



# HORTICULTURE TIPS



Division of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources \* Oklahoma State University

July 2014

## GARDEN TIPS FOR JULY!

*David Hillock*

### Vegetable Garden

- Make fall vegetable garden plantings in late July. Fact Sheet [HLA-6009](#) gives planting recommendations.

### Lawn

- Brown patch disease of cool-season grasses can be a problem. ([HLA-6420](#))
- Meet water requirements of turfgrasses. ([HLA-6420](#))
- Fertilization of warm-season grasses can continue if water is present for growth. ([HLA-6420](#))
- Vegetative establishment of warm-season grasses should be completed by the end of July to ensure the least risk of winter kill. ([HLA-6419](#))
- Mowing heights for cool-season turfgrasses should be at 3 inches during hot, dry summer months. Gradually raise mowing height of bermudagrass lawns from 1½ to 2 inches.
- Sharpen or replace mower blades as needed. Shredded leaf blades are an invitation to disease and allow more stress on the grass.

### Tree and Shrub

- Control bermudagrass around trees and shrubs with Poast, Fusilade or Glyphosate herbicides. Follow directions closely to avoid harming desirable plants.

### Fruits

- Continue insect combat and control in the orchard, garden and landscape. ([EPP-7306](#), [EPP-7313](#), [EPP-7319](#))
- Check pesticide labels for “stop” spraying recommendations prior to harvest.
- Harvest fruit from the orchard early in the morning and refrigerate as soon as possible.

### Flowers

- Divide and replant crowded Hybrid iris (Bearded Iris) after flowering until August.

### General Landscape

- Water plants deeply and early in the morning. Most plants need approximately 1 to 2½ inches of water per week.
- Providing birdbaths, shelter and food will help turn your landscape into a backyard wildlife habitat.
- Insect identification is important so you don't get rid of the “Good Guys.” ([EPP-7307](#))
- The hotter and drier it gets, the larger the spider mite populations!
- Expect some leaf fall, a normal reaction to drought. Water young plantings well.
- Have you visited The Botanic Garden in Stillwater for a group tour?

## Discover What Your Fertilizer Needs are During July

*Becky Carroll*

Although we fertilize in early spring, July is the time to find out what your pecan, peach or apple trees and grapevines really need. Tissue analysis is a reliable management tool used to indicate the fertility needs of pecan, fruit trees and grapevines. Pecans and fruit trees can be monitored by collecting leaf samples while grapevine monitoring requires collection of leaf petioles.



July is the month for both sampling times. Pecan and fruit tree leaf samples are collected according to fact sheet [HLA-6232](#) or the instructions located at <http://okpecans.okstate.edu/news/pecan-leaf-samples-instructions>. Grapevine petiole sampling procedures can be found at <http://www.grapes.okstate.edu/news/july-is-grape-petiole-sampling-time>.

Results will only be as accurate as the sample collected so it is advised to follow the directions. Once the leaves are sampled, they should be submitted to the local county extension office. The cost for tissue analysis is \$20. The extension office will send the samples to the OSU Soil, Water, and Forage Lab. The results will be returned to the extension educator and then shared with the grower.

Fertilizer recommendations will be provided for the following spring application. Frequently growers find out they are applying unnecessary nutrients and can reduce their costs of fertilizing. The fee for a leaf sample can be an inexpensive tool to determine shortages or excesses before problems develop.

## **Dividing and Replanting Iris**

*David Hillock*

Iris are relatively carefree, easy to grow and long lived perennials; however, they should be divided every three to four years when they become crowded. Crowded iris will begin to decline in growth and will have fewer and smaller flowers.

Divide the rhizomes (underground stems) after the plants have flowered; July through August is the best time to do this in Oklahoma. Throw away any segments that are diseased, riddled with insects, or small and weak. Separate healthy rhizomes into segments with one fan of leaves and several roots. Cut the leaves back to six inches. When planting the new plant, spread the roots out in the soil and position the top of the rhizome at the soil surface. If planted too deep they will not flower as well and are more susceptible to disease and insect attack.

