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If you need this newsletter in alternative format, please contact Jennifer Schutter at the Adair County Extension Center.

ALL-AMERICA SELECTIONS ANNOUNCED

The All-America Selections Board of Directors met and approved eleven new and exciting AAS Winners. This group of additional AAS Winners for the 2018 garden season are:

- Canna South Pacific Orange F1 (National)
- Cuphea FloriGlory Diana (National)
- Gypsophila Gypsy White Improved (National)
- Marigold Super Hero™ Spry (National)
- Pak Choi Asian Delight F1 (National)
- Pepper cayenne Red Ember F1 (National)
- Pepper habanero Roulette F1 (National)
- Pepper Hungarian Mexican Sunset F1 (Regional)
- Tomato Chef's Choice Red F1 (Regional)
- Tomato Valentine F1 (National)
- Zinnia Queeny Lime Orange (National)

Previously announced 2018 AAS Winners from July are also featured on the AAS website and are readily available for purchase:

- Corn, sweet American Dream (National)
- Ornamental Pepper Onyx Red (National)
- Tomato, cocktail Red Racer F1 (National)

All-America Selections National and Regional Winners have been tested for garden performance by a panel of expert judges. Varieties that perform best over all of North America become AAS National Winners. Entries that performed particularly well in certain regions are named AAS Regional Winners. The AAS Winners offer gardeners reliable new varieties that have proven their superior garden performance in Trial Grounds across North America, thus, our tagline of "Tested Nationally and Proven Locally®". When you purchase an AAS Winner, you know that it has been put through its paces by an independent, neutral trialing organization and has been judged by experts in their field. The AAS Winner label is like a stamp of approval. And by requirement, all AAS Winners are bred or produced without using genetic engineering, commonly referred to as genetic modification or GMO.

An AAS Trial Ground is one of the most important elements in the process of declaring AAS Winners. A Trial Ground is a location where a professional horticulturist works in their field and where the AAS entries are planted next to comparisons or scientifically speaking, controls. Once the AAS entries are transplanted into a Trial Ground, the AAS Judges observe and evaluate the garden performance. At the end of the trial season, the judges send their scores and evaluations

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to the AAS Office for tabulation.

Only the best garden performers (best scores) become AAS Winners. Once new varieties are announced as AAS Winners, they are available for immediate sale and distribution. Home gardeners will find seeds available from their favorite catalog or [online seed source](#) or as young plants at their favorite garden retailer. To see photos of the new selections go to <http://all-americanselections.org/about-aas-winners/>.

Source: <http://all-americanselections.org/about-aas-winners/>

GREAT PLAINS GROWERS CONFERENCE

The Great Plains Growers Conference (GPGC) is a combination of two great conferences: Great Plains Vegetable Conference and Mid-America Fruit Conference. The three-day conference features presentations by speakers throughout the nation.

Topics covered in past conferences include: High Tunnel Production; Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) Mini School; GAPs/Food Safety; Fruit Growing; Honey Bees; Farming Smarter, Not Harder; Beginning Growing; Vegetable Production; Pest Management; Cut Flower Tracks; Farmers' Markets; Organic Production; Marketing & Agri-tourism; Ethnic Vegetables; Small Fruit & Tree Fruit; Irrigation Practices; Beginning Vegetable Production (for Spanish-speaking attendees); Urban Horticulture & Gardens; and many more.

The trade show consists of more than 50 exhibitors with the latest seeds, supplies, equipment, and grower information.

For information and to register visit www.greatplainsgrowersconference.org/.

BEGINNING BEEKEEPING CLASS FEBRUARY 10

The North Central Missouri Beekeeper's Association and Crooked Hill Beekeeping LLC, Chillicothe, Missouri, will host a beginning beekeepers class on February 10, from 9 am to 4 pm at the Macon High School cafeteria in Macon, Missouri. Cost is \$35 per person and includes materials and snacks. Lunch is on your own.

The presenters are Jim and Valerie Deuver. Jim is president of Boone Regional Beekeepers Association. Valerie is a past president of the Missouri State Beekeepers Association. Both have degrees in Horticulture from the University of Missouri-Columbia. Jim and Valerie have been teaching beginning beekeeping classes in conjunction with local University of Missouri Extension offices. They were named 2009 Beekeepers of the Year. Jim is Vice-president of Hummert International. Jim and Valerie have been keeping bees since 1998.

