

# K-STATE

Research and Extension

Butler County

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# The Grapevine

## Summer Support for Pollinators

Summer has officially arrived, and with the change in season comes a change in the temperatures. While we commonly think of planting flowers and larval plants for our native pollinators and honeybees, we often overlook a critical need of bees and butterflies for a water source. Not only do bees need this water to drink, but honeybees will collect water to bring back to the hive. The bees distribute droplets of water around the nest, which works in parallel with the fanning to create the equivalent of honey bee AC, or air conditioning. As temperatures rise to extreme heat levels, more honey bees will start to forage for water.

We can provide water to support pollinators in a couple of ways. The first option is to provide a shallow dish of water, similar to what is shown in the photo, for bees and butterflies to drink from. You could also add some rocks in the dish for additional landing places for the pollinators to drink and prevent

drowning. Another option is to provide puddles or areas of wet mud for pollinators to drink from. A puddle can be as simple as an area under drip irrigation that stays damp or a location you keep damp by watering it daily. These puddles provide both water and minerals necessary for pollinators to survive. Help keep your pollinators hydrated this summer! Happy growing!



# Fall Gardening



It's hard to believe that July will arrive this week. I am not sure where the summer has gone so far, but it doesn't look like it will slow down anytime soon. While our warm-season crops are thriving and loving the summer heat, it's time for our cool-season crops to start winding down for the summer. As quickly as the summer is going, it's time to start thinking about starting our fall garden plants, and even start planting some of them right now. Fall gardening wasn't an option when I lived in North Dakota, as the growing season was simply too short. In Kansas, fall gardening is an excellent but often overlooked gardening season. In some cases, by the time fall arrives, we are tired of being in the garden, but late-season crops can extend your gardening season and provide fresh veggies to winter, depending on the crop. In many cases, fall-grown vegetables are of higher quality and better for preservation.

Most of our cool-season vegetables can easily be grown in the fall, except for peas, as they require cooler temperatures to germinate than we get in July or August. Some common vegetables grown in the fall include potatoes, green beans, beets, cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, kale, lettuce, radish, and spinach. Some crops, such as kale and spinach, can often be overwintered by only harvesting the outside leaves and mulching the plant in the garden. Most vegetables can be started from seed; however, vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower, or cabbage should be started in containers or in a shady spot in the garden to be transplanted in mid-August. When seeding fall crops, plant the seeds slightly deeper than you would in the spring and water them consistently to help keep the soil as cool as possible.



The timing of planting fall vegetables can be critical to their success. Because of the warm soil temperatures, seedlings will often germinate faster in the summer than in the spring. Here is a brief calendar:

- Mid-July- Start planting potatoes. It's best to use fresh seed potatoes rather than trying to plant the potatoes you just harvested. They have a dormancy requirement and won't sprout soon enough. Finding seed potatoes in July can be hard, so you might have to order them.
- Late July- seed your longer-season, heat-tolerant crops such as carrots, beets, and green beans.
- Late July-Early August- seed spinach and longer season head lettuce. (Leaf lettuce will be started later in the fall.)
- Early August- Transplant broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower seedlings into the garden.
- Mid to Late August- Start radishes and leaf lettuce.

Establishing fall crops might be the most challenging part of gardening in the late summer to early fall. Extra watering or heavy rainfall can form a crust on the top of the soil. Use a soaker hose to prevent the crust from building up if possible. You can also sprinkle compost, peat moss, perlite, or vermiculite over the top of the rows to prevent the crusting from occurring. Gradually reduce your watering as the seedlings grow to encourage a deeper root system. The vegetables will likely require some fertilizer two to four weeks after they have been planted or transplanted. It's best to wait for fertilizer after the seedlings grow, so you don't burn them when they are young.

Fall vegetable gardens can be an excellent extension of your gardening season. The cooler weather as the vegetables mature leads to tastier and higher quality vegetables than those that ripen in the heat of the summer. With just a little work, you can easily enjoy fresh vegetables throughout the growing year and even into the early to mid-winter. I hope your gardens and plants are looking great.



## Question of the Week- Carpenter Ants



Carpenter ants are relatively common in Kansas. They get their name because they tend to build their nests in wood. Unlike termites, carpenter ants don't feed on wood; they use it as a place to live. These are the largest ants in Kansas, with adults ranging in size from  $\frac{1}{4}$ " for workers to  $\frac{3}{4}$ " for queens, depending on the ant species. They range from reddish brown to black, with some species having red fronts and black abdomens. The easiest way to identify these ants is by the ring of tiny hairs at the tip of the abdomen. Carpenter ants will burrow into soft, moist wood to establish their nests.

They prefer wood that has already started to decay; however, they will also excavate into perfectly sound wood. In houses, these ants build "galleries" to rear young. These galleries are formed without regard for the grain of the wood and tend to follow the softer parts of the wood. An indication you have carpenter ant issues is the sawdust they eject from their galleries. Houses near wooded areas are more likely to have problems with carpenter ants than those away from trees. In trees, carpenter ants are taking advantage of wood that has already started to decay. They tend to be a symptom of an already existing issue in a tree rather than being the cause of the damage.