## **Planting Fall Vegetables**

*Kim Toscano*

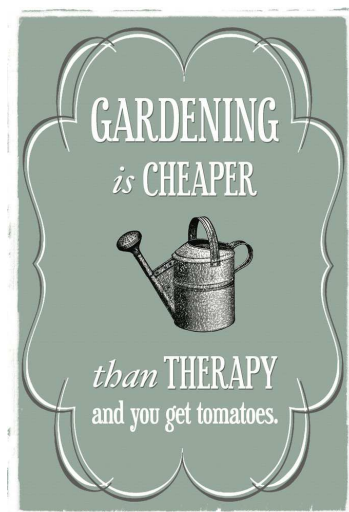
With temperatures soaring and the sun glaring, it is hard to think ahead to fall. But mid-July is the right time to start planting several vegetables for a fall harvest. Following is a list of fall crops and the appropriate planting times.

<u>Crop</u>	<u>Planting Time</u>	<u>Days to Harvest</u>
Bean, bush	Aug 10-20	50-60
Bean, pole	July 15-30	60-70
Beet	Aug 1-15	60-70
Broccoli	July 15-Aug 15	70-80
Cabbage	Aug 1-25	75-90
Carrots	July 15-Aug 15	70-80
Cauliflower	Aug 1-25	70-80
Chard	Aug 1-Sept 15	50-60
Cucumber	Aug 10-20	60-70
Eggplant	July 15	80-90
Leaf Lettuce	Aug 1-15	60-70
Peas, green	Aug 15-Sept 1	60-90
Pepper	July 15	90-110
Potato, Irish	Aug 1-15	90-110
Sweet Corn	July 15	80-100
Summer Squash	July 15-Sept 1	40-50
Tomatoes	July 1-15	70-90
Turnip	Aug 1-Sept 15	50-60
Winter Squash /Pumpkin	July 15-30	100-120



When selecting vegetables for fall plantings, choose varieties that have a short maturation period. Planting time will depend on the length of time needed to produce a crop. Tender vegetables must be started early enough to ensure harvest before frost kills plants. Other crops, mainly root crops, are hardy enough to be stored in place in the garden well into winter.

Getting your fall vegetable garden started can be tricky when the weather is hot and dry. In the heat of the summer sun, the surface of the soil can reach temperatures of 140°F! These temperatures can quickly kill plant seeds, especially small seeds near the soil surface. Water can also be a limiting factor in late summer, when intense sun quickly dries soils. The following techniques can be used to reduce soil temperature and manage soil moisture.



**Plant in Furrows.** One way to reduce soil temperatures around the seed is to plant in rather deep furrows. Before digging furrows, loosen the soil and incorporate a large amount of organic matter, which will help increase the water-holding capacity of the soil. Place the seeds in the bottom of the furrow and cover with soil, but do not fill the furrow entirely. The surface of the seed bed should be set considerably lower than the surrounding soil. The seeds will be shaded down inside the furrow.

The furrow also helps conserve water and direct water where it is needed, to the germinating seeds. When you irrigate your planting, water only in the furrow. Water will naturally fill the low spot you have created, fostering seed germination. As the seedling grows, add more soil to the furrow bringing it level with surrounding soil. Place mulch around the plants to help retain soil moisture while also combating weeds. Weeds tend to be a greater problem in fall gardens than in spring. The constant supply of water favors weed growth as much as it does vegetables. Be sure to remove weeds that establish within the row.

**Provide Shade.** Another way to help seeds develop is to provide extra shade. Shading will both reduce soil temperature and limit evaporation of soil moisture. You can provide shade using shade clothes, strips of screen, or boards to cover the row. Old, wire screens work very well for shading rows. They are pliable enough to bend into tents over the row, yet sturdy enough to maintain the tent shape.

Be creative and use materials you have on hand. The goal is to cool the soil, creating an environment conducive to seed germination. Make sure to secure screens and other shade structures to keep them from blowing away with the wind. Remove any materials used for shading once seedlings emerge.

**Irrigation.** Proper watering is essential to establishing any crop as seeds require constant moisture to germinate. This time of year, you will most likely need to provide supplemental irrigation, as rainfall is typically sparse. Using the furrow method will help you accomplish this task while minimizing water use. Drip irrigation is also very efficient.

Another helpful practice is to soak seeds overnight before planting. The seeds will imbibe or absorb water, hastening germination. This practice is not recommended for beans (*Phaseolus* spp.), because the seeds may crack and germinate poorly with too much moisture.

