

Texas Agricultural Extension Service

The Texas A&M University System

Horticultural Update



Plant of the Month... October

*Dr. William C. Welch, Landscape Horticulturist
Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas*

Pomegranate, *Punica granatum*
Family: Punicaceae
Zones: 8 - 10

Pomegranates were brought by the Spanish to America. After Cortez conquered Mexico in 1521, Jesuit missionaries sent to work with the Indians brought pomegranates from Spain; from Mexico they were carried northward to missions in California and possibly east to Texas. They were also thought to be in the early-Florida city of St. Augustine. Some pomegranates have naturalized in the coastal areas of the United States.



The pomegranate plant form is that of a small deciduous tree or large shrub, growing up to 25 feet tall. Pomegranates are multistemmed unless pruned to a single trunk. Originally grown for their fruit, they are also known for their beautiful flowers that can occur for several months in the spring and early summer. Most commonly, they are red-orange, but white, pink, and variegated flowers may also be found. Double-flowering types have blossoms that are carnation-like. Pomegranates are also useful for large hedges. Their foliage is shiny and dark green, and the stems are somewhat thorny.

October 1995

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Native to Arabia, Persia, Bengal, China, and Japan, pomegranates are sometimes hardy as far north as Washington, D.C., but are best adapted to the Deep South where they have escaped cultivation in the Gulf Coast states.

Pliny considered pomegranates to be among the most valuable of ornamental and medicinal plants. Theophrastus provided an early description about 300 years before the Christian era. Many legends concerning the pomegranate have been handed down by Asian people. The many seeds are supposed to be a symbol of fertility. Legend also

Continued on Page 4

Zones of Adaptation for Fruit, Nuts in Texas

Dr. Calvin G. Lyons, Extension Horticulturist
Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas

FRUIT VARIETIES FOR TEXAS HOMEOWNERS

Peaches

- Zone 1:** Bicentennial, Surecrop, Sentinel, Ranger, Redglobe, Denman, Milam, Jefferson, Belle of Georgia, White Star
- Zones 2-3:** Regal, Bicentennial, Sentinel, Ranger, Harvester, Redglobe, Milam, Denman, Loring, Dixiland, Redskin, Jefferson, Surecrop, Belle of Georgia
- Zone 4:** Regal, Bicentennial, June Gold, Sentinel, Harvester, Redglobe, Sunnigold, Loring, Milam, Dixiland, Redskin, Jefferson, Melba, Palace, White Hale
- Zone 5:** Bicentennial, TexRoyal, June Gold, Sentinel, Harvester, La Feliciana, Dixiland, Redskin, Melba Palace, White Hale
- Zone 6:** Earli Grande, Florida Grande, Florida King, TexRoyal, June Gold, La Feliciana, Texstar, Flordaglo, Starlite
- Zone 7:** Earli Grande, Tropic Beauty, Tropic Sweet, Flordaprince, Florida Grande, Tropic Snow, Flordaglo

Pomegranates

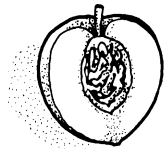
- All Zones:** Wonderful
- Pears**
- Zone 1:** Orient, Moonglow, Ayers, Kieffer, Surecrop, Maxine, LeConte, Magness
- Zone 2-4:** Orient, Moonglow, Kieffer, LeConte, Ayers, Garber, Maxine
- Zone 5-6:** Orient, Kieffer, LeConte, Monterey, Fan-stil, Pineapple, Garber

Loquats

- Zones 4-6:** Ornamental
- Zone 7:** Fruit Production

Apples

- Zone 1:** Starkspur G.D., Red Chief, Starkrimson R.D., Smoothee, Top Red, Prime Gold, Jersey mac, Granny Smith, Gala
- Zone 2:** Top Red, Red Chief, Starkrimson R.D., Starkspur G.D., Smoothee, Prime Gold, Jersey mac, Mollie's Delicious, Granny Smith
- Zone 3:** Jersey mac, Gala, Starkspur G.D., Starkrimson R.D., Mollie's Delicious, Ozark Gold
- Zone 4:** Jersey mac, Gala, Mollie's Delicious, Starkrimson R.D., Granny Smith
- Zone 5:** Ein Sheimer, Anna, Dorsett Gold, Mollie's Delicious
- Zone 6-7:** Ein Sheimer, Dorsett Gold, Anna



