

Weekly Column
Ericka Soumare
Purdue Extension, Elkhart County
Agriculture and Natural Resources Educator
Phone: 574-533-0554
17746 C.R. 34, Goshen, IN 46526

Fall Gardening Checklist

Fall is finally here and the change in temperature is a reminder that winter will surely follow. But in the meantime, there are many gardening activities that can be done this fall. Keeping up with these chores can help in the transition from season to season and facilitate organization for gardening projects.

September is a great time to get storage areas prepared for flower bulbs and harvested vegetables. Also, houseplants that have been set outside for the warmer weather need to be brought back inside before nightly temperatures drop below 55 degrees. Apples should not be left on the tree until they soften, and can be taken off when sweet. Pears will also soften too much if left on the tree and should be taken off when brown spots appear so they can ripen to yellow off of the tree. Green tomatoes that have fully matured should be taken inside to ripen and vegetables such as peppers and sweet potatoes can also be harvested.

October is a time to water indoor plants less frequently and stop fertilizing because they will need to have a resting period to slow growth or stop growth altogether in the winter. Also, plants and trees should be watered well until the ground freezes. This will ensure that they have enough water during the dry winter. Protecting the lawn by removing all large leaves can also help.

November is a good time to make sure that indoor plants are moved to areas that provide the best sun exposure if they start to have leaf drop. This is usually in the south or west facing windows. Tilling the soil in the fall can be helpful in areas that are not susceptible to erosion by helping the soil structure stay intact for possible early spring planting. Also, strawberries can be protected with winter mulch which should be applied when the plants are dormant and before the temperature drops below 20°F.

For more gardening tips for the fall, you can visit the web at <http://www.hort.purdue.edu/ext/HO-93.pdf>. For publications that list tips for other seasons, you can visit Purdue University's Garden Publication website at http://www.hort.purdue.edu/ext/garden_pubs.html. You can also contact your Elkhart County Extension office at 574-533-0554.

Source: Learner, Rosie. Autumn Garden Calendar. Purdue University, Department of Horticulture.

Purdue University is an equal access/equal opportunity institution.