

# Horticulture Hints



Winter  
2017

## Landscape Gardening and Ornamentals



### Time to Plant Louisiana Super Plants

The cool season, from November to February, is the ideal time to plant hardy trees and shrubs. Some of the most outstanding trees and shrubs to plant now are Louisiana Super Plants selections. The Louisiana Super Plants program is an educational and marketing campaign of the LSU AgCenter that highlights tough and beautiful plants that perform well in Louisiana landscapes. Louisiana Super Plants selections have a proven track record. These plants have gone through years of university evaluations and observations or have a long history of thriving in Louisiana landscapes. Louisiana Super Plants are "university tested, and industry approved."



### Conversation Piece Azalea

This azalea belongs to the Robin Hill group and is known for its large flowers in various colors – white, dark pink and variegated with both colors – on the same plant. Flowering occurs in mid-spring and again in the fall. An evergreen shrub that grows 3-5 feet tall and wide, Conversation Piece azaleas (*Rhododendron* 'Conversation Piece') will thrive in well-prepared beds that receive part shade. Use this low-growing, mounding shrub to provide color in beds and foundation plantings.

### Drift Roses

Among the most outstanding of the roses released in the past few years, Drift roses (*Rosa* Drift series) are an excellent choice where smaller growing roses are desired. They grow only about 2-3 feet tall with a spread of about 3 feet or more. Plant Drift roses in well-prepared, sunny beds that have good drainage.

These summer flowering shrubs produce flushes of flowers from April to December and come in a variety of attractive colors. The low, spreading growth habit is suitable for use as a ground cover and planting in flowerbeds or containers. In flowerbeds, these tough, drought-tolerant and disease-resistant shrubs are a lower maintenance alternative to bedding plants.

Belinda's Dream is another outstanding landscape rose that is a Louisiana Super Plants selection. It produces beautiful, double-pink flowers on a vigorous, disease-resistant shrub.



### Penny Mac Hydrangea

Lots of hydrangea cultivars are available these days, but Penny Mac (*Hydrangea macrophylla* 'Penny Mac') is one of the best. This flowering, deciduous shrub grows 4-6 feet tall and about 3-4 feet wide. Plant hydrangeas in an eastern exposure where they get morning sun and shade the rest of the day or in a location that receives lots of bright, dappled light.

The main display of large, round flower heads show up in May and

are attractive into June – sporadic flowers appear in late summer. The flowers may be pink or light blue depending on the pH of the soil.

### **Aphrodite Althea**

The Aphrodite althea (*Hibiscus syriacus* 'Aphrodite') is an excellent cultivar of the old-fashioned rose of Sharon or althea. Plants grow 8-10 feet tall and bloom from late spring through the summer. Aphrodite produces very large rosy-pink, single, ruffled flowers with magenta throats that are sterile and do not set seeds.

### **Shishi Gashira Camellia**

Shishi Gashira camellias (*Camellia hiemalis* 'Shishi Gashira') are reliable evergreen shrubs that have a long, fall-blooming season. This compact shrub slowly grows 4-5 feet tall and wide and should be planted in locations that receive full sun to part shade.

The double, dark pink flowers begin to appear in October and continue until mid-January. The shrubs produce a large number of flowers and put on an excellent fall display. Shishi Gashira camellias may be used as specimen plants, massed in beds or planted in containers. Bees love the flowers.

### **Shoal Creek Vitex**

Among the toughest small trees for our landscapes, vitex (*Vitex agnus-castus*) is easy to grow. Shoal Creek is an especially nice cultivar with large flower spikes that are deep, lavender blue produced in summer. But, all cultivars of vitex are worth planting in the landscape.

Vitex trees flower best in full sun, but the trees will also do well with some shade. At maturity they are about 10-15 feet tall and wide, and are grown as large shrubs or small trees depending on how they are trained. Blooms occur in May to June and again in August. These trees are very drought-tolerant and attractive to bees, hummingbirds and butterflies.

### **Evergreen Sweetbay Magnolia**

One of our most beautiful native trees, the evergreen sweet bay magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana* var. *australis*) is a great choice for landscape planting. It grows well in full sun, but will tolerate some light shade. Trees generally grow about 30 feet tall, but may grow taller.

The creamy white 2- to 4-inch flowers look like typical magnolia flowers and are richly fragrant. They appear in May and continue sporadically through the summer. The backs of the leaves are silver and are beautiful when breezes cause them to ripple silver and green.