Figs

- Zones 1-3:** Texas Everbearing, Celeste
- Zones 4-5:** Texas Everbearing, Celeste
- Alma**
- Zones 6-7:** Celeste, Alma

Apricots

- Zones 1-3:** Bryan, Hungarian, Moorpark
- Zones 6-7:** Bleinheim, Royel

Persimmons

- Zone 2:** Eureka, Hachiya
- Zones 3-6:** Fuyu (Fuyugaki)
- Zone 7:** Tanenashi, Tamopan

Nectarines

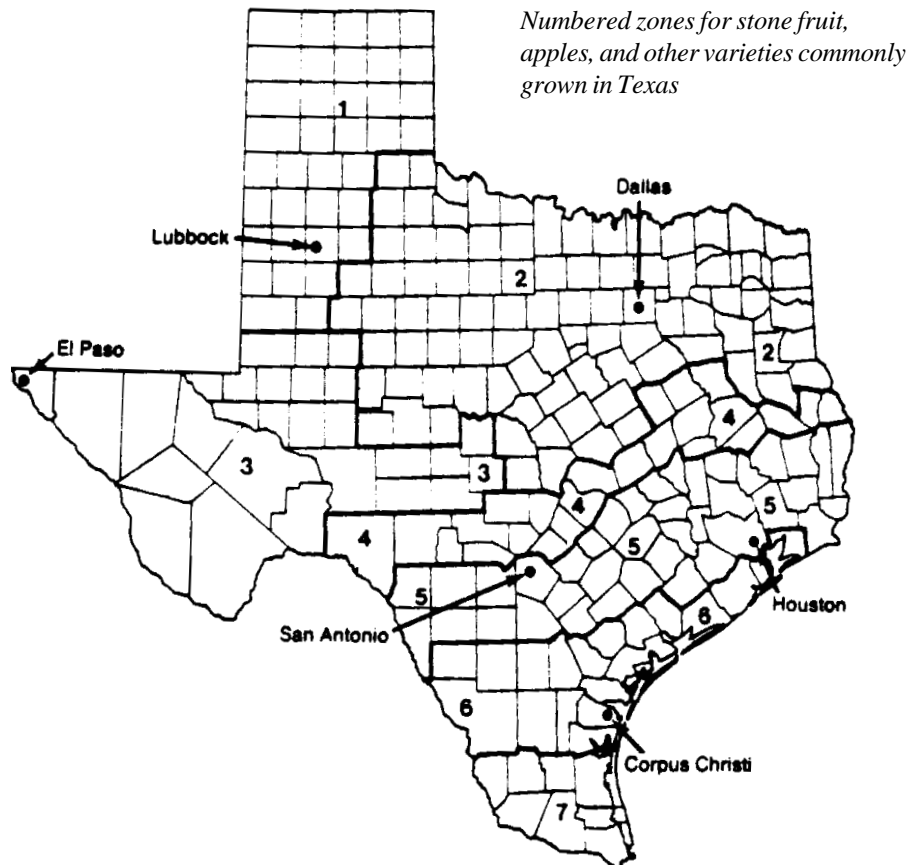
- Zones 1-3:** Redglobe
- Zones 1-5:** Armling, Crimson Gold
- Zones 6-7:** SunRed

Plums

- Zones 1-3:** Morris, Methley, Ozark, Premier, Bruce, Allred
- Zones 4-6:** Methley, Allred, Bruce
- Zones 6-7:** Gulf Ruby, Gulf Gold

