



Horton Around the Yard & Garden

HORTICULTURE NEWSLETTER
by Adrian C. Hinton,

USU - Utah County Horticulture



GREETINGS FROM THE COUNTY AGENT



Are we still looking for an early fall? Evidence is leaning that way. The three small patches of snow on top of the west of Mt. Timpanogos are still hanging in there. We may not get a winner for that contest this year.

Thank you to all of you who helped with the judging of the county fairs this year. And don't forget to take your own produce to the State Fair (September 6). See the Fair Book for details.

The 2005 Master Gardener class is almost full, so get your application in if you want to attend this year.

All of you Master Gardeners need to reserve December 8 at 6:30 p.m. to come to our Fall Social. It's so much fun to have you all come and visit with each other and with us. I will look forward to seeing all of you there.

Have a great fall harvest.

TIMELY TIPS FOR SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER

by Pat Fugal, USU Master Gardener

1. Spray tough perennial weeds like bindweed (morning glory), oxalis, etc. with products that contain 2,4-D + MCPP + dicamba (Trimec, Spurge and Oxalis Killer, Weedit II, or Roundup mix, etc.) when the fall weather turns cool.
2. Plant garlic for harvest next summer.
3. Divide perennials.
4. Rake up and discard leaves infected with fungal diseases such as anthracnose, aspen leaf spot, rust, powdery mildew, etc. Compost the rest.
5. Go visit the State Fair September 8-18 and see all the veggie and flower entries you submitted.
6. Plant spring-blooming bulbs.
7. Don't want to cover tomatoes? Then pick blemish-free ones and store to ripen later, or make fried green tomatoes, green tomato mincemeat, etc. Extension has a booklet entitled "52 Great Green Tomato Recipes."
8. Fertilize your lawn around Labor Day. In October, start lowering your lawn mower height one notch each mowing so the grass is short (1 1/2") going into winter.
9. Make your house less inviting to wandering spiders. If you can see daylight under doors, spiders can walk right in and you need to replace the weather stripping. Check the caulking around windows and cable lines.



Frost Protection & Extending the Growing Season

Hinton Around
The Yard & Garden



by D. Whiting, C. Wilson and C. O'Meara, CSU Extension

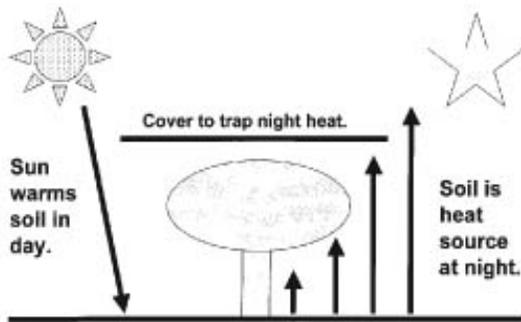
Types of Frost

Advection frosts occur when a cold front moves into the area. Temperatures may drop significantly below critical levels making crop protection questionable.

Radiation frosts occur on calm, clear nights that lack cloud cover to hold in heat. Radiation frosts at the beginning and end of the growing season are typically only a few degrees below critical levels, making crop protection worthwhile.

Heat Source at Night

Soil warmed by the sun in the daytime is the source of heat for frost protection at night. Moist, smooth soil absorbs more heat. To trap heat from the soil around young vegetables at night, place a covering that is low to the ground and spreading. To recharge the heat source for the next night, any covering over crops must allow sunlight to shine through to the soil or must be removed in the daytime.



Coverings

Blankets and Sheets

Grandma's old method of covering the garden with blankets and sheets works well as long as the fabric remains dry. If the fabric absorbs water, evaporative cooling can lead to colder temperatures adjacent to the blanket. To recharge the heat stored in the soil, remove the fabric in the daytime

Plastic Covering on Frame

1. When plastic is used as a covering over a growing bed, it must be held up off the plants. Plants will freeze where the plastic touches them.

Floating Row Covers

Floating row covers are lightweight fabrics that lay directly over crops. Since they transmit light, they provide crop protection over an extended period of time without being removed. They provide 2 to 4 degrees F of frost protection, cut wind on tender plants, and screen out some insects. On insect pollinated crops, row covers must be removed for pollination to occur. Many brands and fabric types are commercially available.