### **Willow Oak**

The native willow oak (*Quercus phellos*) is a great choice when a large shade tree is desired. Mature trees reach about 80 feet tall and 50 feet wide. The growth rate is moderate and the trees produce an upright, oval canopy that fits urban lots better than the spreading growth habit of live oaks. Willow oaks are deciduous, but the narrow leaves are not as messy as many shade trees. The small acorns these trees produce are good food for wildlife, such as squirrels and birds.



## **More Louisiana Super Plants**

This is also a great time to plant cool-season bedding plants that will keep our flowerbeds and landscapes colorful from fall to spring. These plants love the chilly weather and easily tolerate the freezes that occur over the winter. Look for Louisiana Super Plants cool-season bedding plants at your local nurseries. These bedding plants are selected by the LSU AgCenter for their outstanding performance around the state.

Excellent cool-season bedding plant selections that can be planted in December, January and February include: Amazon dianthus (Neon Cherry, Neon Purple and Rose Magic); Amazon; Camelot foxgloves (lavender, white, cream and rose); Sorbet violas in many colors; Red-bor kale with frilly purple leaves; Swan columbines in many beautiful colors; the exquisitely blue-flowered Diamonds Blue delphinium; the long-blooming Mesa gaillardia that will bloom from early spring until late summer; and Homestead Purple verbena.

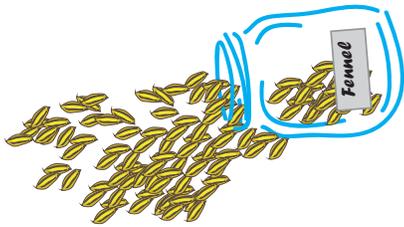


## Winter Work

Winter is not necessarily a time of rest for Louisiana gardeners. While northern gardeners retreat from an onslaught of snow, ice and frozen ground, we enjoy long stretches of mild weather punctuated occasionally by relatively short episodes of cold. This allows us to stay active in our gardens through the winter season.

## Protect Tropicals

We know it will get cold enough again this winter at some point protect our tropical landscape plants. Decide which plants you will choose to protect and which plants will be left to fend for themselves. Make sure you have enough materials on hand to protect those plants that you will cover.



## Store Seeds

If you harvested any seeds from your garden to plant next season, or have some packets of seeds left over, place them in a plastic or glass container with a tight-fitting lid, and store them in your refrigerator to keep them viable. Make sure you label the seeds with the kind they are and their date of harvest or purchase. Try to use seed within a year of harvesting or purchasing them.

## Recycle Leaves

Don't you dare bag up and throw away all of those valuable leaves. Add them to your compost piles or use them to mulch shrub and flowerbeds. Shred the leaves by running over them with a mower (bag attached) and they will decompose faster. Commercial leaf



shredders are also available online from many companies that sell gardening equipment.

As you build up your compost pile, sprinkle some fertilizer that contains nitrogen over each 1-foot layer of leaves to encourage decomposition. And don't forget to keep the pile moist (but not wet). Pine straw does not compost as quickly as other leaves and should be handled separately. (It's best applied to beds as mulch.) Apply it now or stockpile it in plastic bags to use later.

## Keep Up With Weeding

Weeds will continue to grow through the cool season. Do not let these unwanted bullies take over your flowerbeds. Your best defense is to keep the soil surface of beds covered with 2-3 inches of mulch.

Oxalis, a clover look-alike, is one of the worst. For physical control you must remove not just the foliage, but also the carrot-like root or bulbs attached to the leaves. Dig them out with a trowel. An alternative is to use a systemic herbicide such as glyphosate (Roundup and other named brands). Apply only the spray to the foliage of the oxalis, and do not allow it to get on the leaves of any desirable plants nearby. It will take several applications to be effective. Re-treat when it makes a comeback.



## It's Ideal Planting Time

Hardy trees, shrubs, ground covers and vines may be planted from December to February – this is actually the ideal planting season. You also may plant cool-season bedding plants to provide color in the landscape through April or May. Don't forget to keep your vegetable garden productive. Lots of hardy cool-season vegetables may be planted using transplants from your local nursery, or by direct seeding (root crops, such as carrots, radishes and turnips are always direct-seeded).