In case of bad weather, the class will be held the following Saturday, February 17. Seating is limited and payment must be received in advance to reserve your seat. To RSVP, please contact Bill or Tammy at: (660) 214-0132 or georges@chbeekeeping.com.

DIAGNOSING HOUSEPLANT PROBLEMS

During the winter months houseplants may have issues like browning of the leaves or tips, insects or root rot. It is important to catch the problem early and treat it. Problems resulting from poor growing conditions in the home are difficult to diagnose. Often poor growth results from a combination of several unfavorable factors. The following describes symptoms and causes of several cultural problems.

Lower leaves turn yellow and drop when touched

- Usually caused by overwatering
- May occur when a new plant is moved from a greenhouse to a low-light, low-humidity environment

Yellowing and dropping of leaves at various levels on a plant

- Overwatering
- Tight soil
- Gas fumes
- Poor drainage
- Chilling

Tips or margins of leaves appear burned, brown or both

- Too much fertilizer
- Plant too dry for a short period of time
- Plant exposed to too low temperature for short period

Use of softened water

- New leaves are small
- Poorly drained soil
- Soil too dry for long periods
- Tight soil mixture

New leaves with long internodes

- Not enough light
- Temperature too high

Leaves yellow or light green, weak growth

- Too much light
- Poor root system — possibly from poor drainage, overwatering or tight soil

SOURCE: G6510-Caring for Houseplants, Revised by David H. Trinklein, Division of Plant Sciences.

READY TO START COMPOSTING?

By: Sue Limestall, Kirksville Master Gardener

Compost is organic material that can be added to soil to help plants grow. Food scraps and yard waste currently make up 20 to 30 percent of what we throw away, and should be composted instead. Making compost keeps these materials out of landfills where they take up space and release methane, a potent greenhouse gas.

If you are unsure how to get started or think it will be too difficult to make a compost bin, here is an easy solution. Visit your local hardware supply store and ask for one-half inch hardware cloth fencing that is four feet high. You want fourteen feet so you will end up with a circle bin about four feet in diameter. Why a four foot diameter? You want your compost pile to be large enough to generate the heat needed in the middle to decompose the plant materials and kill pathogens and weed seeds. To form the circle with the hardware cloth, overlap the ends about 12 inches or so. You have several options to secure the overlapped ends: zip ties or wire. Secure the outside overlap at the top and bottom edges with a zip tie or short section of wire, and again about six inches from the edges. Add two more secure points about eighteen inches in from the edges. Repeat this process with the inside overlap.

Now your bin is ready for adding the green and brown components: leaves, kitchen fruit and vegetable scraps, shredded newspaper, and disease-free flower and garden trimmings.

WATCHING BIRDS ON A COLD, SNOWY DAY

Watching birds in the garden or at feeders is one of the most pleasurable ways to enjoy nature on a cold winter day. On snowy days, their liveliness, colors and sounds bring joy and fascination to many gardeners. My boys and I like to put out feed and watch the different birds come to our feeders. We even throw out peanuts for the Bluejays.

Keep feeders filled during the winter months to attract a variety of birds. Birds probably depend on your feeder most during weather extremes, especially when snow or ice covers natural foods, and during late winter and early spring when less food is available. During cold weather extremes, birds such as chickadees have had higher survival rates when supplemental food is made available.

Birds have four basic needs: food, water, shelter from predators and the elements, and safe nesting places. In addition to setting out feeders, you can help birds meet their needs in the following ways: leave a brush pile that birds can use for cover; leave seeds and fruits on plants such as sunflowers, cosmos, chicory and evening primrose, and on various shrubs which still have berries this time of the year; and provide fresh water in a shallow container. Water should be no more than two inches deep. In winter, it is especially important to keep the water ice-free by changing it frequently or by using an immersion-type water heater designed for outdoor use.

Landscapes with abundant trees and shrubs, and a relatively small lawn, are most attractive to birds. To enhance your garden with plants that provide natural food and shelter, develop a landscape plan this winter in preparation for spring planting.