Jujubes

- All Zones:** LiLang





BERRY VARIETIES FOR TEXAS HOMEOWNERS

Blackberries

Zones 1-2: Brazos, Rosborough,
Womack, Brison, Cheyenne, Shawnee,
Hil

Zones 3-4: Brazos, Rosborough,
Womack, Brison

Blueberries

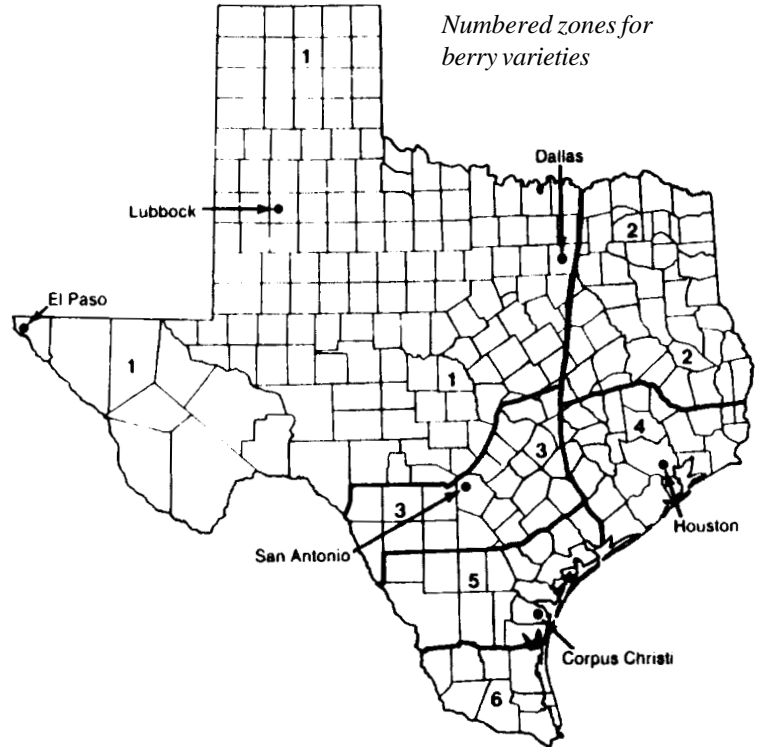
Zone 2: Tifblue, Woodard, Delite,
Britblue, Climax, Premiere, Brightwell
Zone 4: Climax, Sharpblue, Beckyblue,
Tifblue, Woodard, Premier, Britwell

Red Raspberries

Zones 1-4: Dorman Red

Strawberries

Zones 1-2: Sunrise, Cardinal, Allstar
Zones 3-4: Sequoia, Douglas, Chandler,
Tioga, Fresno, Tangi
Zones 5-6: Sequoia, Douglas, Tioga



Numbered zones for berry varieties

NUT AND GRAPE VARIETIES FOR TEXAS HOMEOWNERS

Pecans

Zone 1: Osage, Caddo, Pawnee,
Merrimac
Zone 2: Wichita, Western, Cheyenne,
Tejas
Zones 3-5: Kiowa, Choctaw, Cheyenne,
Wichita, Shawnee, Western
Zones 4-7: Desirable, Choctaw,
Cheyenne, Shawnee, Kiowa, Caddo,
Cape Fear, Oconee, Forkert

Grapes

Zones 1-3: Hybrid, Vinifera, American
Zone 2: vinifera only
Zone 5: American
Zones 4-7: American and P.P. Resistant
Varieties

Grapes: Hybrids

Seibel 9110 S.V. 12-375
Rayon d'Or Vidal 256
Aurelia Mars Seedless
Reliance Seedless Seibel 7053
Orlando Seedless