# Arbor Day

at Burden



**January 21**  
9 a.m.-3 p.m.  
LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens

Burden Museum & Gardens • 4560 Essen Lane (at I-10) • Baton Rouge  
763-3990 • DiscoverBurden.com

Plant a Family Tree  
Scavenger Hunt  
StoryTime  
Children's Tree Climbing  
Smokey Bear  
A Bonfire  
Hayrides  
...And More



## Don't Encourage Termites

Although fall is an excellent time for adding hardy trees, shrubs and ground covers to the landscape, it is also a time to be cautious about creating problems that could invite termites into your home. This is especially true when creating and planting beds around the foundation of the house. LSU AgCenter experts suggest the following to reduce the possibility of termite problems:

- Place gutters, and slope your landscape beds so water drains away from your house.
- Keep mulch in beds adjacent to the house pulled back about 12 inches from the foundation.
- Do not add fill dirt around the foundation or under porches or steps without contacting your termite company for re-treatment.
- Do not disturb the chemical barrier at the base of the slab or around pilings by digging into it during bed preparation.
- Promptly remove all scrap wood and wooden debris from the landscape.
- Pine straw appears to be the mulch that is least attractive to termites. Avoid using wood chips to mulch beds adjacent to the house or other structures.
- Use metal edging, decorative bricks or border plants to edge your beds. Avoid landscape timbers, railroad ties or other wooden materials that may serve as food for termites.
- When watering, avoid spraying water against the foundation of your house.
- Leave at least 2 inches of space between your house and a deck or other wooden structure outside. Build decks and other structures on concrete pads and treat around the pads and posts.
- Do not allow clinging vines, such as English ivy or creeping fig, to grow on the wall of your house.



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[LSUAgCenter.com/OnlineStore](http://LSUAgCenter.com/OnlineStore)

## Growing Amaryllis Bulbs

Few flowering bulbs can surpass the stately beauty of the amaryllis. Blooming typically in April, this popular bulb is a star performer in the spring garden. Dormant bulbs are available now, and, with proper care, they can become a long-lasting part of your landscape.

Dormant bulbs that you purchase now, however, must be handled carefully this winter. When they are dried off and forced into dormancy for shipping purposes, the bulbs are triggered to bloom during the winter rather than the spring. If you plant recently purchased bulbs into the garden, they will send up their flower stalks this winter when they are likely to be damaged by cold. Instead, plant them into pots using a well-drained potting soil with the neck of the bulb above the soil surface.

You also can buy bulbs pre-planted. Place the pot in a sunny window (the more sun the better), and keep the soil evenly moist. When the flower stalk begins to emerge, rotate the pot one-half turn every few days so it will grow straight. If you provide your amaryllis with too-little light, the flower stalk will grow excessively tall and may even fall over. Flowering generally occurs in December or early January from bulbs planted in November. Some large bulbs will produce two flower stalks.

After the flowers have faded, cut the stalk at the point where it emerges from the bulb, but do not cut any foliage. Keep the plant inside, and continue to provide plenty of light or the leaves will be weak. Water your amaryllis regularly when the soil begins to feel dry, but it is not really necessary to fertilize them during this time.

In April, it's time to plant your bulbs in the garden. Choose a well-prepared spot that receives sun for four to six hours. Amaryllis planted in the garden this spring will get into their natural cycle and bloom in April the following years.



## What's in a Name?

In what is probably one of the most quoted lines from Shakespeare's play, "Romeo and Juliette," Juliette says, "What's in a name? A rose by any other name would smell as sweet." The point being, what something is does not change based on what we call it. But in gardening, knowing the proper names of plants is important.

Plants are known by both common and Latin names. Knowing the proper common or Latin name is the key to finding information about a plant. A professional can't do much to provide care information if a gardener does not know the proper name of the plant. If you want to look up information about a new plant in a reference book or on the internet, you have to have the right name for the plant to do that. Knowing the right name also is important in finding and purchasing a particular plant you want.

Common names are easier to pronounce and remember, and most gardeners get by using them exclusively. But they definitely have their limits. Latin names are the most reliable names to know and use. Unfortunately, people generally don't like Latin names. Everyone is intimidated by those long, unpronounceable strings of letters that make up the Latin names of some plants.

Why, you might ask, deal with these unfamiliar and foreign words? Although common names are useful, they change from region to region – and around the world – for the same plant. Several different common names can apply to the same plant, or one common name can apply to several different plants. You can see how easily confusion can creep into this situation. Each plant, however, has only one official Latin name, and it is used worldwide.