Floating row cover

Adding Space Blankets

1. On extra cold nights, placing an aluminum space blanket over the plastic on the frame significantly adds to the frost protection. With the aluminized side placed down (towards the plants), a space blanket reflects 99 percent of the heat. They are readily available where camping gear is sold.

Space blanket with Christmas tree lights - For the gardener really wanting to extend the growing season, try Christmas lights plus a space blanket. One 25-light string of C-7 (mid-size) Christmas lights per frame unit (4 feet wide by 5 feet long) with a space blanket on top gave 18 degrees to over 30 degrees frost protection in Fort Collins trials.



Cold frame with Christmas lights



Hinton Around the Yard and Garden

Wondering How to Store Garden Produce?

By Pat Fugal & Julia Tuck

First, make sure the crops are free from mold, disease, bruises, decay or cuts. Late-maturing varieties are the best for storage. Delay harvesting for as long as possible, as you will need cold weather to help preserve them. Don't wash the dirt off root crops and allow any damp crops to dry before storing them. Some crops can be left in the ground under a layer of mulch and can be used throughout the winter and early spring. Beets, carrots, jerusalem artichoke, parsnips and potatoes are in this category.

Onions



Bulb onions take about 110 days to mature. Harvest when $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ of the tops have fallen over. Leave about 1-1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " of the tops on the onions. Let the bulbs dry for several days before brushing off the dirt. Cure for 2-4 weeks in a warm, dry, well-ventilated location until the tops are thoroughly dry. Don't remove the outer scales.

Garlic

Garlic requires a long growing season. It is harvested when the tops have dried. Garlic must be cured for longer storage life. Place them out of direct sun for a couple of weeks until the roots are dry and have a papery covering. Store in a cool dry place (32 - 40° F) in mesh bags, or in another manner that allows good air circulation.



Winter Squash and Pumpkins

Harvest when fully mature, but before the first hard frost. The squash is mature when the skin is hard and doesn't scratch easily with your fingernail, nor does a scratch mark fill with water. Leave at least 1" of stem attached. Cure in a warm (75-85 degree) dry place for about 10 days. Store at 50-55 degrees where the air is dry. Do not store directly on cement or soil.



Apples

Store apples as close to freezing as possible (30-32 degrees is optimal) with 90% humidity.



Higher temperatures shorten the storage life. An apple will ripen twice as fast at 40 degrees as at 32 degrees. They can be stored in cardboard boxes with perforated plastic liners to increase the humidity. Check them frequently as excess humidity will encourage decay and insufficient humidity will encourage shriveling. Do not store them with potatoes as the potatoes release a gas that will make the apples musty.

Carrots and Beets

Dig before the ground freezes. Dry and remove excess dirt. Cut the stem close to the root. Optimum storage 32 degrees and very moist.



The Master Gardeners Corner

The Gardens of the Northwest tour was outstanding! Our thanks to Larry and Diane Sagers. This is one of the most beautiful regions in the United States.

Tom Hill reports that the Master Gardener Cookbooks are here—come in and buy one or charge it to your Visa/MasterCard and we'll mail it to you for cost plus postage. Also, they'll be for sale at the Fall Social.



Speaking of the Fall Social, it will be held on December 6 at 6:30 in Rooms L700-900 of the County Administration Building at 100 East Center Street in Provo. More information will be forthcoming. This is always an enjoyable event. Mark your calendar!

We are so happy that Paul Wilkey's surgery was a success. We will be happy when he is back with us. We appreciate all his help and expertise.

Harvest time makes all the gardening work worthwhile—cooler days and nights and lots of good eating! Enjoy.

IT'S THAT PEACHY TIME OF YEAR AGAIN

Have you been out in an orchard or yard and seen the beautiful peaches as they start to ripen up? The green coloring starts to turn to a golden yellow and the red portion of the peach starts to get brighter and deeper. There are hundreds of different kinds of peaches and they all have a different flavor and texture. So how do you know which one is the best to can and/or freeze? And when are peaches at the optimum point of ripeness for preserving?



Here are some secrets:

Most all peaches will do well, at least the ones that grow here in Utah and the Intermountain West as far as bottling and freezing. The biggest problem is that we pick the peaches and then let them sit a little too long in a box or on the counter. Then, as we get ready to preserve them, they are a little too mushy and have too many little fingerprints (brown spots) on the peach. This affects both the peaches that we put in a jar for canning and the peaches we slice to put in the freezer.

