



BOULDER COUNTY
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

Community Garden News



Dear Gardeners,

It has been an interesting season. The hot, dry weather made for some amazing tomatoes and okra, the late and early freeze has created some strange symptoms in trees and shrubs as well as some insect and bird die-off. The pandemic, drought and fires have been devastating all over the west.

This is a little late, HOWEVER, Please remember to check for standing water in your plots. Even though we have had an early frost, it is still important to empty standing water. If you have buckets of water that are uncovered, they will have to be dumped. Please read the following article from Boulder County on West Nile Virus.

["Mosquito Traps in Superior, Louisville, and Longmont Test Positive for West Nile Virus"](#)

Boulder County Public Health officials urge residents to follow the 4Ds:

- Use DEET-enhanced insect repellent or alternatives, including Bite Blocker, Picaridin, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus, or IR3535.
- DRESS in long sleeves and pants.
- Avoid the outdoors from DUSK until DAWN.
- DRAIN standing water outside your home.

Happy Gardening!

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CSU Extension

The Extension office provides assistance and programs for citizens in five main areas: Agriculture, Horticulture, Family and Consumer Science, Natural Resources and 4-H Youth Programs.

Colorado State University Extension Mission Statement: Empower Coloradans to address important and emerging community issues using dynamic, science-based educational resources.

Please feel free to use our website as a reference tool for all things gardening and more. <https://boulder.extension.colostate.edu/horticulture/>

For Fact Sheets <https://extension.colostate.edu/publications-2/>

2020 Garden Policies <https://boulder.extension.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2020/03/Community-Garden-Policies-2019-1.pdf>

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Community Service

SOCIALLY DISTANT GROUP CLEAN UP DAY - SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3RD - 8-11AM

Hello Gardeners,

I am recording volunteer hours for everyone in the garden. Please email me with your volunteer hours completed for the season. If you have been able to complete a **pre-approved** project for your required amount of time, please let me know as soon as you can. The deadline for hours is November 15th however, that is very late in the season and the garden needs help now!

We can not give credit for project hours that were not PRE-approved.

The garden has suffered from COVID (abandoned plots, no jail crew and no new gardeners allowed). I could really use everyone's help weeding and clearing out debris. I am scheduling a work day for Saturday, Oct 3rd. The time will be determined by the weather, but I assume the morning.

Thank you for being a member of the CSU Community Garden, I appreciate everyone's efforts to keep our garden a great place to be!



Essential Fall Garden Tasks

Bethany Hayes

Clean out annual flower & vegetable beds

Personal compost **only** plant materials that have no disease, weed seeds or insect infestation. Throwing those types of garden debris into the outside compost dumpster is great because it will be commercially composted. Professional services can heat up their compost to kill off weed seeds, diseases and pests.

Get your soil tested. After a season of veggies depleting the soil, it is always an interesting and helpful thing to do

Add amendments accordingly.

Enrich garden beds with Compost or Manure

Even if you do not have your soil tested, you can rest assured that our Colorado soils almost always need organic matter and nitrogen.

Mulch your beds

As long as we do not have a major pest infestation like last year, mulching is a good thing. Chopped up fall leaves, grass clippings, shredded newspaper or cardboard are a few options. We get a lot of wind over the winter, so please consider laying down trellises over any mulch you put in place. Mulch insulates the soil from wind erosion and swinging temps. When placed around perennials, mulch gives extra protection.

Consider planting cover crops this fall

There are so many benefits to cover cropping, that this practice is really gaining in popularity. Oats and winter rye are good choices for the fall. Check out this GardenNotes from the Master Gardeners.

<https://cmg.extension.colostate.edu/Gardennotes/244.pdf>

Collect seeds

See the next article and for goodness sake, LABEL them. :)

Divide & replant perennials now for an early start on next spring

Clean cold frames, tools & equipment

When its cold outside, you might not want to turn on the hose. If you add a tablespoon of bleach to one gallon of water as you clean, it should kill disease pathogens. Rubbing alcohol and Lysol work well too and are less corrosive to tools.

Remove seed heads that you may not want reseeding all over the garden

ASTERS! Even if you love them, you might not want them everywhere next year.

Planning on doing something different next year? Prepare new planting beds now.



Plant Seeds in Fall

GARDEN GATE STAFF

Did you know some perennial seeds are best planted in fall? Check the list below to see which ones to sow before winter for a gorgeous garden next spring!

There are a lot of perennial seeds that can be planted in the fall to sprout the following spring. In cold-winter areas, plant seeds at the depth given on the package instructions after a killing frost but before the ground freezes.

Why plant in the fall?

The goal for planting in fall is not to have your seeds germinate but to give them a period of stratification, exposing them to cold and moist conditions. The alternating freeze and thaw of winter helps break down the seed coat and starts the growing process. Not all perennials do well with this technique, though.

