

Jefferson County's Extension Connection

Horticulture



Norway Maple flowers, in Henderson, NY.

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Master Gardener Plant Sale

May 21, 2011, 8:00-10:00 am

CCE of Jefferson County,
203 North Hamilton Street, Watertown

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Annuals |  Vegetables |
|  Perennials |  Herbs |
|  Trees |  Houseplants |

Arrive early for the best selection!
Doors will open promptly at 8:00 am!



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HORTICULTURE CALENDAR

Northern New York Grape Growers Association meeting

May 9, 2011

Coyote Moon Winery, Clayton
Presentations by Cornell University Professors Wayne Wilcox and Tim Martinson. Contact David Fralick at 654-3218 for more information.

Village Tree Tour, Alexandria Bay

May 14, 12:30 pm

Meet at the library

Master Gardener Plant Sale

May 21, 8:00 to 10:00 am

CCE offices in Watertown

Master Gardener meeting

May 24, 6:30 pm

Northern New York Grape Growers Association meeting

June 27, 7:00 pm

Contact David Fralick at 654-3218 for more information.

Master Gardener meeting

June 28, 6:30 pm

Free Publication

The Place You Call Home: A Guide to Caring for Your Land in New York is an "owner's manual" for people who own land in the Empire State. It has been produced by the staff of Northern Woodlands magazine with the generous support of many state-wide organizations.

Its audience includes anyone in New York who owns 10 or more acres of land, and anyone who believes that, with careful stewardship, the landscape that makes this state so special can support and sustain us for many generations to come.

For a free copy of this guide contact Sue at 788-8450, or visit www.pych.org. Supplies are limited.

Emerald Ash Borer Efforts in Jefferson County

By Sue Gwise, Extension Educator

In an effort to be proactive about the impending invasion by the emerald ash borer (EAB), Tree Watertown and Master Gardeners are working together to educate the public about this invasive insect. Within Watertown, all 635+ city-owned ash trees will be surveyed by Master Gardeners and Tree Watertown members. The trees will be measured and their condition will be assessed. Trees in poor condition will be removed preemptively. Healthy trees in prominent locations will be tagged with yellow and black signs, and ribbons. These signs will serve an educational purpose by pointing out that the tagged tree is in danger of being killed by the EAB. The tags will also indicate who to contact if anyone notices a problem with the tree. Master Gardeners will also be deploying the tags in towns and villages throughout the county.

Tree Watertown is also drafting a community plan to prepare for the arrival of EAB and deal with the many issues that will need to be addressed and managed once trees begin to die. Several Master Gardeners in the Town of Henderson are also involved with EAB preparedness planning. EAB preparedness plans can help answer questions and facilitate better decision making by the community.

If you would like more information about EAB or community preparedness plans, contact Cooperative Extension at 788-8450.

VEGETABLE GARDEN PRIMER

By Sue Gwise, Extension Educator

The vegetable crops that we grow in the North Country are placed in two categories: *cool season* crops and *warm season* crops. In general, with cool season crops, the seeds are planted directly in the ground in the spring. Cool season vegetable seeds germinate at low temperatures and the plants are not damaged by light frosts. These plants prefer cooler weather conditions and often die back or go to seed with the advent of warm summer temperatures. A cool season crop can be harvested and the area can then be re-planted with a warm season crop- this way you get the most out of your garden space!

Also, consider replanting some cool season crops in August after temperatures start to cool down. Spinach, for example, can be harvested right up until the snow

flies. With a layer of mulch, it can sometimes be overwintered for an early start next spring!

Warm season crops that are planted directly in the garden via seeds need warm soil temperatures in order to germinate. If the soil is not warm enough, the seeds will simply rot. Other warm season crops are started inside and then transplanted into the garden after all danger of frost has passed. If the weather does call for a frost and your transplants are in the garden, just cover them with an old sheet or plastic containers- this is usually enough to prevent frost damage on tomatoes and peppers. Vine crops, (cucumbers, squash, melons) on the other hand, are very cold sensitive. Even if temperatures are not below freezing, a cool wind can kill the plants. If the weather forecast is for cool temperatures, wait until June to set out the plants.