SOIL TEST FEES WILL INCREASE JANUARY 1

Effective January 1, 2018 the cost of soil testing will increase at local county extension centers. In Adair County, soil testing will increase from \$15 per sample to \$17.50. The cost of other individual tests will remain the same. The MU Extension Soil Testing lab tries hard to keep prices low, but the rising cost of reagents, chemicals, equipment, and labor has forced them to raise the testing fee. This is their first price increase in 12 years.

Extension Soil Testing labs provide a key point of engagement with more than 35,000 Missourians each year. The labs link the knowledge created by soil scientists at the University of Missouri to the citizens that use that knowledge to responsibly apply fertilizer and lime products. State and federal agencies such as the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Farm Services Agency require their clients to use MU recommendations to qualify for cost-share programs and nutrient management planning regulations. The MU Extension Soil Testing also leads by ensuring soil test data provided by the public and private labs in Missouri meet national standards by directing the Missouri State Approved Soil Testing Labs Program. Missourians count on our lab to deliver.

Our mission is to provide quality data backed up with unbiased recommendations. We provide quick turnaround time on the samples. In addition, customers can access testing reports using our online system at <http://soilplantlab.missouri.edu/soil/resultsonline.aspx> This option makes it possible for customers to retrieve soil test results and obtain recommendations for multiple cropping options.

GARDEN TIPS FOR JANUARY

ORNAMENTALS:

- Brush off heavy snow from trees and shrubs
- To reduce injury, allow ice to melt naturally from plants.
- Check stored summer bulbs such as Dahlias, Canna's, and Gladiolus to be sure they are not rotting or drying out.
- Limbs damaged by ice or snow should be pruned off promptly to prevent bark from tearing.
- Sow pansy seeds indoors.

HOUSEPLANTS:

- Wash dust off plant leaves on a regular basis. This allows the leaves to gather light more efficiently and will result in better growth.
- Set pots of humidity-loving house plants on trays filled with pebbles and water.
- Kill mealy bugs on plants by wiping them off with a cotton ball soaked in rubbing alcohol.
- Insecticidal soap sprays can be safely applied to most house plants for the control of many insect pests.
- To clean heavily encrusted clay pots, scrub them with a steel wool pad after they have soaked overnight in a solution consisting of 1 gallon of water, and one cup each of white vinegar and household bleach.

MISCELLANEOUS:

All Month

- Store wood ashes in sealed, fireproof containers. Apply a dusting around lilacs, baby's breath, asters, lilies, and roses in spring. Do not apply to acid-loving plants. Excess ashes may be composted.
- Check fruit trees for evidence of rodent injury to bark.
- Avoid foot traffic on frozen lawns as this may injure turf grasses.

Week 1-2

- Christmas tree boughs can be used to mulch garden perennials.
- If you didn't get your bulbs planted before the ground froze, plant them immediately in individual peat pots and place the pots in flats. Set them outside where it is cold and bury the bulbs under thick blankets of leaves. Transplant them into the garden any time weather permits.
- Seed and nursery catalogs arrive. While reviewing garden catalogs, look for plants with improved insect, disease, and drought-tolerance.
- Old Christmas trees can be recycled outdoors as a feeding station for birds. String garlands of peanuts, popcorn, cranberries, and fruits through their boughs.

- Missouri Botanical Garden -

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 11-13: Great Plains Growers Conference, Missouri Western State University, St. Joseph. Pre-registration deadline is December 31. Cost is \$55 for all-day Thursday workshop; \$45 per day for Friday and Saturday. This includes snacks and buffet lunch. For more information contact Buchanan County Extension at 816-279-1691 or email ac-tonma@missouri.edu

January 20: Beginning Beekeeping class sponsored by Boone Regional Beekeepers, Columbia. 8:30 am to 6 pm. Cost is \$60 per person or \$110 per couple and includes beekeeping book and reference guide, 1 year membership to the Boone Regional Beekeepers Assn., lunch and a honey themed dinner. Location is the Animal Science Building, MU Campus, 920 East Campus Dr., Columbia, MO. Snow date January 27. For more info or to register contact Marty at treasurer@boonebees.org or info@boonebees.org.

February 10: Beginning Beekeeping class, 9-4, Macon High School cafeteria, Macon, MO. See page 2 for details.

April 6: Garden workshop at Little Dixie Library in Moberly, 2-4 pm. The topic will be growing fruit for home use.



UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI
Extension *Garden Talk!*

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