

JANUARY GARDEN CHECKLIST

In this weeks article I want to mention things gardeners need to be considering for January. The following is a garden checklist:

- A herbicide containing glyphosate can be used on dormant bermudagrass lawns in January or February when temperatures are above 50 degrees Fahrenheit for winter weed control. Make sure your bermuda lawn is completely dormant or you will damage it.
- Spray peaches with Bordeaux mixture, Ferbam, Ziram, lime sulfur spray, Daconil 2787, Kocide 2000, or Bravo for prevention of peach leaf curl. Do not apply if freezing temperatures are expected in 4 hours. Apply anytime during the winter but before bud swell which can occur as early as March.
- January through February is a good time of year to move plants from one location in the landscape to another. Water and mulch transplanted plants well.
- Till garden plots without a cover crop to expose overwintering insects to the winters cold. Do not till when soil moisture is high causing clods to form. Incorporate compost, animal manures, etc. at the same time to garden plots needing organic matter.
- This winter, remove bagworm bags from shrubs which were infested this past summer. Eggs were deposited within the bags by female worms, shortly before they died. Physically removing and destroying the bags will reduce or eliminate problems this summer.
- Avoid the temptation to fertilize houseplants during the winter months unless they are under grow lights or very high light conditions.
- Winter is pruning time for most landscape trees. You may need to remove lower limbs of young trees each winter as it matures. Ideally you would want your lowest limb six feet from the ground. Do any corrective pruning while trees are young, removing narrow crotch angles, double forks, etc. Remember to cut limbs back to the trunk leaving only the small ridge. No sealants are necessary. You can expect a wound from a 1 inch limb to heal over by the second year after cutting if not by the end of the first year. Larger wounds will take longer to seal.
- Enjoy a touch of spring indoors by forcing some cut branches of forsythia, flowering quince or pussy willow. Place them in water in a warm bright location for a week to ten days allowing these branches to burst out with color. These will surely brighten a cold wintry day.
- Mulch is important in protecting young plants from frost heaving. A 2 to 3 inch mulch will reduce heaving problems which occurs with alternate freezing and thawing. Newly planted plants (2 inch plants) can be pushed completely out of the ground.
- Winter months are an ideal time to submit soil samples to our office. The accuracy of the soil test is a reflection of the sample taken. Be sure the sample is representative of the area to be treated. As a general rule pull

soil from ten random spots of area to be tested at a depth of four to six inches. Mix these ten samples together and submit a **pint** of soil for testing. You are not limited to the number of samples submitted. Test different areas by pulling ten samples from each area. Test results will be returned to you within two to three weeks of being submitted.

- Begin planning seed orders for the upcoming gardening season. Remember that it is easy to plan for a huge garden in the comfort of your easy chair. Don't forget about heat, humidity and weeds. A small garden which is well-maintained can produce as much if not more than a large overgrown garden. Plan to incorporate at least one new variety of vegetable this season. Don't over-plant it, but see how it does and you can plant more next season.
- If you received an amaryllis bulb for the holidays, or bought one yourself, place the bulb in a sunny, yet slightly cool location. The hotter it is, the taller the plant will grow. Give it a drink of water and wait for the growth to begin. Once it begins to grow, keep it evenly moist. Turn the container occasionally to keep it straight. If it grows too tall, give it some support.
- Don't forget about the birds. Make sure they have fresh water to drink and food to eat.

For more information on any of the above points, contact the Baxter County Cooperative Extension office at 425-2335.

Mark D. Keaton
County Extension Agent-
Telephone: 425-2335
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