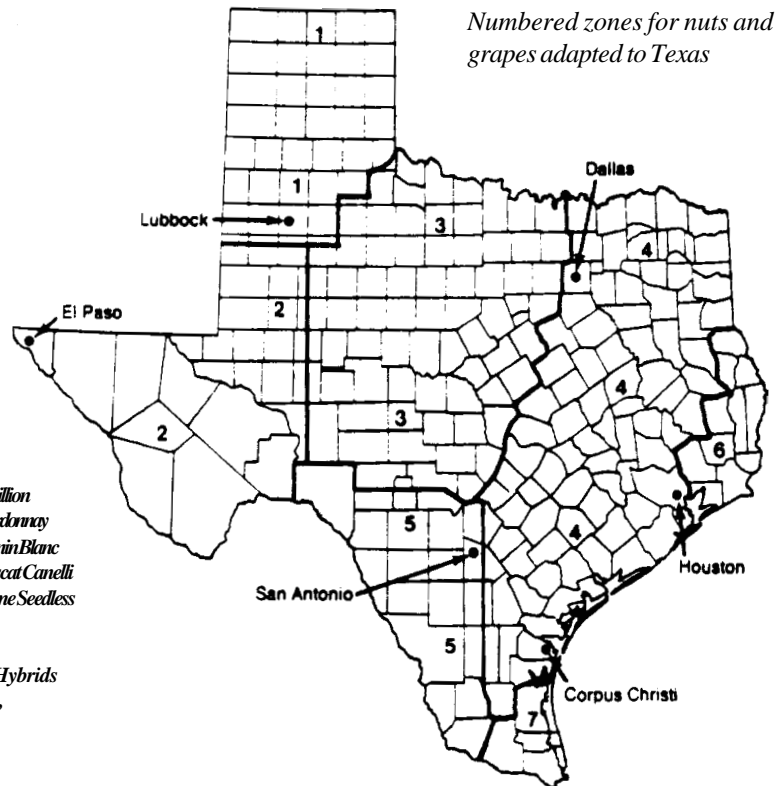
Grapes: Muscadines

Higgins Regale
Summit Cowart
Fry

Grapes: American
Champanel Black Spanish
Favorite Lake Emerald

Grapes: Vinifera
Cabernet Semillon
Sauvignon Chardonnay
Sauvignon Blanc Chenin Blanc
White Riesling Muscat Canelli
Thompson Seedless Flame Seedless
Black Monukka

Pierce's Disease-Resistant Hybrids
Orlando Seedless, Blanc du Bois,
Roucaueuf, Villard Blanc



Numbered zones for nuts and grapes adapted to Texas



Fall Planting Yields Spring Color

Dr. William C. Welch, Landscape Horticulturist
Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas

The first cooling rains and winds of fall are a signal for vigorous gardening activity in the South. Spring-flowering perennials are best set out or divided now so they will have time to be well established when they begin flowering.

Among the most dependable are oxeye and shasta daisies, Louisiana and bearded irises, Louisiana phlox, and daylilies. Prepare the soil well by adding large quantities of compost (about a by volume) and mixing well with existing soil. Incorporate a balanced fertilizer according to label instructions. Four to six pounds of cottonseed meal per 100 square feet provide a fairly long-lasting source of nitrogen. Arrange perennials in "drifts", which are elongated masses of 5 or more plants, spaced so that they can fill in nicely by spring. Prepare beds for annuals such as pansies, sweet peas, violas, ornamental kale, cabbage, alyssums, poppies, snapdragons, and other cool-season favorites, but wait until November, or when the soil and air have cooled signifi-

cantly, before setting out transplants. Poppies and larkspurs should be direct-seeded for best results since they are not easily transplanted.

Consider adding fragrance to your garden with heirloom shrubs such as sweet olive (*Osmanthus fragrans*), banana shrub (*Michelia figo*), or mock orange (*Philadelphus sp.*). All three of these mature into large shrubs (10 to 15 feet tall) and add their distinctive fragrances during winter or spring.



Pomegranates (Continued from Page 1)

says that the pomegranate was the "tree of life" in the Garden of Eden, and from this belief it became the symbol of hope and eternal life in early Christian art. The erect calyx-lobes of the fruit were the inspiration for Solomon's crown and for all future crowns.

Pomegranates were often found in 19th century southern gardens and nurseries. In his *Southern Rural Almanac, and Plantation and Garden Calendar for 1860*, Thomas Affleck listed them in his Washington County, Texas nursery and said, "The pomegranate grows, thrives, and bears most admirably."

