those who will come after us.

Why is Arbor Day so important to Nebraskans? Certainly the holiday's origin in our state contributes to our enthusiasm. But, even more important is the scarcity of trees and forests in Nebraska. We appreciate trees because we can easily see what life would be like without them.

Nebraskans should be proud of their tree planting heritage. We can feel satisfied in knowing this state is a more beautiful place to live and a better place for the future.

To celebrate Arbor Day, this year, consider planting a tree in your yard, neighborhood, school yard, local park, or city square. To find out more about Arbor Day look up the Nebraska Forest Service website on Arbor Day at www.nfs.unl.edu/ArborDay.htm. (MJM)

Mom's Day Garden

Wow, look at the calendar, it's almost May. Mother's Day is a few weeks away! Have you gotten her something yet? Have you even thought about it? It is sometimes hard to find that special gift for someone so significant in your life. Here is an idea for a present that will last longer than cut flowers or chocolate candy.

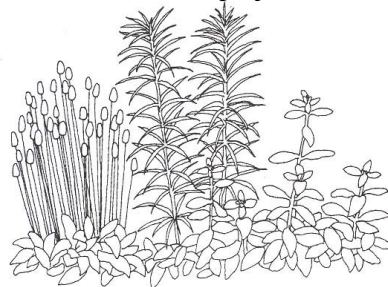
If your mom is a gardener, maybe she deserves to have her own Mother's Day Garden. Select a theme for this garden. If your mom loves roses, buy

roses for her garden. Or if she always wanted a butterfly garden, select plants that will attract butterflies. Then add plants to the garden each year.

Enlist the help of family members for this project. Do

not forget to get your mom's input before you start. She may want the garden in a particular location in the yard or have a favorite plant in mind to go into her garden. She would also appreciate your help in preparing the site for this new addition.

This Mother's Day garden will be a lasting tribute to your mom on her special day. The garden will add beauty to the landscape of the yard that the whole family can enjoy. (MJM)



Annual Vines in the Landscape

Annual flowering vines are useful for many locations around the home landscape. They add new interest to the yard area when grown on a fence, lattice, arbor or trellis.

Annual vines climb by twining around a support or by clinging with tendrils. They grow rapidly to form an attractive mass of foliage and flowers.

Morning glory is one of the most colorful vines you can plant. Brilliant flowers are

available in white and shades of blue, pink, purple and red. The flowers are four inches across and are borne freely on vines which may grow to a height of 12 to 15 feet tall. Morning glories grow best on a well drained soil in a warm sunny location.

Trailing nasturtiums grow four or five feet tall. They bloom profusely and producing fragrant flowers in shades of red and yellow. The plants perform best in well drained soil and full sun.

The sweet pea has a delicate, colorful flower that has

a honey-orange blossom scent. These vines will grow 6 to 8 feet tall in full sun.

Gourds have rather inconspicuous flowers, but produce colorful fruit which are ornamental on the vine

during late summer. The fruit may be dried for fall and winter arrangements. (MJM)

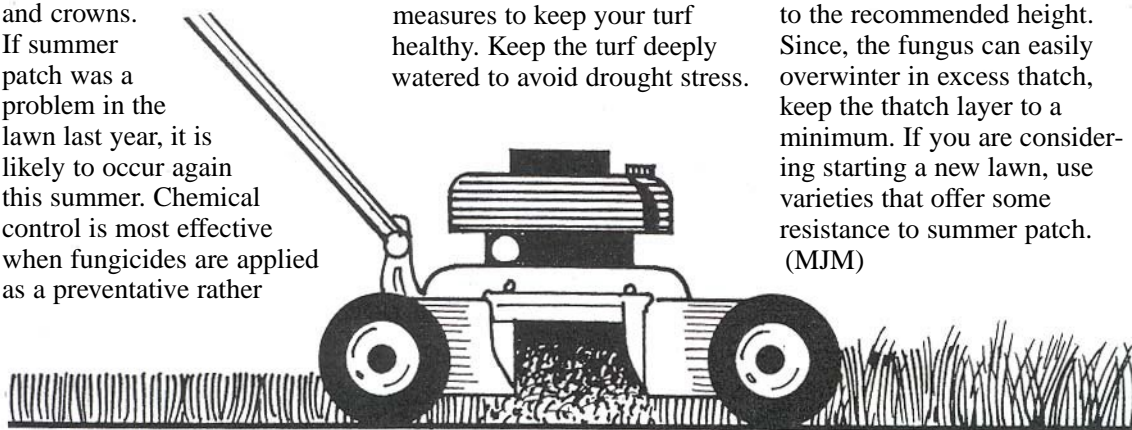
Summer Patch of Turfgrass

Summer patch is a persistent and devastating disease of turf. The fungus resides in the soil and when the grass plants become stressed it attacks the leaves, roots, and crowns. If summer patch was a problem in the lawn last year, it is likely to occur again this summer. Chemical control is most effective when fungicides are applied as a preventative rather

than curative treatments. Make the first application no later than early May, and repeat if needed. Treatment after mid - August is usually not needed.

Follow these control measures to keep your turf healthy. Keep the turf deeply watered to avoid drought stress.

Avoid fertilizing with excess nitrogen in early spring and during the hot summer months. Reduce compaction of the soil by aerating in early fall or mid-spring. Keep the lawn mowed to the recommended height. Since, the fungus can easily overwinter in excess thatch, keep the thatch layer to a minimum. If you are considering starting a new lawn, use varieties that offer some resistance to summer patch. (MJM)



Horticulture information center

NUFACTS
24 hours a day, 7 days a week
1-800-832-5441; or
441-7188 in the Lincoln area

To listen to a NUFACTS information center message, call the number above on a touch-tone phone, then enter a three-digit number listed below. Call 441-7180 to receive a brochure with all the NUFACTS message topics. (MJM)

- NUFACTS
- 110 Good City Trees
- 129 Diseases of Crab Apple
- 130 New Trees and Shrubs Care
- 131 Pine Tip Blight
- 171 Improving Clay Soils
- 181 Dethatching a Lawn
- 190 Tall Fescue Lawn Care
- 191 Kentucky Bluegrass Lawn Care
- 193 Crabgrass Control

- 210 Amaryllis
- 214 Houseplant Insects
- 217 Boston Fern
- 218 African Violet Care
- 245 Apple Leaf Spot
- 265 Vegetable Transplants
- 280 Peas
- 281 Broccoli
- 294 Worm Composting

