Horticulture Tips
November 2010

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service
Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources
Oklahoma State University

GARDEN TIPS FOR NOVEMBER!

David Hillock

Lawn & Turf

- Fertilize cool-season grasses like fescue with 1 pound nitrogen per 1000 sq. ft.
- Continue to mow fescue as needed at 2 inches and water during dry conditions.
- Control broadleaf winter weeds like dandelions (HLA-6601).
- Keep falling leaves off fescue to avoid damage to the foliage.

Tree & Shrub

- Prune deciduous trees in early part of winter. Prune only for structural and safety purposes.
- Wrap young, thin-barked trees with a commercial protective material to prevent winter sunscald.
- Apply dormant oil for scale infested trees and shrubs before temperatures fall below 40 degrees Fahrenheit. Follow label directions.
- Continue to plant balled and burlapped trees.
- Watch for arborvitae aphids, which tolerate cooler temperatures in evergreen shrubs.

Flowers

- Tulips can still be successfully planted through the middle of November.
- Leave foliage on asparagus, mums and other perennials to help insulate crowns from harsh winter conditions.
- Bulbs like hyacinth, narcissus and tulip can be potted in containers for indoor forcing.

Miscellaneous

- Leftover garden seeds can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator or freezer until the next planting season. Discard seeds over 3 years old.
- Gather and shred leaves. Add to compost, use as mulch or till into garden plots.
- Clean and store garden and landscape tools. Coat with a light application of oil to prevent rusting. Drain fuel tanks, irrigation lines and hoses. Bring hoses indoors.

Fruits & Nuts

- Delay pruning fruit trees until next February or March before bud break.
- Harvest pecans and walnuts immediately to eliminate deterioration of the kernel.

Light and its Role in Plant Growth and Development

David Hillock

Light has three principal characteristics that affect plant growth: quantity, quality and duration.

Light **quantity** refers to the intensity or concentration of sunlight and varies with the season of the year. The maximum is present in the summer and the minimum in winter. The more sunlight a plant receives (up to a point), the better capacity it has to produce plant food through photosynthesis. As the sunlight quantity decreases, the photosynthetic process decreases. Light quantity can be decreased in a garden or greenhouse by using shade cloth above the plants. It can be increased by surrounding plants with white or reflective materials or supplemental lights.

Light **quality** refers to the color or wavelength reaching the plant surface. Sunlight can be broken up by a prism into respective colors of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet. On a rainy day, raindrops act as tiny prisms and break the sunlight into these colors, producing a rainbow. Red and blue light have the greatest effect on plant growth. Green light is least effective to plants as they reflect green light and absorb none. It is this reflected light that makes them appear green to us. Blue light is primarily responsible for vegetative growth or leaf growth. Red light, when combined with blue light, encourages flowering in plants. Fluorescent, or cool-white, light is high in the blue range of light quality and is used to encourage leafy growth. Such light would be excellent for starting seedlings. Incandescent light is high in the red or orange range, but generally produces too much heat to be a valuable light source. Fluorescent "grow" lights have a mixture of red and blue colors that attempts to imitate sunlight as closely as possible, but they are costly and generally not of any greater value than regular fluorescent lights.

Light **duration**, or photoperiod, refers to the amount of time that a plant is exposed to sunlight. When the concept of photoperiod was first recognized, it was thought that the length of periods of light triggered flowering. The various categories of response were named according to the light length (i.e., short-day and long-day). It was then discovered that it is not the length of the light period but the length of uninterrupted dark periods that is critical to floral development. The ability of many plants to flower is controlled by photoperiod. Plants can be classified into three categories, depending upon their flowering response to the duration of darkness. These are short-day, long-day or day-neutral plants.

Short-day plants form their flowers only when the day length is less than about 12 hours in duration. Short-day plants include many spring- and fall-flowering plants such as chrysanthemum and poinsettia. **Long-day** plants form flowers only when day lengths exceed 12 hours (short nights). They include almost all of the summer-flowering plants, such as rudbeckia and California poppy, as well as many vegetables including beet, radish, lettuce, spinach and potato. **Day-neutral** plants form flowers regardless of day length. Some plants do not really fit into any category but may be responsive to combinations of day lengths. The petunia will flower regardless of day length, but flowers earlier and more profusely under long daylight. Since chrysanthemums flower under the short-day conditions of spring or fall the method for manipulating the plant into experiencing short days is very simple. If long days are predominant, a shade cloth is drawn over the chrysanthemum for 12 hours daily to block out light

until flower buds are initiated. To bring a long-day plant into flower when sunlight is not present longer than 12 hours, artificial light is added until flower buds are initiated.

