“A garden is never so good as it will be next year.”

Thomas Cooper

NUTRITIOUS VEGETABLES

Can’t get enough fresh vegetables? August is the month to plant the fall vegetables, including all those healthy crucifers – cabbage family crops. Here is a look at what some of your favorite vegetables supply:

- Asparagus: vitamin C, potassium
- Broccoli: vitamins C, A, B, potassium, calcium, iron
- Brussels Sprouts: Vitamins A, C, iron, calcium
- Cabbage & Greens: vitamins C, A, iron, calcium
- Carrots: vitamin A, beta carotene
- Green Peas: protein, vitamin A, thiamine, riboflavin, iron
- Sweet Peppers: lots of vitamin C, vitamin A
- Tomatoes: vitamin C, potassium
- Winter Squash: phosphorous, vitamin A, riboflavin, minerals

Normal August Weather

Weather Averages
For Asheville, North Carolina

 Courtesy of Wikipedia

Normal August Average High  81.7 °F
Normal August Average Low  61.8 °F
Normal August Precipitation  4.30”

Hours of Daylight for Asheville, NC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Sunrise</th>
<th>Sunset</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 1</td>
<td>6:38 am</td>
<td>8:34 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 31</td>
<td>7:01 am</td>
<td>7:59 pm</td>
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CHORES FOR August

LAWNS

- Cool season lawns can be planted or over-seeded late in the month. But if the weather is very dry, hold off for a while.
- Also hold off on fertilizing if the weather is dry. Wait to apply nitrogen when there is adequate rainfall in September or even October.

ORNAMENTALS

- Check hemlocks for hemlock woolly adelgids. September through November is the best time to treat for this pest. See [http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/ent/notes/O&T/trees/note119a/note119a.htm](http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/ent/notes/O&T/trees/note119a/note119a.htm)
- Do not apply nitrogen fertilizer to shrubs.
- Some plants will bloom until frost if you keep the spent flowers removed. Deadhead butterfly bush, purple coneflowers, phlox, and roses.
- Dahlias should be coming back into peak bloom. Stake tall growing plants to keep them from falling over with heavy blooms.
- Spruce up container gardens to keep them looking good through fall. Cut back and thin out overgrown plants. Apply some liquid fertilizer if you have not done so recently.
- Start preparing houseplants to move back indoors next month. Inspect for signs of insect infestations and treat if needed. Repot overgrown plants.

FRUITS

- Harvest apples and peaches. Pick up fallen fruit before it rots and attracts bees.
- Prune blackberries and raspberries after harvest.
- Water the strawberry bed if it is very dry. The plants are starting to form next season’s flower buds.

VEGETABLES

- Plant the fall garden. Some things to plant now include: greens, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, lettuce and turnips.
- Insect populations are highest late in the season. Check regularly for cabbage worms, aphids, tomato worms and squash borers.
- Irish potatoes should be ready to dig.
- Submit a soil sample to prepare for next year’s garden. Turn-around time is fast this time of year and allows you to apply any needed lime in the fall.
- Don’t let the veggies go to waste. Have a neighbor check the garden if you are away.

OTHER

- Keep bird baths and hummingbird feeders clean.
- Remember that surplus produce can be donated to the Plant A Row For The Hungry collection. Fresh fruits and vegetables, in good condition are always welcome. Deliver to MANNA Food Bank at 627 Swannanoa River Rd., Monday-Friday, 8:00-3:30.
INSECTS TO WATCH FOR

**Ornamentals:** Bagworms on all needled evergreens. It is too late to spray, so remove bags by hand. Thrips on roses and other flowers; spider mites on flowers and shrubs; lacebugs on pyracantha, pieris and azaleas. All may need to be treated with appropriate insecticide if significant damage occurs.

**Vegetables:** Bean beetles, squash beetles and squash bugs can be especially prevalent this time of year. Control measures include hand removal (drop them into a bucket of soapy water), or spraying with carbaryl (Sevin), malathion, pyrellin or pyrethrin. Several species of worms become prevalent on cabbage family crops. Bacteria sprays should be effective.

Rain Barrel Tips

Increasing numbers of people are installing and using rain barrels this summer. Here are a few tips we’ve picked up along the way.

- Install the barrel on a solid surface, with a slight tilt forward so that if the lid overflows water will spill away from the house.
- To prevent mosquitoes from breeding in a rain barrel put ¼ of a “Mosquito Dunk” in the barrel every 4 to 6 weeks. This is a bacteria, (Bacillus thuringiensis, var. Israelensis), that kills the mosquito larvae.
- The spigot at the bottom of most barrels does not completely drain the barrel, leaving enough water for mosquitoes and stagnant water. Periodically dump and rinse out the barrel.
- Clean the screen as often as needed to keep water flowing in freely. You may want to just remove the lid and hose the screen from the back side.

SEE YOU AT THE FAIR

This year’s North Carolina Mountain State Fair runs September 5 through 14. Look for the Flower and Garden tent close to the Heritage Village. Be sure to stop in and visit the Master Gardeners’ information tables. Volunteers will be available to answer your gardening questions. (Fri., Sat., & Sun.)