In the age of international internet communication about plants, Latin names are becoming increasingly

important. So I would encourage you to put aside what I call your "nomenclaturephobia" and try to use Latin names more often in your gardening efforts. For that, it helps to understand a little bit about Latin names.

Binomial nomenclature is the scientific system developed by Carl von Linne (Linnaeus) in the 1700s that gives a two-part name to each plant or animal. The first name, the genus, is followed by a descriptive name, the species. The genus and species together form the scientific or Latin name of a plant.

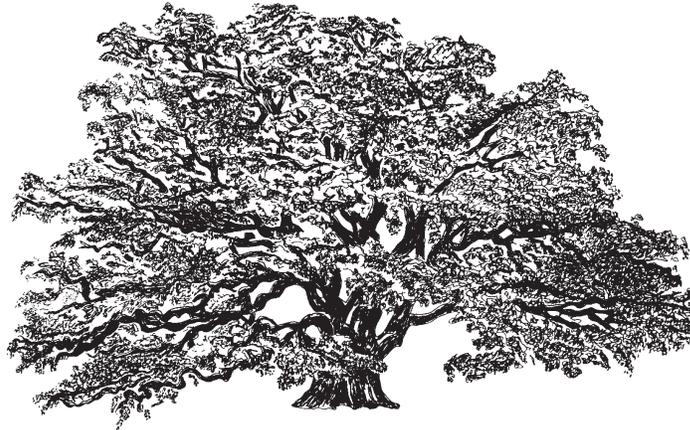
The genus is a group of closely related plants that have many shared characteristics, such as *Quercus* – the oaks; *Ulmus* – the elms; and *Lilium* – the lilies. The genus actually can stand alone. When you see the word *Quercus*, you know it refers to oaks.

A genus is subdivided into species. When a species name is added to *Quercus*, you have the name of a particular type of oak, such as *Quercus virginiana*, the live oak, or *Quercus shumardii*, the Shumard oak. The species name must be paired with a genus to mean anything. It is meaningless by itself.

Since they are in a foreign language, Latin names generally are italicized or underlined in text. Pronunciation often is a challenge, but you should just do your best. And you don't have to know how to pronounce a Latin

name to recognize it or write it, so it's not an insurmountable obstacle. These days, there are even websites and magazines that provide helpful pronunciation guides.

So, although you may hate them, scientific names often are critical to properly identifying plants. And whenever you are asking questions, doing research or looking to buy a particular plant, there are many instances where having the Latin name will make your efforts more successful.



*Quercus virginiana*



## Become A Louisiana Master Gardener

Whether you are a seasoned gardener or just beginning to sprout your gardening skills, you can become a Master Gardener. The Louisiana Master Gardener program, implemented by the LSU AgCenter, is a statewide educational and service program for gardening enthusiasts. Contact your LSU AgCenter extension agent for more information or visit our website.



[LSUAgCenter.com/MasterGardener](http://LSUAgCenter.com/MasterGardener)