Oklahoma's long growing season allows us to grow vegetables well into fall. The warm days and cool nights of autumn are ideal for producing hardy vegetables and leafy greens. Proper planning and preparation will ensure you have a desirable selection of plants available and the tools you need to establish plants during the summer heat. A little extra effort during establishment will be greatly rewarded with fresh produce in autumn.

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Fact Sheet [HLA-6009](#) has more information on planting the fall vegetable garden.

## Read the Label “Before” You Purchase a Pesticide!

*David Hillock*

Pesticides include such products as herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, bactericides, rodenticides, etc.; basically anything labeled to control a pest is a pesticide. Each category consists of many different active ingredients, concentrations and modes of action, each designed to target specific pests or sometimes a broad range of related pests. Therefore, it is very important to identify the type of pest you want to control, the site in which it is to be used, and then select the pesticide best designed to control the target pest.

With all the different products available, consumer labeling can be confusing. For example, Ortho has several products labeled Bug-b-gone or Weed-b-gone, but each one may have different chemicals in them, different sites in which they may be used, and pests they control. Another example is Roundup. Not all Roundup products contain just glyphosate anymore, which has been the main active ingredient for many years, and still is; instead, some of the products produced by Monsanto have other ingredients as well. The products are still labeled as Roundup, but those with added ingredients have an addition to the title, such as “Extended Control, Weed & Grass Killer, Plus Weed Preventer” or “Poison Ivy & Tough Brush Killer Plus.”

The problem consumers run into is they see “Roundup” on the label, think it is just the traditional weed killer with glyphosate in it, purchase it, and apply it to an area it wasn’t really meant for without reading the label!



I know of two cases in which the Roundup Extended Control, Weed & Grass Killer, Plus Weed Preventer was accidentally used instead of the traditional form. One was a friend who wanted to kill an area in her turf to install a vegetable bed, and the other used it in an area they wanted to plant trees and shrubs. The result in both cases, they were unable to plant anything in the area for about four months. The reason, because the second ingredient in this product provides up to four months weed control and can damage un-established plant material.

The moral of the story – Read the Label BEFORE you purchase any pesticide!

Please realize this is not an attack on Ortho or Monsanto’s Roundup or any other manufacturer or product; I love and use many of their products! But it is extremely important for the consumer to do a little research and even read the label before they purchase a pesticide to avoid situations such as the one experienced by my friend. Eventually she was able to plant her garden, but it wasn’t until the following year, after it was safe to plant again.

## Upcoming Horticulture Events

### Water Conservation Demonstration Garden Workshop

July 19, 2014; 9 AM – 11 AM

OSU-Oklahoma City Agriculture Resource Center, Room 196, 400 N. Portland, OKC, OK

Come discover drought-tolerant landscape ideas and learn about irrigation management at Oklahoma City’s first water conservation demonstration garden. Please RSVP by calling 405-297-3380 or emailing [Malarie.Gotcher@okc.gov](mailto:Malarie.Gotcher@okc.gov).

### GardenFest

September 20, 2014; 10 AM – 4 PM

The Botanic Garden at OSU – Stillwater, OK

The Botanic Garden's Annual GardenFest brings together individuals from across the state with a common interest in gardening and sustainable living for a day of educational workshops, tours and activities for the whole family. It is also a wonderful opportunity to view the beautiful landscapes and innovative demonstrations throughout The Botanic Garden at OSU while experts are on hand to answer questions. Live music and vendors will be featured along with our educational programming.



The *Horticulture Tips* newsletter is distributed monthly (except January) by the following:

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service  
707 West Electric Avenue  
McAlester, OK 74501  
918-423-4120 [www.oces.okstate.edu/pittsburg](http://www.oces.okstate.edu/pittsburg)

This newsletter is one way of communicating horticultural information to those interested.

**DAVID CANTRELL**  
Extension Educator, Agriculture  
[david.cantrell@okstate.edu](mailto:david.cantrell@okstate.edu)

PREPARED BY: Stephanie Wilson  
[stephanie.wilson12@okstate.edu](mailto:stephanie.wilson12@okstate.edu)

Oklahoma State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, State and Local governments cooperating. Oklahoma State University in compliance with Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 11246 as amended, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and other federal and state laws and regulations, does not discriminate the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, religion, disability, or status as a veteran in any of its policies, practices or procedures.