In the landscape, plants vary in their need for light. Some plants require full sun and some perform best in shady areas. Full sun plants may grow in shadier areas, but their performance is usually poor. As a rule, sunny areas are those that get at least 6 hours of full, direct, sun a day. Light shade gets at least 4 hours of direct sun or 6 or more of dappled light. Full (also called deep) shade gets 4 hours or less of sun.

As important as light is when selecting plants for the landscape, remember that light is not the only factor that affects growth. High summer temperatures and the extreme humidity also affect plant growth and performance. Some bedding plants for example, such as lobelia and alyssum, are labeled for full sun, but suffer in the brutal Oklahoma heat. Such plants may need to be placed so they receive as much sun in the early part of the day, but are protected from the late afternoon sun.

Oklahoma and Arkansas/Oklahoma 4-H Horticulture Identification Contest List Changing

Shelley Mitchell

The identification lists of the National Junior Horticulture Association, accessible at http://www.njha.org/projects_hortid.html, will be the official lists for the horticulture contests at the Oklahoma State Fair and the Arkansas/Oklahoma State Fair, starting with the 2011 fairs. The NJHA website has photos for most, if not all, of the specimens listed, as well as an article on judging horticulture products. There are also links to articles on basic horticulture knowledge, such as plant nomenclature, plant nutrition, fruit and nut production, landscaping, etc. It is a valuable site. In the Oklahoma and Arkansas contests, we will identify 40 specimens and judge 3 classes of specimens (to be selected from any of the 4 identification categories of fruits/nuts/berries, vegetables, flowers/indoor plants, and landscape ornamentals). Please spread the word to all 4-H'ers interested in participating in the horticulture contests.

Oklahoma State Pecan Show 2010

Becky Carroll

Be sure to get the word out to everyone to enter their best pecans in the state show this year. There will not be any qualifying regional or district pecan shows this year. However, some county/area shows will be held at the discretion of the County Extension Educator. Winning entries from county shows will be sent to the state show. If no county/area show is available, growers may enter pecans directly by sending samples to Oklahoma State University, Department of Horticulture, Attn: Becky Carroll, 358 Ag Hall, OSU, Stillwater, OK 74078. Samples should arrive by January 21, 2011.

Samples should be entered in a sealed plastic or paper bag. Label the bag on the outside and place a label inside the bag. Information should include exhibitors name and address, county, and type of pecan entered. Be sure to follow the guidelines that are listed below before sending entries.

A few helpful hints: Take the time to select pecans that are all the same cultivar, or same size and shape natives – *don't send mixed pecans*. Select uniform, clean, uncracked pecans. Presentation can make the difference between two very similar samples. Make sure to send 2 pounds of pecans in a labeled and sealed bag.

General Rules and Guidelines

- All entries must be grown in Oklahoma during the current season.
- Each entry shall consist of two pounds of nuts.
- Entries deemed unworthy by the judges will not compete for awards.
- Label each entry as to exhibitor's name, address and cultivar of nuts. If more than one native (seedling) pecan exhibit is made, identify the nuts from separate trees by numbers. Only one exhibit of each cultivar or native tree may be entered by one individual.
- Each entry will compete in one of the following 28 classes:

1. Apache
2. Barton
3. Burkett
4. Cheyenne
5. Choctaw
6. Comanche
7. Graking
8. Gratex
9. Kanza
10. Kiowa
11. Mahan
12. Maramec
13. Mohawk
14. Pawnee
15. Peruque
16. SanSaba Improved
17. Schley (eastern)
18. Shawnee
19. Shoshoni
20. Sioux
21. Squirrels Delight
22. Stuart
23. Success
24. Western
25. Wichita
26. Other Cultivars
27. Large-Native (seedling) 60 nuts/lb or larger
28. Small-Native (seedling) more than 60 nuts/lb

- Each grower is allowed to participate at one county show of his or her choice.
- Each grower is allowed to enter one entry in each show class with the exception of Class 26 (Other Cultivars), Class 27 (Large-seedling) and Class 28 (Small- seedling)
- Each grower may enter one entry from each native (seedling) tree.
- Entries should be shipped or mailed to arrive at the show at least one day prior to the deadline.
- County pecan shows will not be affected by these rules and procedures.

- Samples will be placed in cold storage, and judged before the Oklahoma Pecan Growers Annual Meeting. At that time, the winning entries will be displayed with awards and recognitions. All entries will become the property of the OPGA.

- First, second, and third place winners in each class at the State Pecan Show will receive ribbons.

