

November in the Tallahassee Garden



Photo by Mississippi State University Extension: 'Red Giant' mustard is both ornamental and edible. It can be mixed with plantings of cool-season annuals such as pansies or petunias.

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Annuals and Perennial Flowers: Most perennials can be planted now. In November you can plant several kinds of annuals from seeds such as sweet peas, Oriental poppies, California poppies, Shirley poppies, sweet alyssum, nasturtium, larkspur, and bachelor buttons. Some spring wildflowers like phlox, gaillardia, coneflower, rudbeckia and coreopsis can be sown from seed. Sow in bare, prepared soil, very lightly cover and water immediately. Keep the soil moist until the seedlings are up and well established. It's also time to set out plants of pansies, dianthus, violas, snapdragons, flowering cabbage, flowering kale, delphinium, and petunias. Leafy greens such as Swiss chard, mustard greens, and parsley provide excellent texture and color contrast when mixed with winter-flowering annuals. Some of these are available in interesting colors, such as 'Bright Lights' Swiss chard or 'Red Giant' mustard. It's not too late to divide perennials. Pinch back petunias to encourage them to branch and spread.

Bulbs, Corms and Tubers: Plant anemones, daffodils or narcissus, Dutch iris, ranunculus, and zephyranthes bulbs. You can wait until the middle of December to plant tulips and hyacinths, and only plant them if pre-chilled in the refrigerator for at least six weeks. After they flower next spring, pull them up. They don't flower more than one year in our climate. Don't keep bulbs and fruits such as apples in the same area or the refrigerator. A gas, ethylene, given off by some fruits can cause the flower buds to abort.

Shrubs and Trees: After the weather turns cool is a great time to reduce over-wintering populations of scales, mites, and other sucking insects on infested ornamental shrubs and trees by spraying them with a solution of

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horticultural oil emulsion. Read label directions carefully before using this product. It should be used only when temperatures are within a certain range, and thorough spray coverage, especially of the undersides of leaves, is required. When planting shrubs for a screen or garden backdrop consider Ocala anise, cleyera, yaupon holly, wax myrtle, viburnum, loropetalum, or 'Nellie Stevens' Holly. For more on Nellie Stevens Holly visit <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ST313>.

Vegetables and Herbs: Harvest all warm-season vegetables before a hard freeze ends production. Large, almost mature, tomatoes can be picked just ahead of the first frost.

Plant mustard, turnips, shallots, cabbage, spinach, collards, Brussels sprouts, broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, radishes, lettuce, garlic, and kale. Now is the best time to start an herb garden. Most herbs love the cooler weather, bright sun and reduced humidity of the fall and winter. Plant herbs you like to use. Consider anise, bay laurel, borage, chives, coriander, dill, fennel, lavender, lemon balm, lovage, mint, nasturtium, oregano, rosemary, sage, sweet marjoram, tarragon and thyme. It's best to grow the taller herbs like dill, fennel, rosemary, sage and Mexican tarragon in the center or to the rear of the bed, then add lower growing types along the sides.

Fruit: You may spray deciduous fruit trees with horticultural oil emulsion after they drop their leaves. This spraying helps control over-wintering insects. Apply according to label directions. November is the best month to plant strawberries.

Lawn Care: Keep fallen leaves off the lawn. Use your lawnmower to chop and blow the leaves into areas under trees where the grass isn't growing well. There probably isn't enough sunlight in such areas to grow grass. So, it's better to have leaves there than bare soil.

Roses: Clean up your rose beds this month after the last of the roses have faded. Major pruning should be done in February, but now you can do a light pruning of tall shoots. Also, pick up all the faded flowers, fallen leaves and rose hips and prune out any dead shoots. Control climbing roses. Remove the oldest canes and any dead or diseased wood. Leave a good number of canes, but cut out the weaker of any two that rub together. Then cut back the remaining canes to the height you want to maintain. Tie them back onto the trellis.

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