ENTER THE FLOWER SHOW

With two flower shows at the Fair, how can you resist the opportunity to show off your prettiest flowers? There are more than 150 categories for entries. Order a catalog now so you can start planning your entries. [www.mountainfair.org](http://www.mountainfair.org)
SPOTLIGHT: SMOKETREE

Smoketree, or smokebush, has been used in landscapes for hundreds of years. There are two similar species. *Cotinus coggygria* originates from Southern Europe and Asia. *Cotinus obovatus* is native to parts of the southern United States. Although both prefer well drained soil and a sunny location, they are quite adaptable to different soil conditions.

At about 15 feet in height, common smoketree, *C. coggygria*, is a large shrub or small multi-stemmed tree. It can work as a background plant for the shrubbery border or as a single specimen plant. Its claim to fame is the cloud of pinkish gray “smoke” that covers the plant in the summer.

The effect is the result not of flowers, but of tiny pinkish hairs on the small fruits that occur in large clusters. There are some popular cultivars with purple leaves and darker flower clusters, such as ‘Royal Purple’, ‘Velvet Cloak’, and ‘Nordine Red’.

*C. obovatus*, American smoketree, is similar in appearance, but at 30 feet is more of a small tree in form. In addition to the summer display, the leaves develop excellent fall color, usually in shades of orange gold or red.

TIPS FOR THE WATER WISE LANDSCAPE

If you need to water landscape areas, you certainly don’t want to waste the water. If you use sprinklers on landscape beds, make sure they are adjusted to throw water only where needed and water is not running down paved surfaces. Run the sprinklers long enough to put out about 1 inch of water. Less than a half inch generally will not soak in below the mulch and soil surface.

Soaker hoses can be a good way to restrict the water right around the roots of the plants that need it. Soakers will need to drip for several hours so set a timer or put a timer on the spigot.

Need to water a newly planted tree or shrub? Drill a few small holes in the bottom of a 5 gallon bucket and let the water trickle out over the roots of the plant.
**GET YOUR CANNER GAUGE CHECKED HERE!!!!**

Canning season is just around the corner and it’s time to get prepared. Check your equipment to make sure it is ready for use. Buy new jar lids to replace the lids used last year. Check your bands and jars to see that they are in good condition. Check your gaskets and pressure gauges as well. If you would like to have your gauge tested, call our office, at 255-5522 to set up an appointment.

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**BASIC HOME MAINTENANCE COURSE**

The Buncombe County Center of North Carolina Cooperative Extension is offering a five-series Basic Home Maintenance Course beginning September 2. The two-hour class will be held Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 5:30 – 7:30 pm on Sept 2, 4, 9, 11 & 16. Some of the topics to be covered are: saving on your heating and cooling bills, basic plumbing repairs, interior and exterior maintenance, landscaping and lawn care, indoor air quality common household pest, etc.

The course will be held at the Extension Center, 94 Coxe Ave. Asheville.

The fee of $20.00 includes all materials. Space is limited so pre-registration is necessary. To register, call the Buncombe County Center at 255-5522.

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**Growing in the Mountains**

**DESIGNING AND MAINTAINING A HEALTHY LANDSCAPE**

And Fall Vegetable Gardening

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6:00 to 7:30 pm

Lord Auditorium – Pack Memorial Library

No pre-registration required.

Doors open at 5:30, Lecture begins promptly at 6:00 pm

**Program Agenda**

- August 12
- Planting a Fall Vegetable Garden
- August 14
- Six Steps to Landscape Design
- August 19
- Selecting the Right Plants
- August 21
- Planting it Right
- August 26
- Maintaining the Landscape
- August 28
- Home Lawn Planting and Maintenance

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The *Mountain Gardener* is a newsletter produced by the Buncombe County Center of North Carolina Cooperative Extension. The purpose of this newsletter is to inform and educate Buncombe County residents about issues related to home lawns and gardens.

**Editor:**

Linda G. Blue

*Extension Agent – Agriculture – Urban Horticulture*

Check out Buncombe County Center’s website at.....

[http://buncombe.ces.ncsu.edu](http://buncombe.ces.ncsu.edu)
COMING EVENTS

August 9 & 23  Plant Problem Clinic – By Extension Master Gardeners at the WNC Farmers Market, 11:00 am – 2:00 pm in the breezeway between the retail buildings.

August 12  “Gardening in the Mountains: How to Win A Flower Show Blue Ribbon”, Presented by Extension Master Gardener volunteers at the North Carolina Arboretum at 10:00 am. No pre-registration. Tuesday is free admission.

August 9 & 23  Back Yard Composting – By Extension Master Gardeners at the WNC Farmers Market, 11:00 am – 2:00 pm

August 12-28  Growing in the Mountains: Maintaining a Healthly Landscape – Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6:00 – 7:30 pm

September 5 - 14  WNC Mountain State Fair

Individuals with disabilities who would like to participate in any program mentioned in this newsletter, but who need special assistance to do so, should call the Extension Center at 828-255-5522 at least five days prior to the event.