Perennial seeds to plant in fall

- Black-eyed Susan ~ *Rudbeckia fulgida*
- Penstemon Penstemon spp.*
- Perennial geranium ~ *Geranium spp.*
- Perennial sunflower ~ *Helianthus spp.*
- Pincushion flower ~ *Scabiosa spp.*
- Prairie coneflower ~ *Ratibida spp.*
- Purple coneflower ~ *Echinacea purpurea*
- Wild columbine ~ *Aquilegia canadensis*



Collect Flower Seeds

BY: STEPHANIE PETERSEN

Save money next spring by saving your favorite flower seeds now. This article shows you how to know if your plants are good candidates for collecting and walk you through the process.

Whether you'd like to save money or you enjoy following a plant through the entire growing process, collecting seeds from flowers in your garden is rewarding. And you can even share with friends! Here are a few tips for success:



Which flower seeds to collect

Many vegetables, herbs and flowers produce seeds that can be collected and stored for future seasons. However, you'll want to know whether you have hybrids. Often listed as F1 hybrid on plant tags and packets, they don't produce seeds that come true, or grow plants that look like the parents. Species and open-pollinated plants, ones pollinated by wind, insects or self-pollination, will produce seeds that come true.

Keep in mind, however, that even if they're open-pollinated, the same species of plants growing close together will likely cross-pollinate, then not come

true after all. So to be sure next year's plants look exactly like this year's, only grow one variety of a species.



12 flowers whose seeds are simple to collect - (there are more)

- Blackberry lily ~ *Iris domestica*
- Cilantro ~ *Coriandrum sativum*
- Coneflower ~ *Echinacea purpurea*
- Dill ~ *Anethum graveolens*
- Four o'clock ~ *Mirabilis*
- Larkspur ~ *Consolida ajacis*
- Love-in-a-mist ~ *Nigella damascena*
- Marigold ~ *Tagetes patula*
- Poppy ~ *Papaver spp.*
- Sunflower ~ *Helianthus annuus*
- Sweet pea ~ *Lathyrus odoratus*
- Zinnia ~ *Zinnia elegans*

How to identify flower seeds

Where seeds form on the flower can vary between species. Some plants, such as sweet pea, larkspur and love-in-a-mist, form seed pods. Sometimes the seeds are all that's left, such as on the dying stems of cilantro. And on others, such as zinnia and marigold, you'll need to remove parts to find the hidden seeds that form just below the bloom.

How to know flower seeds are ready to collect

When you're collecting seeds, choose the healthiest plants. Because seed formation is the last phase in a plant's life cycle, you may have to wait until late in the growing season to harvest. Be patient and vigilant. Remove them too soon and the seeds will not have fully matured and won't be viable. But wait too long, and you may miss out on being able to collect them if seed-heads crack open and seeds blow away or drop to the ground.



Although seeds come in a variety of shapes and sizes, there are some characteristics to look for so you know they're mature and ready to be collected. Read on to find out what to look for.

Shriveled & brown seeds

To start, the flowers will shrivel and turn brown. But seeds still may take time to ripen. For example, the marigold flower heads in the photo above are all on the same plant on the same day, but only the one that is entirely brown and spent is ready for harvest.

Flower seed harvesting tip

Use scissors or garden snips to make the cleanest and quickest cuts of seed heads from large flowers, such as marigolds, then pop them into a plastic storage bag or other small container to transport indoors for cleaning.

Papery seed pods ~

If the seed pods are papery, or you hear rattling when you shake the pod, it's likely that seeds are ready.

Split-open sheaths ~

In addition, look for husks or sheaths to break open and reveal brown-black seeds like those of the blackberry lily here. Leave those that are still pliable and white to ripen a little longer. Once you know the seeds are ready, you can collect them.

Since every flower's seeds develop differently on the stem, it only makes sense that the best method of collection is different for each one.

Brush seeds into a bag or bowl

Sometimes the seeds are loose and scatter easily. The love-in-a-mist in would probably make a mess if you took the pods indoors, so it's easiest to collect the seeds into a bowl while you're in the garden. Other times you'll strip the seeds from the stems.

Snip off the seed-heads

If seeds are neatly packaged in a sheath, you may be able to simply snip the spent flower-heads to take indoors.

Protect the flower seed harvest

You may need to protect your seeds from hungry birds, squirrels and other critters before you harvest. Sunflowers

seem to be a favorite. To prevent loss, cover the head with a brown paper sack, wrapping it gently around the stem and stapling it shut like you see below, where the seeds will ripen safely. The paper allows air to circulate so they dry and don't rot.

After a week or two, open the bag to see if the seeds are mature; some of them may have fallen inside. When they're ready, cut the head off the stem and carefully remove the bag so you don't lose any seeds. Then lay it on a tray and use your fingers to scrape the seeds away from the head.

Storing flower seeds

Once you've successfully collected the seeds, read about how to store seeds you've collected from your garden to ensure they're ready to sprout next year.

Some seeds can be directly planted into the soil and others need to be kept in a dry cool place. It is important to learn about each variety.

