

# GREEN



# GAZETTE THUMB

Fall 2021

www.harwellsgreenthumb.com

## A TIME FOR HARVEST

**H**appy Fall! It's a favorite time of year for many. Cooler weather moves in and I automatically yearn for a slower pace. Changing seasons give us space to reflect and allow for transitions and new habits to form. Fall is a season of harvest. A time to collect the fruit of hard labor and enjoy the bounty with friends and family both far and near - from a safe social distance of course!

I grew up in a gardener's family. Some of my best childhood memories were with my dad, joking and telling crazy stories as we picked rows of fruits and vegetables. Bushels of produce would pile up on our front porch waiting to be preserved. I was by my mother's side as she labored—canning and preserving green beans, applesauce, apple butter, apple pie filling, creamed corn, stewed tomatoes, tomato sauce, spaghetti sauce, hot mustard relish, cinnamon apple rings, dill and sweet pickles. Vacations were planned around growth cycles and harvest, and the values of hard labor and teamwork were implanted into my life at a young age. Gardening wasn't just a hobby for us, it was a way of life.

When autumn came, it was time to rest and regroup. The hard work was done for a brief moment and we were able to revel in the grandeur of fall. Gathering around the dinner table was an autumn delight. Warm, homemade bread pulled from the oven, dutch oven filled to the brim with roast, carrots, and potatoes, green beans seasoned with garlic butter, homemade apple pie with vanilla ice cream, and laughter - lots of love and laughter as food was passed around and enjoyed.

As we move deeper into this autumn season, I hope you grab hold of this slower time to reflect as well. Often, the same principles applied to gardening can be turned into self-reflection. Are you nurturing a life of health, growth and balance this year? Maybe new traditions need to be implemented or some habits weeded out. How are the seasons shaping your goals and values? Have you shared your gifts of "harvest" with others? Who has contributed to your "harvest" and how can you thank and honor them for their investment in your growth? I hope you'll ponder these questions with me and find the courage to change direction if needed and discover the rewards of your harvest to be more love, laughter, and life in abundance.

**Home & Garden**  
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### Mama's Never Fail Pie Crust Recipe

Makes enough dough for 2 full pie crusts or 4 single crusts

#### Ingredients

- 4 Cups of Flour
- 2 Teaspoons Salt
- 2 Cups of Shortening
- 1 Egg
- 1 Teaspoon of Sugar
- 1 Teaspoon of Vinegar
- ½ Cup of Water



Combine flour and salt; Cut in the shortening. Beat egg, add in sugar, vinegar, and water. Add the egg mixture into the flour mixture and mix well. Texture will be slightly lumpy. Wrap pie dough in wax paper. Refrigerate at least one hour before rolling out into pie plate form.

### APPLE PIE FILLING (Makes 7 Quarts)

#### Ingredients

- 5-6 pounds of tart apples - peel, core, and slice.
- 4 ½ Cups of Sugar
- 1 Cup of Cornstarch
- 1 Teaspoon of Salt
- 1 Teaspoon of Cinnamon
- ¼ Teaspoon of Nutmeg
- 10 Cups of Water
- 3 Tablespoons of Lemon Juice

Pack raw apple slices in mason jars. Cook sugar, cornstarch, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg, and water until thick and bubbly. Add in the lemon juice. Pour liquid mixture over raw apples until the jar is full. Process the quart jars in a canner for 20 minutes.

Heat oven to 425 degrees. Lightly flour the counter. Divide the pie dough in fourths. (Two sections will be used for this pie. Freeze the other two sections for later.) Roll out one section of pie dough for the bottom pie crust. Place it in the pie plate. Empty contents of one quart jar of apple pie filling into the pie plate. Roll out the second section of pie dough. Place it on top of the filling and pinch together the top and bottom edges of the dough. Cover the edges with foil or crust covers to keep sides from burning while baking. Cut slits (or any design of your choosing) into the top of the crust to allow for ventilation while baking. Bake pie for 40-45 minutes. The filling will be golden and bubbly - seen through the vents on crust. Serve warm with vanilla ice cream. Enjoy!

*Green Thumb is extremely thankful for our wonderful Green Team! Jennifer is a valuable member of our staff. We thank her for sharing her family recipe and reflections on Fall.*



## FALL PLANTING IS BEST

**F**all is a fabulous time to plant trees and shrubs. The cooler months allow root systems to acclimate and strengthen before being subjected to the south's sweltering summers. **FERTI-LOME'S ROOT STIMULATOR** is a product we highly recommend and can be used on anything you plant.

Some favorites to consider in your landscape are the often overlooked nut and fruit-bearing trees, shrubs, and vines. We routinely keep in stock pecan, chestnut, apple, peach, pear, plum, fig, and pomegranate trees, blueberry, blackberry, and raspberry bushes, muscadine and grape vines, and citrus trees and bushes.

**Expert Tip:** *Some fruits are self-pollinating. However, be alert to those that require two different varieties to allow for cross-pollination.*

Blueberry bushes are often a fun choice! They produce delicious fruit to be enjoyed immediately or preserved for later and their fall foliage is a striking addition to any landscape.

## CONTAINER CORNER

**I**f you are limited in space or new to gardening, container planting can be a fun and easy way to start off small while adding a dramatic flair to your landscape design. The container ideas are so numerous it is sometimes hard to know where to begin!

First, think about the placement of your containers. Will they be lining your steps, framing a doorway? Maybe it will be a new centerpiece for your patio area or a colorful addition to your outdoor nook. Sometimes it can be fun to look at your normal environment with new eyes and allow your creative side to flourish. Grab a sketchpad if needed and give yourself time to imagine and visualize. This is half of the fun of creating a new space you will enjoy for the coming months and possibly years to come.