Cool Season Vegetables-

Usually planted via direct seeding in early spring

VEGETABLE	PLANTING TIME	COMMENTS
Asparagus	Mid to late April	Perennial crop, crowns are planted; 3 years before first harvest.
Beets	Mid to late April	Plants come up in clusters; thinning is necessary.
Broccoli	Seeds can be planted as soon as the soil can be worked- early to mid-April.	Transplants are also available. They can be set out in late April or mid to late July for a fall crop.
Cabbage	Late April	Transplants are also available; they can be set out in early May.
Carrots	Late April to early May	Seeds are slow to germinate; interplant with radish to mark the rows.
Cauliflower	Late May (transplants). Direct seed in summer for a fall crop.	Transplants grow best; direct seeding gives poor results.
Lettuce/Endive	Late April to early May	Lettuce seed needs light to germinate; do not cover the seeds. Can be planted in August for a fall crop.
Onions	Mid to late April	Seeds, sets, or plants.
Peas	Seeds can be planted as soon as the soil can be worked- early to mid-April.	Bush and climbing varieties. Plant in August for a fall crop.
Potatoes	"Seed" tubers are planted in late April.	Seed tubers are cut to contain at least 2-3 "eyes".
Radish	Late April to early May	Can be used to "mark" the rows of slower germinating seeds.
Rhubarb	Mid to late April	Perennial crop. Crowns are planted; harvest can begin after the first year.
Spinach	Mid to late April	Plant in August for a fall crop.
Turnip	Plant seeds mid June to late July	Crops that mature in the cool temps of fall are best.

Warm Season Vegetables-

Planted via seeds or transplants

VEGETABLE	SEED OR TRANSPLANT	PLANTING TIME	COMMENTS
Beans (dry and snap)	Seed only	Late May to early June	Bush or Pole varieties. Pole varieties tend to save space since the plants are grown vertically on a trellis.
Cucumber	Seeds or transplants	Late May to early June	Plants are damaged by wind and cold temps. Wait until early June if necessary to place in the garden.
Eggplant	Transplants	Early June	Very frost sensitive, set out after all danger of frost has passed.
Melons	Seeds or transplants	Late May to early June	Plants are damaged by wind and cold temps. Wait until early June if necessary to place in the garden.
Peppers- Green and Hot	Transplants	Late May	Set out after all danger of frost has passed.
Pumpkin	Seeds or transplants	Late May to early June	Plants are damaged by wind and cold temps. Wait until early June if necessary to place in the garden.
Sweet Corn	Seed only	May to early June	Needs space for an adequate crop.
Tomatoes	Transplants	Late May	Bury stems up to first set of leaves. Plant outside after all danger of frost has passed.
Watermelon	Seeds or transplants	Late May to early June	Plants are damaged by wind and cold temps. Wait until early June if necessary to place in the garden.
Winter Squash	Seeds or transplants	Late May to early June	Plants are damaged by wind and cold temps. Wait until early June if necessary to place in the garden.
Zucchini	Seeds or transplants	Late May to early June	Plants are damaged by wind and cold temps. Wait until early June if necessary to place in the garden.

CORRECTION!

On page 6 of the March/April issue of the Horticulture Newsletter, under the section "Know your soil pH", there is a correction.

It should read:

If your pH is high (above 7) you may have to add **sulfur** to bring the pH down. Conversely, if your pH is highly acid, you may have to add **limestone** to raise the pH.

Thanks to Master Gardener Dorothy Reynolds for catching this mistake!

RIGHT PERENNIAL, RIGHT PLACE

Cornell University, Department of Horticulture

For successful perennial gardening, you need to choose plants that fit your site, including environmental conditions. Just as perennials come in all shapes, sizes, colors, and bloom times, New York has climate zones that range from just cold in the winter to positively arctic! You need perennials that can tough it out where you live. Check out the perennials listed below. They were chosen by a panel of nursery and garden center owners, and all are hardy in northern New York. All of these plants are being trialed at 10 locations throughout New York State, including Cornell University. Choose the right perennial for the right place!