As far as deciding which variety has the very best flavor, that is up to your individual taste buds. Experience with different flavors of peaches to help you decide which you like the best. I have found that the five best varieties for my taste buds are:

1. Elberta (all 9 different varieties)
2. Red Haven
3. Red Globe
4. Canadian Harmony
5. Fairtime



If you are going to make jam it's a whole different story. The little brown spots will not make much of a difference, and the juicy, overripe peaches do make very good jams and jellies.

For processing in the jar for maximum storage quality, you need to have the peach just slightly on the firm side for optimum canning quality. Sometimes this means the skin will not come off easily, but you can always use the scalding process to make the skins come off easier (dip in boiling

water for 30-60 seconds; immediately dip in cold water, then slip off peel). You will always be happier when the fruit comes out of the jar in one to three years later if the peaches are a little more firm and without brown spots when you process them.



A possible problem with having firm peaches is the sugar content may not be quite optimum at this point. But you can always add some type of sweetener to take care of the problem. I have even used honey from my beehives as a sweetener with very great success. I have found that $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of sugar and not more than $\frac{1}{2}$ a cup per quart or 3-5 tablespoons of honey per quart makes the best quality syrup for canning for long storage life (2 to 3 years).



Be sure and check your recipes for conversions of cane sugar, sucrose, fructose, Equal, or any other artificial sweeteners. You can look in the Ball Blue Book for conversions for honey and the other sweeteners.

If you have any further questions please give me a call at the Extension office or stop by and look at my beautiful jars of peaches. Whatever peach you have in your backyard should do very well in the jar. Just don't let it get too ripe.



by Adrian Hinton, USU & Utah County Horticulturist

Nematodes Dominate

Nematodes are the most abundant and diversified group in the animal kingdom, with four out of five animals on Earth being nematodes. Nematology was first recognized as an independent discipline during the early part of the 20th century and since that time has made unparalleled advances to become an integral part of biological sciences. As in most bio types, there are the good guys and the bad guys. We have found that most of our nematode problems occur when the good guys are overrun by the bad guys.

Source: Howard Deer, Extension Specialist, Michigan State



by Judy Harris, USU Extension Agent in Utah County

A personal allowance in your spending plan gives you some individual freedom

You've probably had the shopping experience of finding what appears to be just the perfect article of clothing you've been looking for—until you try it on and find you can't raise your arms! You can't move comfortably if the clothing doesn't have enough "ease" or "wiggle room."

The same is true of your spending plan or budget. A little ease or wiggle room in your plan can make it a comfortable fit instead of a financial straight jacket. An important way to add ease is to include a "personal allowance" category in the spending plan. A personal allowance is a *pre-determined portion* of the spending plan that is earmarked for a person's personal and "free-choice" spending.

Each person is unique, so the list of expenses you pay from your personal allowance will be different. Jot down your typical personal expenses such as hair care, clothing, lunch out with a friend, books, hobbies, and so on. Evaluate the first few months to determine if the dollar amount for the personal allowance is realistic.

The word "allowance" means permission. A personal allowance includes items that we give ourselves permission to buy. Some folks need to be reminded that it's ok to spend some money on themselves. Others need daily reminders that their personal "free choice" spending is to be limited to the planned amounts of the personal allowance. Of course, if you share finances with a spouse or partner the dollar amount needs to be agreed upon as well as the types of expenditures that will be covered from the personal allowance money. The wiggle room or ease in this strategy is that record

keeping or reporting is not needed as long as you stay within your agreed amount for your personal allowance.

To keep your personal allowance spending (which you do *not* have to record as long as you stay within your allotment) separate from your spending plan money (which you *do* need to record) you might have a separate wallet or coin purse or envelope for your personal allowance cash. One wife gave her cowboy husband a hot pink beaded coin purse to hold his personal allowance—in hopes that he would get in the habit of thinking through if he *really* wanted to buy an item enough to pull out the pink coin purse!

Many people find that a personal allowance is liberating because it allows for personal wants within self-imposed limits. Couples find added benefits, because a personal allowance for one or both partners tends to reduce conflicts. Seldom do two people agree completely on how to spend money, and a personal allowance gives each person a degree of financial freedom on a daily basis.

A personal allowance can encourage financial responsibility. With a set amount to spend on yourself each month or pay period, you are forced to make choices and live with the consequences. Some consumers become more savvy consumers and better bargain shoppers to get the most satisfaction from their personal allowance.