Finding their nest is the first step to controlling the ants in a home. The first places to inspect are areas affected by water seepage, such as window sills, roofs, porches, posts, columns, and rotten stumps, logs, or trees nearby. Apply pyrethroid products directly to the nest according to the label requirements to eliminate the parent colony. You should also apply spot treatments and insecticide spray around the perimeter of buildings to prevent a new colony from infesting the area. Be sure to fix the issue that also caused the rotten or damp wood.

## Insect of the Week- Squash Vine Borer

Our insect of the week is starting to become active in our gardens. Suppose you have noticed squash plants suddenly wilting; even in the cooler morning temperatures, you must check the stalk for squash vine borers. The adults of this insect are clearwing moths that start to emerge in late June through early July and lay eggs on squash plants. These eggs will hatch in approximately a week, and the larvae will begin feeding on the plant's stems. Squash vine borers feed on summer and winter squash and pumpkins, causing yellowing leaves and wilting. Look for sawdust-type material that is moist, green/orange in color, and located near holes at the base of the stem. Treating the plant for the larvae is difficult, so it is best to monitor the plants before the adult hatches and treat them before the larvae infect the plant.



Treatment should begin when the squash plants start to spread and be reapplied every seven to ten days through the end of June. Be sure to spray the plant crown and the runners' base. Use products with the active ingredient permethrin or bifenthrin applied as a spray or dust. If your crop is still successfully attacked by borers, you can try to kill the borer inside the vine. Keep in mind that you may not be able to save the plant. As soon as wilting is noticed, use a sharp knife to cut a slit in the affected stem. Slice carefully up the vine until you locate the borer (or borers). Once you have killed any borers with the tip of the knife, mound moist soil over the cut area and keep this spot well watered. New roots may grow along the cut stem, allowing the plant to survive. Another option is to plant squash in early July so the plants will mature while the larvae are pupating rather than when they are active. You can also plant Hubbard squash as a perimeter around your field as a trap crop since squash vine borers prefer it to other varieties.

## Video of the Week

### Establishing a More Environmentally Sustainable Lawn



Whether you are interested in reducing your water bill or supporting pollinators, there are alternatives to growing and maintaining typical turfgrass lawns. This webinar will discuss reducing the water, herbicides, and fertilizers used on fescue lawns and replacing fescue turfgrass with low-growing alternatives that support our pollinators. Watch the video on the [K-State Research and Extension Garden Hour Website](#).



## Upcoming Events

### Garden Hour Webinars:

July 2<sup>nd</sup>- Cutting Edge Efforts in Kansas Demo Gardens

August 6<sup>th</sup>- Innovations in Horticultural Research at Kansas State University

September 3<sup>rd</sup>- Shrubs that Thrive in Kansas

### Upcoming Events:

July 9<sup>th</sup> at 12:15 pm- Troubleshooting Issues in the Garden Lunch and Learn at Andover Library

July 9<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm- Fall Gardening at the Benton Community Building

July 13<sup>th</sup> from 10-2 pm- Produce Fest at the El Dorado Farmer's Market

July 16<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm- Annual and Perennial Plants for Kansas at the Bradford Memorial Library

## July Garden Calendar

### Vegetables and Fruits

- Harvest the fruits of your labor and enjoy
- Control weed growth to preserve water and nutrients
- Fertilize vegetables to encourage plant development
- Watch for foliar disease development on lower tomato leaves and treat with a fungicide
- Prepare for fall gardening. Plant potatoes, broccoli, and other fall crops
- Spray sweet corn to control corn earworms as silks emerge
- Be on the lookout for pests in the garden and control
- Remove old raspberry canes after harvest

### Flowers

- Remove faded flowers from annuals to stimulate more flowers for late summer color, and from perennials to prevent reseeding
- Keep gardens well mulched
- Lightly fertilize annuals to promote growth
- Dig, divide, and replant crowded irises
- Fertilize roses for fall blossoms
- Fertilize and water container gardens
- Complete the final pinching of chrysanthemum tips for bushier plants

### Lawns

- Fertilize zoysia to encourage summer growth with a high-nitrogen fertilizer. Let grass clippings fall to return nutrients to the soil and grass
- Be on the lookout for summer diseases such as brown patch
- Watch for grubs. If they begin to hatch, an insecticide may be required. Apply in late July or early August.
- Keep mower blades sharpened
- Replace lawn mower air filter and change lawn mower oil per the owner's manual
- Prepare to control perennial grassy weeds such as zoysia, fescue, and nimblewill
- Water deeply and less often for deep roots and a healthy lawn

### Trees and Shrubs

- Water newly planted shrubs and young trees (planted within the last three to five years) during dry weather
- Keep plants mulched to conserve moisture and cool roots
- Remove sucker growth from the base of trees and along branches
- Prune diseased, dead, or hazardous limbs

### Miscellaneous

- Water weekly by deeply soaking the soil. Use surface irrigation and avoid watering late at night to help reduce disease development.
- Take photos of gardens



# LUNCH & LEARN

Bring your lunch and join Horticulture Agent, Calla Edwards, over the lunch hour during our monthly Lunch & Learn Program. This will be held over the lunch hour and will cover a variety of horticulture topics.

**July 9<sup>th</sup>**  
**12:15-12:45 p.m.**

**Andover Public Library**  
1511 E. Central Ave.  
Andover, KS

**July Topic: Troubleshooting  
Issues in the Garden**

Learn how to identify and treat common vegetable garden issues.

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service  
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