For a period in the early 1900s, pomegranates were grown in commercial quantities in the U.S., but consumers have never really developed an appreciation of the pomegranate fruit. One of the few varieties still available is 'Wonderful', which, if picked and aged at room temperature for a month or two, will develop the rich, sweet taste characteristic of better-quality fruiting varieties.

Although of very easy culture, pomegranates prefer a sunny location and deep soil. They thrive in acid or alkaline soils and tolerate heavy clay as long as there is sufficient drainage. Many forms exist, and not all fruit well. Generally, double flowering types provide little, if any, fruit. Mature specimens withstand drought well, but fruit often splits after rainy spells following extended dryness. Dormant hardwood cuttings root well, as do softwood cuttings, under mist in the summer.

In addition to eating fresh (it is very seedy), the fruit may be used in the preparation of syrups (especially grenadine), alcoholic beverages, and jellies. Plants of the dwarf and large-growing forms are sometimes available in the southern half of Texas. Plants tend to be long lived, but occasionally they freeze back to the ground. Interesting trials with pomegranates from Iran and Russia are being conducted in the Houston area by fruit specialists who believe that some of the plants may have superior fruiting, growth, and hardiness characteristics.

Winter Garden Cabbage Variety Evaluations

Dr. Frank J. Dainello, Extension Horticulturist
Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas

Fourteen cabbage varieties were evaluated by Drs. Jerry Parsons, Larry Stein, and Calvin Finch for horticultural characteristics and yield potential. The test site was located on the Verstraeten Farm near San Antonio, Texas. The cultivars were evaluated in an observation trial established within the grower's field. Each variety was direct-seeded in a single-drill row 150 feet in length on 40-inch beds. The trial was established on February 21, 1995, and harvested on July 7, 1995. The data obtained is presented in Table 1.

Of the 14 entries, 'Charmant' was the earliest-maturing. One hundred percent of its heads were of marketable size on July 1, the date visual ratings were taken. The latest-maturing entries were 'Vantage Point', 'Cardinal', 'Solid Blue 780', and 'Solid Blue 790'. Less than 20 percent of the

heads in the plots of these entries were of marketable size on July 1.

The highest yield potential was exhibited by the experimental HMS 7270 (1409 sacks/A). Yields of all entries in this trial were exceptional. Only 6 of the 14 lines yielded less than 1,000 sacks/A. Average head weight ranged from 1.6 pounds for 'Fortress' to 4.5 pounds for HMX 7270. As anticipated, most of the lower-yielding entries were red-leaf types. Of these, 'Red Rookie' produced the highest yield: 970 sacks/A.

For additional information regarding this trial, contact Dr. Larry Stein at P. O. Box 1849, Uvalde, Texas 78802-1849, phone (210) 278-9195, or Dr. Jerry Parsons at 3427 NE Parkway, San Antonio, Texas 78218, phone (210) 930-3086.

Winter Garden

Table 1. Yield and plant characteristics of 14 cabbage varieties; 1995-San Antonio, TX

Entry/seed provider /a	Head color/b	Yld/A (sacks)/c	harv. heads/d	Avg head			Avg core	
				wt (lbs)	wdt (in)	ht (in)	wdt. (in)	ht (in)
HMX 7270 (HM)	B/G	1409	67	4.5	6.8	6.5	1.3	4.0
Rio Verde (AC)	B/G	1377	55	4.4	6.5	6.5	1.3	4.3
Cheers (AC)	B/G	1351	50	4.3	6.8	6.5	1.5	3.8
Blue Vantage (AC)	B	1252	67	4.0	6.1	6.3	1.3	3.5
Solid Blue 760 (AC)	B/G	1189	33	3.8	6.5	6.0	1.3	3.3
Solid Blue 780 (AC)	B/G	1127	17	3.6	5.5	6.5	1.3	3.8
Charmant (AC)	G	1096	100	3.5	5.8	6.0	1.3	3.3
Solid Blue 790 (AC)	B	1064	17	3.4	6.3	5.5	1.3	2.5
Red Rookie (AC)	R	970	33	3.1	5.8	6.0	1.3	3.3
Cardinal (HM)	R	939	18	3.0	5.5	6.0	1.0	3.8
Red Jewel (AC)	R	937	38	3.0	5.5	5.5	1.3	3.0
FMX 381 (FM)	B/G	908	50	2.9	6.0	5.8	1.3	3.0
Vantage Point (AC)	G	876	15	2.8	5.0	6.0	1.0	4.0