# Checklist for December/January/February



1. Most spring-flowering bulbs can be planted through early December. Tulips and hyacinths must be refrigerated for six to eight weeks before planting in late December or early January.
2. Remove old flowers from your cool-season bedding plants to extend blooming and improve flower performance.
3. Plant gladiolus in late February in south Louisiana. Prolong the blooming season by planting at two- to three-week intervals for a couple of months.
4. Mulch shrubs and flowerbeds to get plants off to a good spring start and minimize weed problems.
5. Watch azaleas in February for lace bugs. They cause the foliage to have numerous small, white spots and feed underneath lower foliage. Control with horticultural oil sprays or Orthene.
6. A late-winter planting of petunias will provide a good flower show for early spring. Consider the new Wave series.
7. Winter is a great time for planting trees. Some excellent native species for Louisiana include nuttall oak, southern red oak, willow oak, red maple, southern sugar maple, southern magnolia, bald cypress and mayhaw. Louisiana Super Plants selections include evergreen sweetbay magnolia, willow oak, vitex and southern sugar maple.
8. February is the ideal time to fertilize trees.
9. January and February are good months to prune landscape trees and any deciduous and evergreen plants that don't flower in the spring.
10. Clean and sharpen tools before you put them away. Wipe the metal blades with an oily cloth that coats them with a thin layer of protective oil to help prevent corrosion. Coat wooden handles with protectants such as a sealer, tung oil or varnish.
11. February is a good time to plant container or bare-root roses. Bare-root rose bushes should be planted by the end of February. Early planting allows rose bushes to become established in their new locations before they begin to bloom. This increases the number and quality of flowers, and the bush is more prepared to deal with summer heat when it arrives in May. Plant roses in sunny, well-prepared beds that have excellent drainage
12. Look for Louisiana Super Plants at your local nurseries. Louisiana Super Plants are selected for their outstanding performance around the state and are "university tested, and industry approved." Cool-season bedding plant Super Plants that can be planted now include Homestead Purple verbena, Swan columbines, Redbor kale, Camelot foxgloves, Amazon dianthus, Sorbet violas and Mesa gaillardia. Hardy shrub Louisiana Super Plants selections that can be planted now include Belinda's Dream rose, Drift roses, Shishi Gashira camellia, Conversation Piece azalea and Leslie Ann sasanqua.
13. Prune everblooming roses in late January or early February. Landscape roses, like the popular Knock Out roses, should be cut back by about one-half their height (do not cut back lower than 2 feet from the ground). Fertilize rose bushes in mid- to late March.
14. Trim back dormant ornamental grasses in late February. It is important to remove the brown leaves before the new growth emerges and mixes with the dead growth. Electric hedge trimmers are a good tool to use for this job.



*Dan Gill*  
*Consumer Horticulture Specialist*



## LouEASyana GARDENING

### Yummy to You, Me and the Bees!



Gardeners generally grow edible crops they love to eat or that they know family and friends love to eat; however, have you ever considered planting an edible crop for your hardworking bees? Bees and other pollinators are an integral part of gardening. We need them to ensure adequate yields of cucumbers, cantaloupe, watermelon, squash, zucchini and more spring crops. So, start attracting them to the garden early!

From mid-January to the first of March, plant broccoli transplants. Provide the transplants with plenty of water and fertilizer to get them started. Fertilizer is key to success here. We must grow nice, robust plants to ensure they produce the florets. Aged manures, compost, organic and synthetic fertilizers are all sufficient as preplant fertilizers. These should be applied between one and three weeks prior to planting your broccoli transplants. Approximately two to three weeks after you transplant, add some additional fertilizer as a sidedress application. In other words, apply it to the side of the plant, 6-8 inches away from the base. I generally like to apply liquid fertilizers that have 15 percent nitrogen for the sidedress application.

Avoid manures for sidedress applications of fertilizer, especially those that have not been aged. This precaution is simply to avoid increasing your chance of foodborne illnesses.

Keep the broccoli watered but not saturated, and enjoy watching it grow. As the main head forms, harvest it for yourself to eat. The day you harvest the main head, apply one more application of fertilizer as a sidedress, and continue to let the plants go. As the side shoots develop, do not harvest them. Allow them to open up into tons of beautiful tiny yellow flowers. Once they've started to open, you'll find the bees have arrived and are enjoying their sweet nectar. This will start to attract pollinators to your yard just in time for south Louisiana gardeners to begin planting cucurbits in mid-March and north Louisiana gardeners to begin planting cucurbits April 1. Keep the broccoli plants in the garden until the yellow flowers form tiny seedpods that look very similar to miniature green beans. Then discard and make room for more spring plants.



## Monthly Garden Tips

### December

- Build rows in gardens, and turn over soil in raised beds now, while the weather is drier. The early spring season can be quite wet. Early winter preparation makes spring vegetable gardening a breeze.



- Plant onion and shallot sets. Choose sets that are thin, the size of a pencil or thinner. Thicker plants tend to bolt in cold weather and set seed rather than form a bulb.
- Scout for insects. Aphids and worms are the biggest culprits in the vegetable garden in winter. Use insecticides only when you see the insect, not as a preventative. Insecticides such as horticulture oil, insecticidal soap and Bifenthrin products (Ortho Bug-B-Gon Max) work great for aphid control. Insecticides that kill worms and loopers include Sevin, Bt (Dipel) and Spinosad.
- Order spring vegetable seed now if you want first pick of the great varieties. Wait too long and it will be too late to start your transplants.

