

Gardening and home landscape news & information from the UGA Cooperative Extension in Houston County. Our newsletter provides research-based horticulture information to assist Middle Georgia gardeners. Each edition is researched, compiled and printed as a free service.

### Fall Events & Gardening in Middle Georgia

**Come to the Fair!** The theme is *What a Ride!* at the [2010 Georgia National Fair](#) in Perry, **October 7 - 17**.

**Come join Master Gardeners in the Heritage Building near the Georgia Grown Pavilion.**

Master Gardeners will present demonstrations on gardening and environmental topics. Contact Teddie Berry for a complete list of topics and times - [mg@uga.edu](mailto:mg@uga.edu). Master Gardeners will also be available to answer your gardening questions.

### Flowers, Trees and Shrubs

Plant some excitement! **Fall planting** gives perennials a head start. They will out-perform spring-plantings.

**Plant evergreen perennials and shrubs** to give color and interest to your winter garden.

**Shrubs, including roses and trees, have a much greater chance of success when planted in the late fall and winter.** Winter planting gives plants a chance to develop their root systems before the summer heat stress.

Seeds of annuals, flowers or vegetables that are not hybrids may be saved and used in your garden next spring. Save those seeds! Store them in a cool, dry location.

One of the most exciting activities in the fall is choosing and planting **bulbs**

for color in the spring garden. Order early to get your first choices. When **planting bulbs**, if you're not sure which end is the top, plant it on its side. The stem will always grow upright.

Protect your landscape: monitor rainfall in your yard. The rule of thumb is  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1 inch of water a week. If there has been no significant rainfall for one week, **water shrubs, trees, and vines. This is especially important for new plantings.** Direct water to the root ball on new plants.

**Bring some excitement to flower beds** and container plantings with fall color. **Chrysanthemums add color** and texture to the fall garden. They generally grow well in any soil capable of producing a good crop of vegetables or turf. They grow in poorer soil if ample nutrients and organic matter are incorporated.

**Ferns** can be planted or transplanted in the fall. Move, divide, and plant **irises and daylilies**. Arrange for swaps with friends and neighbors.

As you clean out the flower beds, **mark the spots where late starting perennials will come up** next spring to avoid damaging them.

Turn off and **drain irrigation systems before freezing weather**. We expect the first frost around Nov. 15 - 20.

**Prune dead wood out of shrubs and trees.** Wait to do most other pruning until after Christmas. Prune spring flowering plants after they bloom.



Snapdragons  
Perennial color

### Fall Color Tips & Tricks

- \* Add color through the use of snapdragons, dianthus, pansies and violas.
- \* Add texture & color to the garden through the use of ornamental cabbage and herbs such as rosemary and parsley.
- \* Plant pansies and violas from Oct. 15—Nov. 15. They need to develop strong root systems before frost but can be damaged by heat.
- \* Use water soluble slow release fertilizer to feed pansies and violas in winter.

**Website:**  
<http://www.ugaextension.com/houston>

Newsletter compiled by:  
Diane Stephens, Master Gardener  
Willie Chance, Extension Agent  
Extension Office: 801 Main Street  
Perry, GA 31069  
Telephone: 478.987.2028  
E-mail: [mg@uga.edu](mailto:mg@uga.edu)

## Fall Landscape & Garden Tips

Take the time to evaluate this year's garden results. **Plan for next year.** Consider changes and improvements for your gardens. Begin planning new beds.

Compost is great for building up garden beds. Till in at least two to three inches when using compost. Make sure the compost is well composted first. It should look and smell like rich soil. The Georgia National Fair & Ag Center and other locations offer free compost for pick up. Contact the Extension Office for a list of [sources](#) for compost and mulch.

Be sure to [soil test](#) each garden site.

### Vegetables

**Cool season vegetables may be planted** at this time. Now is the perfect time to **add some salad greens with a variety of lettuces.** Loose-leaf lettuce varieties are easy and fast to grow at this time of year. You can grow these in large planters even if you don't have a big garden.

**Transplant broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, collards, and kale** into the garden in September or October. Plant seeds for turnip, spinach, mustard greens, lettuce, radishes, beets, carrots, and Chinese cabbage.

Be sure your vegetables are adequately watered this time of year. Many crops will not mature correctly if stressed due to lack of water. **Mulch to control weeds** and slow water loss. Till the soil as the days get cooler to destroy soil-burrowing insects.

### Fruits & Nuts

Plant fruit and nut trees once temperatures cool and fall rains begin. Till soil well. Plant fruit and nut trees in a sunny, well-drained spot. Plant at the same depth they originally grew. **Plant only [UGA recommended varieties](#).**

**Do not prune new fruit or nut plants** until January or February.

**Fall weed control around fruit trees is crucial** because weeds act as hosts to over-wintering insects.

**Apply mulch around fruit trees,** but do not place it right up against the trunk.

**Prevent disease** by promptly disposing of all fallen fruit, leaves, and dead limbs.

**Check grapevines for mummified berries**—victims of black rot. Pick and dispose of them before they spread the disease. Do not put them in the compost pile.

**Keep strawberry beds weed free.** Weeds you pull now will make weeding much easier next spring.

**Pick and discard old fruit.** They may harbor pests that can attack the plants next year.

### Lawns and Turf

**Continue to mow until the grass goes dormant.** Mow at the recommended height for the type of turfgrass you are growing.

**Keep leaves and pine straw raked up** off the lawn. They can pack and smother the turf underneath.

**Apply a [pre-emergent herbicide](#) to your lawn in early October.** Select one that is labeled for your type of grass.

### Tasks in the Garden

**October can be a very dry month and plants need water to properly go dormant.** Water deeply but infrequently. Do not water unless the soil is dry. Apply 3/4 to 1 inch of water each time.

Wait for cooler temperatures to ensure the successful **transplant of pansies for winter color.** In Georgia, it can be hot even in October!

**Autumn is the crowning glory of the year.** Take time to enjoy the season.



The University of Georgia

The University of Georgia and Fort Valley State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the counties of the state cooperating. The Cooperative Extension offers educational programs, assistance and materials to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex or disability. An equal opportunity/affirmative action organization committed to a diverse work force.

### Web Page Links

Houston County Cooperative Extension  
<http://www.ugaextension.com/houston>

Cooperative Extension Home Page  
<http://www.caes.uga.edu/extension/>

Gardening & Landscape Information  
UGA Urban Ag Web site:  
[www.ugaurbanag.org](http://www.ugaurbanag.org)

Call your local  
Extension Agent at  
(800) ASK-UGA1