Lungwort (*Pulmonaria*) 'High Contrast'- Early flowering. Flowers open pink then turn blue. Silver spotted leaves last until fall.

Habit—Mounding, 8-12 inches tall

Zone—3 to 9

Origin—Europe

Culture—Partial shade, moist soil.



American Ipecac (*Gillenia trifoliata*)- Masses of white, star-shaped flowers, in late summer that look like butterflies. Attractive cut flowers with red stems. Medium-textured, trifoliate leaves that turn bronzy in the fall.

Habit—Bushy, 2-4 feet tall

Zone—4 to 8

Origin—United States

Culture—Partial shade, moist soil.



Heartleaf Brunnera (*Brunnera macrophylla*) 'Emerald Mist'-Early flowering. Azure blue flowers. Heart-shaped green leaves accented with silver.

Habit—Clumping, 12-18 inches tall

Zone—3 to 8

Origin—Europe

Culture—Shade. Moist soil or near a water feature.



Toad Lily (*Tricyrtis formosana*) 'Gilt Edge'- Late summer flowering. Exotic looking flowers are pinkish with purple spots and yellow throats. Flowers for many weeks. Dark green leaves have yellow variegated foliage.

Habit—Spreading, but not aggressive. 1-2 feet tall.

Zone—4 to 9

Origin—Taiwan

Culture—Partial shade. Moist soil. Protect from wind.



Betony (*Stachys monieri*) 'Hummelo'- Blooms mid-summer. Spikes of lavender-rose flowers that attract bees. Long and narrow, textured leaves.

Habit—Clumping, 18-20 inches tall.

Zone—4 to 8

Origin—Europe

Culture—Full to partial shade. Critter resistant.



Dwarf Delphinium (*Delphinium grandiflorum*) 'Summer Nights'- Early blooming, bright blue, spurred flowers. Well branched, nice cut flowers. Proper spacing and air flow decrease occurrence of mildew.

Habit—Upright., 8-14 inches tall

Zone—3 to 7

Origin—Europe

Culture—Full sun. Alkaline, well-drained soil. No staking necessary. Attracts butterflies.



Oregano (*Oregano rotundifolia x scabrum*) 'Kent Beauty'- Blooms all summer and into fall. Aromatic. Nice as dried flowers. Bracts range from pale green, to white, to pink. Groundcover.

Habit—Creeping, but not aggressive. 6-12 inches tall.

Zone—4 to 8

Origin—Mediterranean

Culture—Full sun. Alkaline, well-drained soil.



Ironweed (*Vernonia lettermanii*) 'Iron Butterfly'- Fall flowering. Purple flowers with rusty seed heads. Fine-textured foliage.

Habit—Clumping, 3-3 ½ feet tall.

Zone—4 to 9

Origin—United States

Culture—Full sun. Tolerant of drought. and occasional heavy moisture.

For color photos, view the digital newsletter at our website— www.ccejefferson.org.

CHOOSING GRASS SPECIES

By Sue Gwise, Extension Educator

It's spring, and you may be tempted to re-seed, patch, or renovate your lawn. Actually, August 15 to September 15 is the optimum time to plant grass seed.

But, why not plant in the spring? Well, water *is* more plentiful in the spring, but the young grass will quickly enter the hot, dry summer period without a deep, established root system. This will leave the grass more vulnerable to drought. It will go dormant quicker and it may not recover because it does not have a mature root system.

By planting in the late summer you can take advantage of increasing rainfall and cooler temperatures. The grass has plenty of time to establish a good root system and harden off before the ground freezes.

The next question is, "What type of grass do I plant?" It can be very confusing when you go to purchase a bag of grass seed and are faced with what seems like hundreds of choices! First let's look at the two main types of grasses:

1. **Warm season grasses**- In New York these grasses can only be grown in the southeastern part of the state. They like warm temperatures and are killed off by cold winters.
2. **Cool season grasses**- These grasses are grown throughout the northeast. They do go dormant during the hot, dry period of mid-summer, but they bounce back. More importantly, they survive our winters without a problem. Cool season grasses are the most common type of grass sold in this area.

