

OCTOBER'S GARDEN CHECKLIST

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service — Galveston County Office



October 2, 2019



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PHOTO CREDIT: Alice Rodgers

The Galveston County Master Gardeners' 2019 Fall Plant Sale will be held on Saturday, October 12, at the Galveston County Fairgrounds located off Hwy. 6 in Hitchcock. More than 100 Master Gardeners will be on-hand to assist customers with questions and purchases.

Tropical Storm Imelda delivered an abundance of rainfall during mid-September. While mid-September is the peak season for hurricanes, we should be mindful that the official hurricane season extends to November 1.

October has arrived and most gardeners have been anticipating the arrival of

the first "genuine" cool front. With all due respect to the science of meteorology, my definition of a cool front in the fall is one that gets your attention by immediately uplifting your spirit when you first walk outside in the morning!

I normally pull up and dry-store my multiplying onions in late spring before the

onset of summer's heat. I left some of the remaining onions in the ground to see how they would survive our summer heat. The bulbs survived the heat of summer but all of the top-growth melted back and the bulbs became sun-scalded. It always amazes me how plants "sense" the most subtle





of Mother Nature's patterns. Over the past couple of weeks, the bulbs started to send out new leaves as daytime temperatures started to slowly tick downward. I now get to harvest more multiplying onions over the coming fall, winter and spring growing seasons.

Most gardeners are now eager (or at least far more willing) to venture out into the home landscape and garden. In light of this heightened enthusiasm, here are some activities for the fall gardener to consider:

Fall Plant Sale: The Master Gardeners will sponsor their Annual Fall Plant Sale from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 12, at the Galveston County Fairgrounds located north of Hwy. 6 in Hitchcock. Plants to be offered include many types of fall vegetable transplants, citrus trees, Texas-Tuff perennials, bulbs, garden artwork and more.

A pre-sale presentation will also be offered from 8:00 - 8:50 a.m. before the sale yard is opened. Check online (<https://aggiehorticulture.tamu.edu/galveston>) for updates on plants that will be available at the sale.

Save Caladium Tubers: Caladiums are getting past their prime with the onset of cooler weather. If you plan on saving caladium tubers for another year, be sure to dig them up before the top growth disappears – those tubers can be very difficult to locate after the top growth is gone. Allow the tubers to air-dry for 7-to-10 days in a well-ventilated but

shaded area.

After drying, gently remove any attached leaves and large soil particles from the tubers then store in dry peat moss, vermiculite or similar material in a well-ventilated container. Pack so that the tubers do not touch each other. Dust with an all-purpose fungicide to help prevent decay. Store the tubers in an area where temperatures won't drop below 50 degrees F.

Control Cool Season Weeds: Most lawn weeds that we see during late winter and early spring actually sprout in the fall. They are cool season weeds and, in fact, their germination is stimulated in the fall by the onset of cool temperatures. They grow during winter if temperatures stay warm enough, then produce a crop of seeds in the spring and die out when hot weather arrives.

Use of pre-emergent herbicides to control cool season weeds is effective only if properly timed, i.e., they should be applied very soon after the onset of relatively cool weather conditions. Several pre-emergent herbicides are approved for lawn use and are sold under a variety of commercial labels. Check with your area garden center or feed store for available products. Always read and follow label directions.

At a Glance

WHAT: Gardening for Jewels . . . attracting hummingbirds

WHEN: 9:00 - 11:00 a.m., Saturday, October 5

WHO: Master Gardener Deborah Repasz, photographer and hum-

mingbird enthusiast, will present a program highlighting ways to increase hummingbird sightings in your yard. She will show you how to create an inviting habitat, including examples of shelter, food, and water, as well as other resources to utilize to attract hummingbirds. Plants presented will be proven winners grown in the speaker's home landscape, many of which will be for sale at the Galveston County Master Gardener Fall Plant Sale on October 12.

WHAT: My Favorite Fall Vegetables

WHEN: 1:00 - 3:00 p.m., Saturday, October 5

WHO: Master Gardener Gene Speller will present a program on cole crops and other favorite vegetables usually grown during fall and winter months. These include popular varieties of broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, collard, kale, mustard and turnip greens. Other vegetables included will be several varieties of lettuce, spinach, and Swiss chard. Many of the vegetables discussed in the presentation will be offered for sale as transplants at the Galveston County Master Gardener Fall Plant Sale on October 12.

WHERE: All programs conducted at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office located in Carbine Park (4102-B Main St. in La Marque). Pre-register by e-mail (galvcountymgs@gmail.com) or phone (281-309-5065).

