

Master Gardener Series October 2008



- 1 [International Day for the Elderly](#)
- 8 [Yom Kippur](#)
- 13 [Columbus Day](#) observed
- 13 Thanksgiving Day in Canada, 2nd Monday
- 16 [Boss's Day](#)
- 18 [Sweetest Day](#) 3rd Saturday
- 31 [Halloween](#)

GARDENING TASKS FOR OCTOBER

HOME Keep poinsettia in complete darkness for 15 hours each day, for example, between 5 p.m. and 8 a.m., for eight to 10 weeks until red bracts begin to show.

Pot spring-flowering bulbs to force into bloom indoors. Moisten soil and refrigerate 10 to 13 weeks. Transfer to a cool, sunny location, and allow an additional three to four weeks for blooming.

Water indoor plants less frequently, and discontinue fertilizer as plants slow down or stop growing for the winter season.

GARDEN Harvest root crops and store in a cold (32 F), humid location. Storing produce in perforated plastic bags is a convenient, easy way to increase humidity.

Harvest pumpkins and winter squash before frost, but when rind is hard and fully colored. Store in a cool location until ready to use.

Harvest mature, green tomatoes before frost, and ripen indoors in the dark. Warmer temperatures lead to faster ripening.

Plowing and incorporating organic matter in the fall avoids the rush of garden activities and waterlogged soil in spring. Fall-prepared soils also tend to warm faster and allow earlier planting in spring.

Dig tender, garden flower bulbs for winter storage. Gladiolus corms should be dug when leaves begin turning yellow. Caladiums, geraniums and tuberous begonias should be lifted before killing frost. Dig canna and dahlia roots after a heavy frost. Allow to air dry, then pack in dry peat moss or vermiculite, and store in a cool location.

Condensed from Purdue Extension Garden Calendar:
<http://www.hort.purdue.edu/ext/oct08gc.html>

FALL HARVEST MENU



Beet Soup
Apple Salad
Pork Chop Casserole
Apple Pie
Home Made Bread

Beet Soup

6 small beets, cooked and diced; reserve ½ cup of the beet water.
2 large ripe tomatoes, skinned, seeded, and diced
2 cups chicken stock
2 teaspoons onion juice
juice of half a lemon
1 cup red wine, port or Bordeaux
salt to taste
3 cloves garlic
6 peppercorns

Simmer ingredients until they are well blended. Then serve very hot, topped with cold sour cream and a green herb-parsley or chives.

Apple Salad

1/4 cup salad oil
2 tablespoons white sugar
2 tablespoons cider vinegar
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon almond extract
6 cups torn mixed greens
3 medium apples, sliced
1 cup thinly sliced celery
2 tablespoons sliced scallions or green onions
1/3 cup slivered almonds, toasted

In a screw-top jar, combine the oil, sugar, vinegar, salt, and almond extract. Cover the jar and shake well until the sugar and salt are dissolved. Chill in the refrigerator for several hours.

Just before serving, combine the greens, apple wedges, celery, and scallions in a salad bowl. Sprinkle with the almonds. Pour the dressing over the salad and toss. Serve immediately.

PORK CHOP CASSEROLE

3 to 4 potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced
4 carrots, thinly sliced
1 stalk of celery
1 to 2 onions, thinly sliced
4 pork chops
salt and pepper to taste
1 can (10-3/4 ounces) condensed cream of mushroom soup plus 1 can water

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Lightly grease a 9-inch by 13-inch baking dish. Layer the potatoes, carrots, celery and onions in the baking dish. Place the chops on top. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Mix the soup with the water and pour over the chops. Cover and bake for 1-1/2 hours. Serve hot.

Note: My mother made this with sauerkraut once in awhile. If you are a sauerkraut lover, this will be a satisfying dish.

SHOULD YOU GRIND YOUR OWN WHEAT?

What better way to support Morgan County Farmers than to purchase their freshly harvested wheat for the winter's supply of bread? One bushel of wheat will provide about 65 loaves of bread!

BASIC BREAD MAKING

Ingredients

8-9 cups wheat
1/2 cup millet
1/2 cup flax seed
3 tablespoons oil
4 1/2 cups warm water (80 degrees, tepid)

3 T honey
2 T dry yeast (rounded)
2 T wheat gluten (this will have to be purchased or you can Google for bread enhancer recipes that are gluten free)
1 T salt

Grind 8 or 9 cups of wheat in the kitchen mill. Add about 1/2 cup millet and 1/2 cup flax seed

Put oil, water, gluten and honey into mixing bowl with dough hook. Pulse a few times to mix.

Add approximately 6 cups of flour and pulse to moisten the flour. Add yeast and salt.

If you would like to add whole grains (eg millet or flax) add them at this time instead of grinding it with the flour at the beginning.

Start mixer, gradually adding flour and let it moisten before adding more.

You have added enough flour when the dough begins to leave the bottom of the bowl. Knead 7 to 10 minutes.

Remove and shape into 4 loaves. (8"x4" greased pans). Loosely cover with tea towel and plastic wrap.

Let rise until double in volume, approximately 20 to 25 minutes. Preheat oven to 350°F-375°F and bake for 30 minutes. The bread is done when it clearly leaves the sides of the pan and the loaf sounds hollow when you tap the bottom with your finger.

Place on a cooling rack. Prep time includes standing time.

NOTE: We always made bread from the wheat grown on our farm when I was growing up. It is hard work, but is very satisfying. Of course, back then we kneaded the dough by hand. The recipe can be adjusted to use with a bread machine. The millet and flax sort of fancy up the recipe, but they can be omitted. Just adjust with a little more wheat. Also, if you want a sweeter bread, add a little more honey.

THE HALLOWEEN GARDEN



Plant clusters of Clear Black Pansies and Clear Orange Pansies in your fall garden to complement Halloween and fall harvest decorations. You can also add Yellow Blotch Pansies.

The flower photos are from Icicle Pansies, a trademark name of Fernlea Flowers, LTD.





THE WITCH GARDEN

Witches' thimbles, devil's nettle, fool's parsley, or wolf's bane in the garden during the 17th century might have caused people to talk that you were a witch.

Witches' thimbles are foxglove, the source of digitalis and a beautiful plant with tall flowering stalks. Devil's nettle is yarrow – a good wound poultice in country lore, and also good for clearing a sour stomach. Fool's parsley is a hemlock herb, and just as deadly. Don't plant where there are children and pets. Cumin and Verbena were grown for love potions; and all witches grew the flowers associated with astrological signs.

To keep witch hunters away, the witches planted four rows of red flowers around their gardens. The witches border their gardens with yellow and green florals. Supposedly, yellow reminds them of the sun, which they hate.

Yikes, what a fright! So now you know how to recognize the witches in your neighborhood. There is a lot more lore about the witches' garden and you can read it here:

<http://www.uvm.edu/pss/ppp/articles/ghouls.htm>