So, what this all boils down to is that you have to plant a cool season grass in order for the grass to overwinter. You have four basic choices on what species of grass to plant:

1. **Kentucky Blue Grass** is the Cadillac of grass species. When you picture the perfect lawn, what you are seeing is a Kentucky blue grass lawn. It is a high quality grass with high maintenance requirements. The seed is slow to germinate and the grass will not tolerate drought conditions. It will not grow in the shade; Kentucky blue grass needs full sun. It is excellent for high traffic lawns and can withstand a

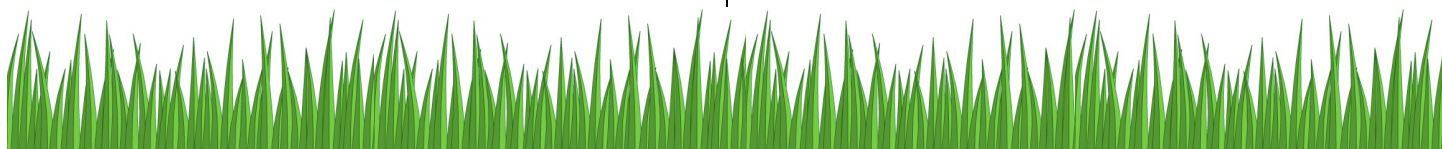
lot of wear and tear. Kentucky blue grass is the most common grass planted for athletic fields.

2. **Perennial Ryegrass** has a wider leaf blade, giving the lawn a coarser look than a Kentucky blue grass lawn. It is a medium quality grass with average maintenance requirements. From seed it establishes rapidly; that's why you often see perennial ryegrass in mixtures with Kentucky blue grass. It gives the purchaser a quick result until the Kentucky blue grass germinates. Perennial ryegrass has some drought tolerance, it is good for high traffic areas (although not as good as Kentucky blue grass), but it will not tolerate shade. It is a good choice for an average, sunny lawn where you don't want high inputs of money or time.
3. **Fine Leaf Fescues** create medium quality, low input lawns. The seed germinates at an average rate and the grass has some drought tolerance. This narrow-leaved grass is excellent for shady areas, but does not do well in full sun. Also, it will not tolerate high amounts of foot traffic.
4. **Tall Fescue** is probably the best all-around grass for the average lawn. It has a wider leaf blade so the quality of the lawn is considered lower, but tall fescue offers many benefits. The seed establishes at an average rate and the grass is shade, traffic and drought tolerant.

All of the above grasses can be purchased alone or mixed with each other. Common mixtures are:

- 80-90% Kentucky blue and 10-20% Perennial rye
- 85-90% Tall fescue and 5-15% Kentucky blue
- 35-50% Kentucky blue and 50-65% Fine fescue

Cool season lawn grasses are perennial grasses. They overwinter and green up quickly in the spring. Beware of grass seed mixtures that list any type of *annual* grass (i.e. annual bluegrass or annual ryegrass). These grasses germinate quickly and grow until the frost hits, and then they are killed off. The following spring you will have no lawn (if you planted a 100% annual mix) or a patchy lawn (if you planted a mix that contained an annual grass). Annual grasses are often found in less expensive seed mixes and in mixes labeled for patching.



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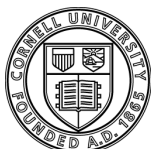
WATERTOWN NY

Horticulture Newsletter

Your resource for gardening, lawn care, vegetables, trees, pests, and more;
from Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County.



This publication may contain pesticide recommendations. Changes in pesticide regulations occur constantly and human errors are still possible. Some materials mentioned may no longer be available and some uses may no longer be legal. All pesticides distributed, sold, or applied in New York State must be registered with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Questions concerning the legality and/or registration status for pesticide use in New York State should be directed to the appropriate Cornell Cooperative Extension Specialist or your regional DEC office. **Read the label before applying any pesticide.** Cornell Cooperative Extension and its employees assume no liability for the effectiveness or results of any chemicals for pesticide usage. No endorsement of products is made or implied.



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