If you try this personal allowance strategy, give yourself several months to find the right fit with enough wiggle room to be comfortable without being sloppy.

Good News/Bad News

Many credit cards are increasing the minimum monthly payment from the current 2-2½ percent to 4 percent of the balance. Consumers must pay at least the minimum payment to avoid costly penalties

The good news is that paying 4 percent of the balance will pay off the debt sooner and generate less interest.

The bad news for consumers who could barely find enough money to pay the 2 percent minimum will now have to find additional money just to make the new minimum payment that is 4-5 percent of the balance.

Reduce Accidental Falls in Your Home

by Claudia C. Collins, Ph.D.

What can you do to protect yourself?

To protect yourself, check your home for hazards that might cause you to trip, slip, or fall. Also, look at entryways to your home. When you spot a safety hazard, correct it as soon as possible.

By following these recommendations you can make your home a safer and more comfortable place to live.

Watch out for slippery substances

Be careful in the kitchen, bathroom, and laundry area where water might be splashed from a sink or other source. Floors in these areas should be easy to care for and slip resistant when wet. Avoid waxing floors.



Provide adequate lighting

Changes in vision occur with aging. Older adults require up to three times more light and their eyes do not adjust as quickly to changes in light conditions such as those experienced when walking from a brightly lit room to a darker room.

Keeping lights on in several rooms of your house can help you avoid slips, trips and falls.

Avoid kitchen hazards

Store items that you use often where they are easily reached. Standing on a chair or some other makeshift stool to reach a high shelf is dangerous. Consider buying a stepstool, particularly one with handrails you can hold onto while standing on the top step. Make sure the stepstool is fully open and stable before you climb onto it. Tighten any screws or braces and get rid of stepstools with broken parts. Consider buying a reach extender (grabber), which is a long stick with a gripper on the end that you control with a lever. This may be helpful to reach lightweight items that are not easily broken.



Clear loose objects and clutter from the floor

All passageways and walkways should be clear of loose objects, debris, low or unexpected objects and furniture. Objects and furniture blocking passageways should be removed. Furniture placement should be designed to assist with balance.



Check electrical and phone cords

Electrical and phone cords should be set against a wall where people can't trip over them. Furniture should be arranged with lamps and appliances near outlets so that cords are less likely to extend across areas where people walk.

Safety proof your bathroom and bedroom

To help avoid falls in shower or tub install grab bars (never substitute a towel bar). Use shower seats, or transfer benches. Place non-skid strips or decals in tub or shower. Use a seat for grooming while in front of a mirror. The bathroom light switch should be near the entrance. Consider a switch that glows in the dark, or a nightlight for the bathroom.



Remove or secure loose area rugs

Loose rugs, runners and mats in all areas of your home should be removed. They catch heels and toes and cause many in-home falls. If you insist upon using area rugs, check them for slip-resistance. If they tend to slide, they should be removed or secured. They can be secured by applying double-faced adhesive carpet tape or rubber matting to their backs. Matting or tape must be checked periodically for adhesion and wear and be replaced if needed.



Bedroom

Lamps and/or switches should be near the door and the bed. Rearrange furniture to create clear passageways. Use a night light.

Safeguard stairs and steps

Install handrails that extend beyond the stairs. Check lighting for shadows or glare. Light switches should be at the top and bottom of stairs. Paint the edge of each stair in a color that contrasts with the color of the stairs to help see where one stair ends and the next one starts.

Source: University of Nevada Cooperative Extension

*Can you help?***Utah County Children's Justice Center**

Each year nearly 2,000 cases of child abuse and neglect in Utah County are reported to the Division of Family Services (DFS) and local police. Nearly 1,200 of these referrals involve sexual or significant physical abuse.

Traditionally, investigation of child sexual abuse required multiple interviews of the child victim by police, social services, medical personnel, psychologists and attorneys. Each interview occurred at a different place and rarely in a setting that was familiar or comfortable for the child. The Children's Justice Center is a place for the child with a home-like environment, where the necessary interviews can occur in an atmosphere that is non-threatening to the child.

The Utah County Children's Justice Center is gearing up for its Fall Child Advocate Training. This program relies on concerned community volunteers to help Utah County's abused children. If you or someone you know may be interested in becoming a volunteer, please read the following information carefully. **Currently there is a pressing need for male volunteers.** To be a Child Advocate, volunteers must: — Be at least 18 — Pass a criminal background check — Complete 40 hours of state mandated training — Commit to participate for at least six months.