## January

- Onions can be planted from mid-December to early January. In early January, continue to plant onion sets.
- Mid- to late January, transplant broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and lettuce.
- Mid- to late January, seed Irish potatoes into the garden. Cut the potatoes a few days before planting.
- Vegetable growers in south Louisiana should start their tomato, eggplant and pepper transplants mid-January. North Louisiana vegetable growers should wait until the end of January or the beginning of February. It takes between 8 and 10 weeks to germinate and grow into a decent size seedling for the garden. Keep seedlings in a warm and BRIGHT area. One week prior to transplanting, move the seedlings outside to harden off.



## February

- Continue to transplant broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and lettuce transplants into the garden. Successive planting (a portion of a row or a new row) every two weeks ensures a steady harvest.
- Direct-seed beets, turnips, mustard, parsley, radishes, lettuce, snap beans and Irish potatoes.
- Leave space for spring crops, which will go into the garden in March and April!

*Dr. Kathryn Fontenot,  
Vegetable Crops*

## Perk Up Your Winter Garden With Pansies



Pansies are a good choice for winter gardens, and the best time to plant them is in the fall.

They are winter annuals, meaning they will bloom all through the winter months and begin to die back when the weather becomes hot. Pansies are relatively small, usually spreading 6-8 inches tall and wide. The flowers are rounded with five petals, and they come in a variety of colors. Pansies are great for adding a pop of color to your garden. Pansies can tolerate cold temperatures, even down to freezing. Be careful not to plant below the base of the stem, because this can cause crown rot.

Pick a planting location that has well-drained soil and full sun. When shopping for pansies, choose plants with green leaves and plenty of unopened flower buds. Plant them 6-8 inches apart, then water thoroughly with a water-soluble, liquid fertilizer around base of plant. Fertilize monthly. When flowers fade, clip the withered blossom and stem off at the base of the plant. This is called dead-heading and will encourage the plant to flower.

Pansies can be planted along the edge of a flower bed as a border or planted in large masses for a big impact. They are great in containers, window boxes, tubs or hanging baskets. Plant one color for a bigger impact or plant mixed colors for a rainbow effect. Pansies are generally pest-free but you may have to spot treat for snails or slugs. Pansies do not tolerate heat well so when temperatures rise, remove them to make room for summer annuals.

*Mary Sexton, M.S.  
Extension Associate*

## Winter Turfgrass Management

### Bleak Time for Turfgrasses Begins in December

December begins a bleak time for warm-season turfgrasses. Most lawns should be dormant or at least close to this stage by Christmas. Because lawns are not actively growing, fertilizer applications are not needed during the winter. Actually, you should have stopped nitrogen fertilization on home lawns by late summer (late August for St. Augustinegrass and centipede-grass).

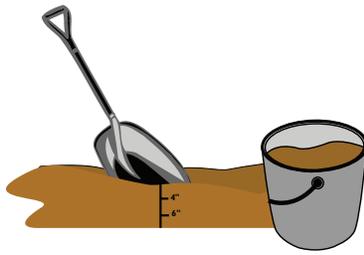
Nitrogen fertilizer on dormant to semi-dormant St. Augustinegrass, centipede-grass and zoysiagrass lawns can lead to increased brown patch and winter kill. Also, nitrogen applications during this time have a greater potential for leaching or movement into nontarget areas.

## Soil Sampling and Liming

Winter is an excellent time to collect soil samples and submit them for analysis. Samples should be a composite of soil collected from 3 to 4 inches deep at various places around the lawn.

Mix well, reduce the sample to about a pint of soil and take it to the LSU AgCenter Extension Service office in your parish or to a participating garden center. Make sure to specify the type of grass you are growing on the soil test form.

Soil samples submitted to the LSU AgCenter result in a wealth of information concerning the overall fertility of your soil. If results of the soil test indicate the soil pH is too acidic, lime will be prescribed in the soil test recommendations. Sulfur may be prescribed for soils that are too alkaline. Winter is the best time to apply lime or sulfur so that it can be activated by the growing season next spring and summer. The correct soil pH is extremely important and has everything to do with nutrient availability to your lawn's roots and to fertilizer performance.



## Turf Establishment

Postpone any permanent warm-season turfgrass seeding until next spring. Soil and air temperatures will be too cold for germination and growth.

Sod, such as St. Augustinegrass and centipedegrass can be laid during winter and established successfully during the spring. But remember to maintain good moisture to prevent the sod from dying. Establishment of sod is easiest, however, when sodding is delayed until the middle of spring, well after spring green-up.