a/ Seed providers: AC = Abbott & Cobb
FM = Ferry Morse
HM = Harris Moran

b/Head color: B = Blue
G = Green
R = Red

c/ Sack = 50 lbs

d/ Harv. heads = % heads of harvestable size on July 1, 1995
Direct Seeded = February 21, 1995 Harvested = July 7, 1995
40 " beds with 12 " in-row spacing One plant row/bed.
Location = Verstraeten Farms, San Antonio, TX

Homeowners Prepare for a Big Pecan Harvest

*Dr. George Ray McEachern, Extension Horticulturist
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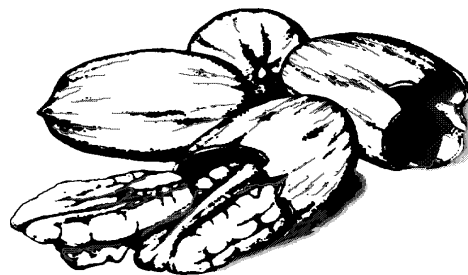
The 1995 Texas pecan harvest is going to be a big one. There are over 60 million pounds set throughout the state in commercial orchards and native groves. There are another 20 million pounds on yard and park trees. The good crop is due to a very low crop in 1994, a mild winter with no major spring frosts, good rain early in the year, a very low pecan-nut casebearer problem in May, and a dry summer, which reduced pecan scab disease.

The large crop on yard trees growing in shallow soil without irrigation has resulted in poorly filled kernels. There is little that can be done at this point in the season. Commercial growers prevented the problem by irrigating from April to October, with the most important irrigations in late August and September. Poorly filled nuts will also have fuzz on the kernel, an indication of insufficient irrigation.

This year there has been a problem with pecans splitting the shell. This happens when the shell size is too small to contain the developing kernel, and the pressure splits the shell. Splitting occurs mainly in Wichita varieties, but we have received Pawnee nuts which have split also.

Viviparity, or sprouting in the shuck, can become a problem on over-cropped trees which have not received sufficient irrigation. In October or early November, if heavy rains occur with warm weather, the pecans can germinate while they are in the shuck on the tree. This problem is most common in south Texas; however, it can occur in any area of the state. Good tree management in August and September and early harvest will prevent loss from viviparity.

Birds, especially crows, destroy 10 million pounds of pecans each year in Texas. Because of the very large pecan crop, the birds will not be noticed as much this year, but blue jays and squirrels are going to be a big problem for urban pecans. There are no legal methods for blue jay control, but squirrels can be prevented from climbing up



the tree trunk by placing a 24-inch band of sheet metal around the trunk, beginning at 4 feet from the ground. If other trees touch the pecan or if houses or electrical wires are nearby, squirrels will enter the tree from these rather than the trunk. To reduce this loss, landscape pecan trees need to be harvested as soon as the shucks open. Long PVC pipe or fishing poles can be used to thrash the nuts from the trees when the shucks open in early November. The blue jays and squirrels will show you when the pecans are ready. If you do not harvest with haste, they can and will consume the entire crop.

As soon as the pecans are harvested, they should be air dried in open-weave onion or citrus sacks, or they can be placed on a concrete floor with fans blowing air over them to remove the moisture. Fresh off the tree, the kernel moisture content can be above 15 percent. Commercial shellers require a 4 percent moisture content; therefore, drying is important. Home owners can tell if the pecans are dry enough by bending the kernel. If it snaps into two pieces, the kernels are dry enough for storage. If the kernel bends without snapping, the drying needs to continue.

