

Fall Gardening Tips

For those that have fruit trees with some disease, such as fire blight and apple scab, make sure you get those spotty leaves raked up and put in the trash, but not in your compost bin. Also remove any diseased grapes or blueberries. The fungus will survive through the winter and continue to weaken your plants. You certainly don't want these diseases to spread to your other fruit trees and plants, or to your neighbor's.

Here is a fruit tree management calendar provided by UT:

<https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/SP307-D.pdf>. This calendar shows the best times to prune as well as treat diseases. Also, here is a UT document on fruit tree diseases and how to control them: <https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/PB1622.pdf>. Identification of what is ailing your fruit tree is essential to finding the cure and getting the fruit output you want.

Make sure that your cool season crops are getting enough water. We've had some dry weather this fall. My spinach plants withered away because I forgot that spinach roots are shallow and didn't water them enough. It happens to the best of us!

Speaking of the weather, we're getting close to our first hard frost. The temperature here has already dipped into the 30's. Have you taken your house plants in for the winter? See last week's advice on how to prepare them for wintering over.

October is a good time to maintain your gardening tools. A little oil and some sharpening may keep your shoulders from aching next season and those tools will be ready to go to work!

The fall is a good time to build that raised bed garden you've been planning to get to all year. These fall days are pleasant and easier to do this type of work. If you need suggestions for building raised beds there is a UT Extension guide to help: <https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W346-E.pdf>.

Happy fall gardening from your friendly master gardener!