## Brown Patch Disease

Brown patch disease can come and go through the winter if the weather is mild. Treatment with fungicides containing myclobutanil, propiconazole, pyraclostrobin, thiophanate-methyl and triticonazole and azoxystrobin will reduce the spread of brown patch. Damage from brown patch will slow spring green-up, and affected areas will remain unsightly until warmer spring weather conditions help with turfgrass recovery.



## Winter Weed Management

Broadleaf weeds such as clover and lawn burweed (sticker weed) and annual bluegrass infesting St. Augustinegrass, centipedegrass and zoysiagrass, as well as dormant bermudagrass, can be managed with applications of atrazine herbicide applied in February and March. These are good months to spray winter weeds since they are still actively growing and not producing seed. Also, herbicides containing three-way mixtures of 2,4-D, plus dicamba, plus mecoprop (trimec) can be used for winter broadleaf control with less turf injury potential in all southern turfgrasses this time of the year. Weed-and-feed products can be substituted as your first application of fertilizer during the early spring.

## When to Fertilize Lawns

Lawns may show signs of green-up in southern Louisiana in late February. Do not push turfgrass growth with fertilizer at that time. Fertilizer applied too early will feed winter weeds and will result in lush turfgrass growth that is more susceptible to injury from late frosts and increased levels of brown patch disease. Lawns may be fertilized in the New Orleans area by late March, but delay fertilizing areas north of Baton Rouge until early April. Consider fertilizing lawns in north Louisiana around mid-April.

*Ron Strahan  
Turfgrass Science*

## Fruits

### Gardeners Can Help Feed Their Communities

Home fruit and vegetable gardeners can help solve two problems: (1) Food is wasted because gardeners harvest more than they can use – it could feed 28 million people; (2) Food pantries nationwide desperately need that fresh food – they feed 50 million people.

One solution is AmpleHarvest.org, which helps 42 million home and community gardeners end food waste and hunger by educating and enabling them to donate their excess garden produce to one of nearly 8,000 nearby food pantries across America. What they do is enable you to help eliminate food waste, hunger and malnutrition in your own community. When you donate garden produce that you can't use, preserve or share with friends, you are ending the waste of healthy fresh food – the very food that is so desperately needed by food pantries nourishing hungry families in your community.



The essence of the AmpleHarvest.org “No Food Left Behind” educational campaign is simple: backyard growers should enable nearby food pantries or food banks to provide nutritious produce to the nation’s hungry, rather than throwing the “surplus” away or letting it rot.

Thousands of food pantries across all 50 states are registered to receive a sustainable and recurring supply of freshly harvested, locally grown food from area growers – absolutely free! As a result, millions of pantry clients can feed their families fresh food instead of products packaged with added salt, sugar and corn syrup, thereby reducing the likelihood of diet-related illness such as diabetes, high blood pressure and obesity.

Children are at a greater risk of obesity than ever before, so exposing them to fresh produce pays healthy dividends. Many learn for the first time that apples do not come pre-sliced in cellophane, peas come in pods and not cans, and carrots are a sweet and crunchy snack. Better yet, families are introduced to new varieties of food previously unavailable to them.

The carbon footprint of the food pantries is greatly diminished as locally sourced food – without packaging or cans trucked across the country that need to be disposed of – is delivered to hungry people within that community.

The AmpleHarvest.org mission is to make food pantries easier to find and thus better equipped to receive bigger and better donations of fresh produce. Using web-based platforms and media, they are striving to connect 40,000,000 backyard growers to 33,500 food pantries across the country, thereby facilitating the delivery of fresh, surplus produce to 50,000,000 hungry and/or malnourished Americans.

To find one near you, simply enter your ZIP code, and click on a pantry to learn more about their mission, hours of operation and when and how much fresh produce they can receive. Give them a call and make a new friend! Most pantries will enthusiastically answer any and all questions—especially those pertaining to donations. <http://ampleharvest.org/>.

## Good Food Org Guide

Food Tank and the James Beard Foundation have recently released the third annual Good Food Org Guide, which features 1,000 nonprofit organizations creating a better food system across the United States. Check out the website at <http://foodtank.com/news/2016/10/the-third-annual-good-food-org-guide-is-here>.