Pecans should be stored at 0 degrees F. for best quality. Because pecans have a very low moisture content, they can be eaten or used for cooking directly from the cold storage without a thawing delay; therefore, pecans should always be stored in the freezer.



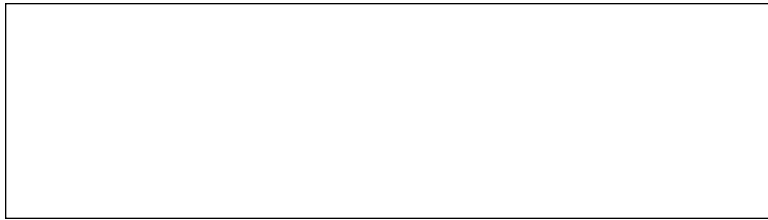
Garden Checklist for October

*Dr. William C. Welch, Landscape Horticulturist
Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas*



- ✧ October through November is an excellent time to purchase bulbs while you still have a good selection in the garden store. They may be planted at any time with the exception of tulips and hyacinths; chill tulip and hyacinth bulbs in the refrigerator until mid or late December before planting. The lower part of the refrigerator is best. Do not leave bulbs in airtight plastic bags during refrigerated storage.
- ✧ Plant bulbs in well prepared beds so the base of the bulb is at a depth that is three times the diameter of the bulb. In sandy soil, set slightly deeper and in clay soils less deeply.
- ✧ Start collecting leaves for the compost pile. Be sure to have extra soil available so that each 6-inch layer of leaves may be covered with several inches of soil. Always wet the layer of leaves thoroughly before adding the soil. Add about one pound of a complete lawn or garden fertilizer to each layer of leaves to provide the necessary nitrogen for decomposition.
- ✧ In addition to bulbs, check your nursery or garden center for started plants of pansies, snapdragons, pinks, sweet williams, poppies, and calendulas. Planted now, they will usually provide a riot of spring color.
- ✧ Keep Christmas cactus in a sunny spot where night temperatures can be kept below 65 degrees F. Buds will drop if you allow night temperatures to go above 70 degrees F. or if you allow the plant to become excessively dry. Keep them in total darkness from 5:00 PM until 8:00 PM for about 30 days in October to initiate flower buds.
- ✧ If you have saved seed of your favorite plants, allow them to air dry, then place in an airtight container and store in the refrigerator. Be sure to label each packet carefully. Remember, seed from hybrid plants will seldom resemble the parent plant.
- ✧ Prepare beds for planting pansies when they become available at the garden centers. They need a well-drained soil and exposure to at least a half day of sun. It's best to use started plants, as seed is difficult to handle.
- ✧ If you are planning to save caladium tubers for another year, dig them in late October and allow to dry in a well-ventilated but shady area. After 7 to 10 days, remove leaves and dirt, then pack in dry peat moss, vermiculite, or similar material for storage. Pack tubers so they do not touch each other. Dust with all-purpose fungicide as you pack. Place container in an area where the temperature won't drop below 50 degrees F.
- ✧ If twig girdlers have worked over your trees so that many twigs and branches are dropping, making sure these are collected and destroyed, as the eggs are deposited in that portion of the branch that drops to the ground.
- ✧ There is still time to divide and reset such perennials as phlox, violets, hollyhocks, irises, day lilies, and shasta daisies.





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Coming Events

Oktober Gartenfest

October 27-28, 1995, at the University of Texas Winedale Historical Center & The Round Top Festival Institute

"Celebrating the Spanish Influence on Texas Gardens"

- ! Friday evening & all-day Saturday program
- ! Sale of heirloom & unusual plants of Spanish & Mexican origin
- ! Call Glorinda Jaster, UT Winedale (409) 278-3530

TEXAS & SOUTHWEST *Greenhouse Growers' Conference*

November 14 - 16, 1995

Hilton Hotel & Convention Center, College Station, Texas

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- ! More than 50 trade exhibits & special educational sessions
- ! For more information, please contact the Texas Agricultural Extension Service at (409) 845-7341

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EDITOR SEPTEMBER 1995

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