Next, let's narrow down your container. Do you want a basket of blooms, a sweet and simplistic table arrangement, stately urns, overflowing strawberry jars, vintage type barrels, colorful glazed planters, a stunning window box, or aged concrete for a more rugged and established look? Maybe you want a raised garden area or burlap bags designed more for vegetables and herbs. Consider various sizes, textures, and colors and how it will contrast with your decor.

Now that you've chosen your containers and the placement, it's time to prepare them. Always make sure there is proper drainage. A layer of egg rock or some stones at the base of the planter helps ground it and allows for good drainage.

**Expert Tip:** *For large planters and urns, you may want to consider an additional filler such as styrofoam blocks. We have a great product called, **BETTER THAN ROCKS**, which fills space without the additional weight of unnecessary rocks. Choose a good potting soil. We recommend **FOXFARM COCONUT COIR**, **OCEAN FOREST** or **HAPPY FROG POTTING SOIL**. It is light, allows good drainage, and is nutrient-rich to aid in strong root development.*



Now it's time to arrange your planters. Do you want splashes of vibrant color or more soothing tones? Be aware of seasons and take time to learn when certain flowers and shrubs are in bloom. Some plants will last for months while others are conditional and need extra care in extreme heat or as we head towards cooler weather.

When arranging, we normally use the guideline of multi-layers or you may have heard the terms thriller, filler, and spiller. A thriller is something dramatic and tall to help give a grounded and foundational look for your container.

Some great thriller ideas for the fall season are grasses

# URGENT LAWN CARE INFORMATION!

**F**all is not the time to fall back on your yard maintenance. If you want a weed-free spring, then now is the time to apply **FERTI-LOME WINTERIZER AND WEED PREVENTER**. This granular product keeps cool-season weeds from sprouting by preventing the seeds from germinating. The lower nitrogen-higher potassium balance helps promote root hardiness in your turfgrass. Once daytime temps drop below the mid-80's, any existing weeds should be sprayed with **FERTI-LOME WEED FREE ZONE**. This will eliminate pesky weeds such as Dollar Weed, and Florida Betony, also known as Rattlesnake Weed. Any troublesome patches of fungus can be treated with a dose of **FERTI-LOME F-STOP**, a granular fungicide to kill the spores before your grass goes into winter dormancy. You may also make a final application of **HI-YIELD TURF RANGER** to kill any lingering insect pests.



such as pink and white muhly, and maiden grass. Tropical Crotons add lovely color but need to be covered in freezing temperatures. Some good evergreens to use include boxwoods, junipers, arborvitae, sky pencil holly, and cypress. Variegated yucca, cordyline, cast-iron, and taller perennial options such as salvia, coneflowers, daisies, and daylilies are striking as well.

A filler is just what it sounds like – it fills the gaps and provides a contrasting splash of color. These could include mums, marigolds, snapdragons, ornamental kale, swiss chard, pansies, violas, dianthus, autumn ferns, nandina, dusty miller, and purple pixie loropetalum.

A spiller is a trailing plant that cascades over the edge of the planter. English ivy, creeping jenny, and creeping fig are great greenery choices. For splashes of color try the “Cool Wave” trailing pansies.

These plants soften the sharp edges and give a settled look to your arrangement. Vegetables and herbs are forgotten options but can be great additions to your planters as well – and they are edible! Think lettuce, spinach, cabbage, collards, cauliflower, brussel sprouts, sage, rosemary, parsley, and thyme.

You can even go a step further and plant bulbs in your container. They will stay hidden for now but come springtime

you will have lovely surprise blooms.

Last, but not least, be sure to feed your plants. A good fertilizer will go a long way in preserving your blooms through the season. **FERTI-LOME'S PREMIUM BEDDING PLANT FOOD** or the **FERTI-LOME WATER SOLUBLE BLOOMING AND ROOTING POWDER** are fabulous fertilizers.

Bottom line—embrace the learning curve on this journey. There are endless choices and fun to be had in the designing process. At the end of the day, your container garden should be a vision of beauty and a celebration of your creativity.





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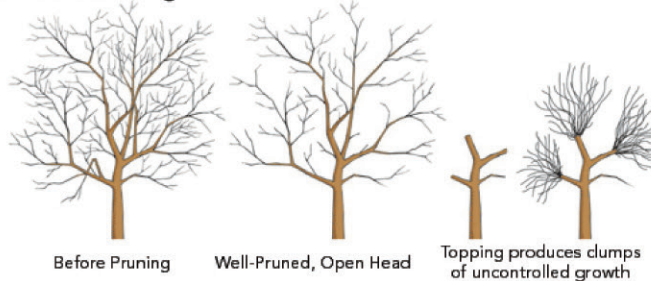
## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**W**hen should I prune...? This is a commonly asked question here at Green Thumb Nursery. There are some exceptions of course, but, as a general rule, you should plan to prune while plants are still dormant.

Here's the advantage for pruning during dormancy. When leaves drop off, you can see the form and structure clearly. This allows you to easily trim cross-branches and

weakened limbs without new growth getting in the way. By pruning in winter, you eliminate the stress a plant or shrub experiences. The root system will strengthen due to the unnecessary growth you prune back and it will foster an abundance of new and healthy foliage in springtime.

### A Look at Pruning



Charles Harwell will host our annual pruning seminar January 22, 2022.  
MARK YOUR CALENDARS and come with your pruning questions.



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