With the help of an advisory board of food system experts, Food Tank and the James Beard Foundation created this definitive guide to feature nonprofit orga-

nizations that are creating a better food system. The organizations in this year’s Guide are effecting change in kitchens, schools, churches, labs, businesses, community centers, governments, urban farms, fields, food banks and more.

Since the inaugural Good Food Org Guide was released in 2014, it has highlighted groups that: combat childhood obesity, malnourishment and physical inactivity; prevent food waste; educate consumers on healthy, nutritious food choices; create networks of social entrepreneurs; protect food and restaurant workers; highlight solutions for restoring the health of people and the planet; work with indigenous communities to preserve traditions, culture and biodiversity; inspire and educate individuals to cook more of their own food; and protect public health, human health and the environment.

This year’s Guide includes an online search tool. The website enables users to search for organizations by the region and category of the organization’s work. Each organization highlighted in the Guide has its own profile page, which includes its contact information, description, logo, social media links, location, photos and related organizations. I found 12 websites listed for Louisiana. Most of the groups were in the New Orleans area, but you may wish to start a similar outreach in your community, and these organizations could provide useful advice.

## Plant a Row for the Hungry

The Association for Garden Communicators has an excellent program called “Plant a Row for the Hungry.” Garden writers are asked to encourage their readers/listeners to plant an extra row of produce each year and donate their surplus to local food banks, soup kitchens and service organizations to help feed America’s hungry. Since 1995, over 20 million pounds of produce providing over 80 million meals have been donated by American gardeners. All of this has been achieved without government subsidy or bureaucratic red tape – just people helping people.

Over 84 million U.S. households have a yard or garden. If every gardener plants one extra row of vegetables and donates their surplus to local food agencies and soup kitchens, a significant impact can be made on reducing hunger. “Plant a Row for the Hungry” provides focus, direction and support to volunteer committees that promote herb, vegetable and community gardening at the local level. They then provide training and direction to enable the committee to reach out into the community. Finally, they assist in coordinating the local food collection systems and monitor the volume of donations being conveyed to food agencies. Check out their website if you would like to get involved at <https://gardenwriters.org/Plant-a-Row>.

# 2017 Get It Growing Lawn & Garden Calendar



The 2017 Get It Growing Lawn & Garden Calendar offers monthly tips for Louisiana gardeners from LSU AgCenter horticulturist Dan Gill, beautiful photos from Louisiana photographers and a special feature on environmentally-friendly landscaping.



- Full color
- 13 1/4" x 9"
- Monthly tips
- Gardening terms
- Louisiana Super Plants
- Special feature and how-to replot container plants
- Zone map

**How to Repot a Container Plant**

**Simple Steps to Repotting Root-bound Container Plants**

- Step 1:** When the roots of a container plant have the same space to grow, it's time to trade in for a larger planter.
- Step 2:** Start by making a cutting list to the larger container. For it to be a proper fit, which also shows the plant in the container, the top of the new soil will be somewhat below the rim.
- Step 3:** First, remove the original plant from its old home. Lay the container on its side and loosen the root ball. Using the tines of a fork, gently break apart the soil. Gently pull the root ball out of the pot.
- Step 4:** Now, place the plant in the new pot, pushing to see the top of the root ball is just below the rim. Spread the roots as little as possible.
- Step 5:** Next, fill in any spaces between the root ball and pot with soil, adding enough to reach the top of the container. Use the back of a shovel to firm the soil. In the case of a large plant, you may need to use a shovel to get the soil into the pot. Add soil until you are getting soil with your hands. Use your soil to gently firm the soil around the plant.
- Step 6:** Finally, finish setting in the new soil by adding water. You are done!

**LSU AgCenter Recommended SUPER Plants**

**Fall 2016**

- Wendy's Double Dandy
- Wendy's Double Dandy
- Wendy's Double Dandy

**Spring 2017**

- Superstar
- Wendy's Double Dandy
- Wendy's Double Dandy

**Fall 2017**

- Superstar
- Superstar



[www.LSUAgCenter.com/GetItGrowingCalendar](http://www.LSUAgCenter.com/GetItGrowingCalendar)

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# Horticulture Hints



**Winter  
2017**

**Visit our LSU AgCenter Store**  
[www.LSUAgCenter.com/OnlineStore](http://www.LSUAgCenter.com/OnlineStore)

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**David Himelrick, Ph.D., Fruits**  
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**Parish agents, please adapt these suggestions to your area before disseminating.**

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