The Child Advocate program is designed to provide support to children who have been through a child abuse investigation. A Child Advocate's role is to be a friend, a positive influence, and a reliable and consistent presence in the life of a child. Advocates, **individually or as a couple**, are assigned a child to work with, on a weekly basis, for six months. **Advocates are encouraged to participate in fun and healthy activities with the child—going to the park, getting an ice cream cone, or going roller-skating are some things the Advocate and child may do together. The point is to have fun and be ready to listen. As an advocate, you are in a position to let the child know that you are there for them if they need help. As a friend, you are in a position to let them know that someone really cares.**

The upcoming training will consist of five sessions, held on Saturday, September 10, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings, Sept. 13-15, and Saturday, Sept. 17, 2005. Attendance at all five sessions is mandatory. **For more information, please contact Pattie Huestis at 851-8504.**

Sugar substitute for canning

We have had many questions about this, so here is the information for you all. Xylitol may be used in canning. It should work fine for sweet pickled foods and sweetened fruit syrups. It most likely would *not* work well for jams and jellies.

Pure Xylitol is a white crystalline substance that looks and tastes like sugar. On food labels, Xylitol is classified broadly as a carbohydrate and more narrowly as a polyol. Because Xylitol is only slowly absorbed and partially utilized, a reduced calorie claim is allowed: 2.4 calories per gram or 40% less than other carbohydrates. (Source: USU Extension Food Safety Specialist Brian Nummer, Ph.D.)

Surviving your next onion encounter

Why do onions make you cry? Onions contain sulfuric compounds that, when cut, go into the air and the chemical dissolves in the small amount of water in your eyes—causing your tear ducts to react.

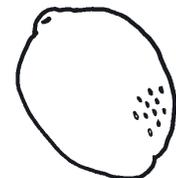
Strategies to reduce onion-induced tears:

- Swimming goggles protect your eyes well if the seal around your eyes is sufficient.
- Try refrigerating an onion 30-60 minutes before cutting.
- Peel or cut an onion under cold running water.

“To die for” lemon curd

The commercially bottled lemon curd is good, but when you want to knock their socks off make this:

- 5 lemons, juiced
- ¾ cup egg yolks
- 1¼ cups sugar
- 5 ounces butter (the real stuff)
- lemon zest garnish for each serving



Remove zest from one lemon with a zester. Squeeze the juice from 5 lemons and discard seeds. Combine the yolks and sugar, whisk until pale yellow. Place yolk/sugar mixture in double boiler. With water boiling, add eggs while whisking. Whisk in juice. Continue cooking and whisking until thickening begins at 170°F. Then remove from heat. Add butter in pieces and whisk to melt. Cool in an ice bath (50% ice and 50% water) to 20°F. (The quicker it cools the thicker it gets!) Store in a covered glass bowl in the refrigerator. Serve lemon custard in a parfait dish or tart crust and top with pieces of fresh fruit. It's terrific! (Source: Chef School, May 2000)

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Emergency Preparedness

The devastation in Louisiana and Mississippi as well as the recent floods and fires here in Utah are grim reminders to us all to prepare *now* for emergencies.

In a disaster you may not be able to leave from some exits, so have some water by multiple exits of your home and in your vehicles. Water is your #1 priority.

Food on hand for emergencies should require little or no cooking. Canned goods (plus can opener!) And ready-to-eat pouches can be stored in grab-and-go containers or totes.

The University of California Extension office prepared a helpful bulletin suggesting foods to store that would feed your family for two weeks. It costs 75¢ and is available at our office.

We have 14 bulletins on emergency preparedness. A few of the topics include earthquake hazards, home heating in an emergency, helping children cope with disaster, and emergency sanitation at home. The Red Cross office at 865 North Freedom Boulevard in Provo also has publications on preparedness.



This newsletter is an educational effort of the Utah County office of Utah State University Extension, 51 So. University Ave., Room 206, Provo, UT 84601.

The phone for USU Extension is 851-8460. If you do not have a touch tone phone, stay on the line and the receptionist will help you. With a touch tone phone, at the greeting press the number of the desired subject:

- 5) garden, yard, trees, insects
- 2) food, finances, clothing, housing
- 3) pastures, field crops, dairies
- 4) 4-H and youth



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