

Garden Calendar

(provided by Cornell Cooperative Extension, Putnam County)

October

- When frost threatens, cover tender plants. Simply tenting annuals with lightweight cloth, such as sheets, tablecloths and dishtowels can protect them from frost, thus extending their blooming period. Brussels sprouts and parsnips taste better after a light frost.
- October is garlic-planting time! Garlic starts can be purchased at many landscape and garden centers at this time. Unusual varieties can be mail-ordered as well. Choose disease-free, clean garlic cloves for your planting.
- Dig-up and store the corms and tubers of Dahlias, Cannas, Caladium and other tender plants. Storage suggestions differ and maintaining the proper humidity is key. Consult your local cooperative extension or Cornell University's gardening website at <http://www.gardening.cornell.edu/index.html>
- Plant deciduous shrubs and trees. This is a great time to pick up bargains too, as local nurseries and garden centers often offer fall planting incentives. Deciduous trees can be planted until December.
- Begin clean-up of gardens. Remove spent annuals and vegetables, trim perennial foliage after frost. Discard diseased foliage in the trash. Compost everything else. Leave ornamental grasses and interesting seed heads for winter interest and the birds.
- Mulch after the ground freezes to prevent heaving.
- It's still not too late to plant spring flowering bulbs. October is ideal for planting tulips.
- Fall is not a good time for planting and transplanting evergreens because they suffer from drying winter winds which may result in "winter burn". Wait until spring.