- State Pecan Show Special Awards – Plaques will be awarded for the largest pecan entry, the entry having the highest kernel percentage, the champion native and the best entry of the show.

- If a qualifying show is not available, growers may submit entries in accordance with these guidelines directly to the State Show. Entries in the state show must be received by January 21,2011 at the following address:

  Oklahoma State University
  Department of Horticulture & LA
  Attn: Becky Carroll
  358 Ag Hall
  Stillwater, OK 74078

Reminder on the 2010 Cucurbit Vegetable Production and Marketing Educational Meeting – This Year's Meeting will Include Other Popular Vegetables

Jim Shrefler

The 2010 Oklahoma Cucurbit Production and Marketing Educational Meeting will be held Thursday, December 16 at the Grady County Fairgrounds in Chickasha. In response to developing market opportunities and producer interests, this year's meeting will include topics that should be of interest to all vegetable growers including Market Gardeners and Farmers' Market Growers. Some topics to be addressed include weed control practices for use in vegetables, legal issues with vegetable marketing, vegetable disease control, vegetable variety information and results of a 2010 plasticulture demonstration.

This event is intended to provide information of what should be of value to Extension Educators, market garden growers, commercial farmers and agricultural supply businesses. Not only will this program address numerous topics related to cucurbit fruits and vegetables (watermelon, cantaloupe, squash, pumpkins, etc.), the program will include other important vegetables as well.

The meeting will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Fairgrounds Community Building in Chickasha (Grady County Fairgrounds). Please note that there will be a $10 registration fee for this year's event. We request that you register by December 8 to guarantee the noon meal. Watch for further details on the program and registration at www.lane-ag.org or contact the Lane Agriculture Center at 580-889-7343 or by email jim.shrefler@okstate.edu.

Master Gardener Corner

David Hillock

Horticulture Industries Show (HIS) – January 14-15, 2011. The HIS program is nearly complete and preregistration forms will be mailed late November – early December. This year HIS will be held at the Holiday Inn City Center, Fort Smith, AR. All Master Gardeners are invited to attend. If you are a returning Master Gardener you can receive Continuing Education hours that will count towards the minimum 20 hours you need to keep active member status. Remember, however, that only the time actually spent in class counts as training received. Travel and in-between times do not count.

Though we do offer a Master Gardener/Public Garden session, you may also choose from any other session offered during the conference. There are 5 commodity groups represented during HIS, all conducting seminars, workshops and business meetings. You may choose from any of the following groups – Vegetables/ Farmers Market, Fruit, Sustainable Ag, Master Gardener/Public Garden, and Christmas Trees.

The conference theme is "4 Season Farming: Meeting the Demand for Locally Grown Specialty Crops Year Round" with Keynote Speakers: Paul & Alison Wiediger, Au Naturel Farm; Jon Biermacher, Noble Foundation; and John Lee, USDA.

Topics for the Master Gardener/Public Garden session include: "The Learning Fields," "Planning Now for Summertime Water Needs," "An Update on Crystal Bridges," "A Gardener's Guide to Botanical Gardens," "Community Gardening," "Gardening with Schools," "Gardening with Native Plants," "The Botanical Garden of the Ozarks Turns Three," "Applying IPM in Your Landscape," "A Review of Disease Issues in 2010," "Hearts and Hammers, A City's Rebirth Following a Devastating Tornado," "What's New in Oklahoma Gardening," "Youth Gardening Programs," and "Landscaping in a Changing Climate."

For more program information and registration go to http://www.hortla.okstate.edu/his/.

This should be another great conference, hope to see you there!

2011 State Master Gardener Continuing Education Conference – June 2-3, 2011. Next year the Garfield County Master Gardeners are hosting the State Master Gardener Conference in Enid with a theme of "The Role of the Master Gardener in the Farmland". The conference will be held June 2-3, 2011 at the Autry Technology Center. On Thursday, June 2 there will be an evening social at the Heritage Village. Regular conference activities will begin on Friday, June 3. We hope that you will mark your calendars and plan to attend. Planning and organization of the conference is still underway; we will keep you posted.

Upcoming Horticulture Events

December 9, 2010
Global Horticulture Conference
Stillwater, OK
http://www.hortla.okstate.edu/pdf/2010_globalhort.pdf

January 14-15, 2011
Horticulture Industries Show
Fort Smith, Arkansas
http://www.hortla.okstate.edu/his/

April 14, 2011
Gardening with Disabilities
Stillwater, OK

For more information about upcoming events, please contact Stephanie Larimer at 405-744-5404 or stephanie.larimer@okstate.edu.