

August 16, 2012

## Fall Gardening

As fall begins to creep up on us, we begin to wonder what things for fall gardening we can do at this time. There are a few things that we can start doing to prepare for the winter or to prepare our fall vegetable gardens. It is good that we can finally see the temperatures starting to go down from those triple digits so we can get back outside again, comfortably.

If you haven't already planted your fall vegetables yet, you may want to get that done before it gets too late. Most of our fall vegetables should be planted within the first week or two of August to ensure a good fall harvest before the frost takes the plants out. Those plants that you may have planted in the early spring to get to maturity before it got too hot are the things that are usually planted in the fall. Plants such as carrots, beets, chard, lettuce, cabbage, and snap peas are great for the fall garden. The first frost in Southeast Nebraska is usually around the last week in September or the first week in October, so for planting dates, just count backward from that and compare it to your harvest time listed on the package. For example, if your lettuce says that it takes 50 days to mature, planting on August 1 will give you mature lettuce by the end of September. This will ensure that you will have a harvest before the frost hits.

Another thing that you can do in the fall is to prepare your vegetable garden for spring. If you are done in your garden and your plants have died due to frost or you are just tired of eating all of those cucumbers, you can clean up your garden in preparation for next year. Removing all of the dead plants will help to reduce the diseases and insects that may use them as an overwintering habitat. Also, after removing those plants you may want to till up your ground to get it ready for next spring. This is also a great time to add any compost or manure to your ground if you need to add some nutrients for better plants next year. After tilling it up, you should put some type of mulch on the bare soil to keep it from eroding or blowing off in the wind, grass clippings are a cheap, easy mulch to use.

If you have areas of your lawn that need to be reseeded, we are getting to the point of the year when we can think about doing that. This year, we may need to reseed a lot of lawns, due to the drought. Be sure to keep the soil and seed moist throughout the entire germination period when you reseed a lawn. August 20, is when we advise people to start reseeding their lawns. If you had a problem with henbit, reseed in that area to push out the henbit next spring. If you had a problem with nimblewill, you can spray it with roundup while it is still green and then go in and reseed the area. Fertilizing on your lawn is not recommended until Labor Day at this point of the year, and that should be done with a broadleaf herbicide in the fertilizer to combat your dandelions, bindweed, clover, and other broadleaf weeds. The best control for broadleaf weeds comes in the fall. Another fertilizer treatment can be done around Halloween as well.

Nicole Stoner, Extension Educator

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension in Gage County • 1115 West Scott Street, Beatrice NE 68310

P: 402-223-1384 • fax: 402-223-1370 • email: [nstoner2@unl.edu](mailto:nstoner2@unl.edu) • website: [gage.unl.edu](http://gage.unl.edu)

facebook : <http://www.facebook.com/NicoleStonerHorticulture> • twitter @Nikki\_Stoner