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JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2013

Gardening and home landscape information from UGA Cooperative Extension in Houston County. Our newsletter provides research-based horticulture information to help Middle Georgia gardeners.

→Effective January 1, 2013, all soil samples will be \$8.00. Please use exact cash or check made out to Houston County Office Fund. The Extension Office will no longer make change. All soil sample results will be sent via Email.

Planting Dates for Your Winter/Spring Vegetable Garden

| Planting Dates | Type of Vegetable |
|------------------|-------------------------------|
| Jan 1 – Mar 15 | Green onion, Dry bulb onions |
| Jan 15 – Feb 15 | English peas, Edible pod peas |
| Jan 15 – Mar 1 | Lettuce, Irish potatoes |
| Jan 15 – Mar 15 | Asparagus, Cabbage, Spinach |
| Jan 15 – Mar 20 | Carrot |
| Jan 15 – Apr 1 | Mustard, Radish, Turnip |
| Feb 1 – Mar 10 | Kale |
| Feb 1 – Mar 15 | Collards |
| Feb 15 - April 1 | Beets |

Plant Spotlight



Hellebores orientalis

The Lenten Rose blooms late January through April. Once established, this shade loving evergreen perennial is drought resistant and has no serious pest or disease problems.

Plants should be planted 1 1/2 to 2 feet apart in partial to full shade with the root ball even with the soil. They prefer a well-drained, slightly alkaline soil amended with organic matter and should be fertilized once or twice a year by broadcasting 10-10-10. Dead or damaged foliage should be removed in late winter prior to bloom.



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Home Garden and Landscape Tips for Middle Georgia

Flowers: Many of our spring blooming bulbs have already begun to send up green shoots. Fertilize the bulbs when the plants get 2-3 inches tall. Apply one pound 10-10-10 per 100 square feet or another equivalent fertilizer. Keep the soil moist, but not overly wet. To replenish the bulb's food supply for next year's bloom, leave the foliage on the plant until it turns brown.

To increase bloom and color, continue deadheading and fertilizing pansies. Fertilize pansies monthly with granular fertilizer or bi-weekly with liquid fertilizer.

Prepare flower beds for warm season annual flowers. Do a soil test and add lime and fertilizer as needed.

Vegetables & Herbs: Plan your garden now. Be sure to pick an easily accessible area that has 8-10 hours of sunlight and a good water supply. For winter and early spring plantings, raised beds provide better drainage and earlier soil warm-up.

Prepare the garden for planting. Incorporate compost into the soil to improve the fertility, physical structure and water-holding capacity of the soil. Take a soil sample now.

Shrubs & Trees: Pruning is one of the most important cultural practices for maintaining woody plants, including ornamental trees and shrubs, fruits, and nuts. Pruning may be done to train or direct the growth of plants, to control the shape and size of the plant, to improve fruit or flower quality, or to correct structural problems. Late February is the time to prune to encourage spring growth. Refer to the CAES publication [Basic Principles of Pruning Woody Plants](http://www.caes.uga.edu/publications/pubDetail.cfm?pk_id=6098) (http://www.caes.uga.edu/publications/pubDetail.cfm?pk_id=6098) for information on how and when to prune different plants.

Crape myrtles flower on new growth and can be pruned any time during late winter or early spring though pruning is not essential for flowering. The type and amount of pruning that should be done each year depends entirely on desired shape and size. Refer to the CAES publication [Crape Myrtle Culture](http://www.caes.uga.edu/publications/pubDetail.cfm?pk_id=6861) (http://www.caes.uga.edu/publications/pubDetail.cfm?pk_id=6861) for additional information.

Muscadines should be pruned in February or early March. Since muscadine fruit are borne on new shoots arising from last year's growth, you should prune back the canes that grew the previous year, leaving about 3 inches of growth to form spurs. Refer to The CAES publication [Home Garden Muscadines](http://www.caes.uga.edu/publications/pubDetail.cfm?pk_id=6826) (http://www.caes.uga.edu/publications/pubDetail.cfm?pk_id=6826) for additional information.

Plant bare root roses now through March. Prune non-climbing roses in mid-February. Trim Knock-Out roses only if they grow over a path or need shaping.

Lawn Tips: Broadleaf weeds can be sprayed with Weed-B-Gon, 33-Plus, or equivalent, but large weeds may be difficult to control so you may want to just mow the weeds and collect clippings before seeds form. To control wild onion and garlic in your lawn, use two sprays of chemicals containing imazaquin four weeks apart.

Prevent summer weeds by applying a pre-emergence weed killer in late February and again 45 days later. Do not use during lawn green-up or if you plan to seed your lawn within 45-60 days. Atrazine may be used on all lawns except Bermuda. Pendamethalin, benefin, and oryzalin can be used on all warm season grasses. See the [pesticide handbook](http://www.ent.uga.edu/pmh/Hm_Turf.pdf) (http://www.ent.uga.edu/pmh/Hm_Turf.pdf) or read the pesticide label to see which weeds each one controls.

Improve air flow, water absorption and the effectiveness of fertilizers and weed killers by removing thatch layers thicker than 1/2 inch (1 inch for St Augustine lawns). De-thatch the lawn in January or February. Do not de-thatch lawns once they begin to green up. Take a soil test and add lime if needed. **Do not lime lawns unless recommended by a soil sample.**

YOUR GARDEN BENCH



The average winter temperature in Houston County is around 47 degrees, and there are plenty of days when the temperature is warm enough to sit comfortably outside on a garden bench. Why not plant some winter bloomers to brighten up the area around your garden bench?

Those **pansies** you planted in the fall can provide some winter color while the **spring-flowering bulbs** begin to grow., promising cheerful color in the spring.

Winter jasmine is an evergreen, arching shrub that flowers best in full sun. It has red buds that open into bright yellow tubular flowers on green stems.

Winter daphne is a slow-growing evergreen that produces clusters of fragrant tiny white or pink-edged flowers. The flowers stay in good condition for 4-6 weeks.

Winter honeysuckle doesn't have showy flowers, but the small creamy flowers do produce a sweet fragrance that can make sitting on your garden bench quite delightful.

Lenten rose is a delightful perennial that grows well in partial shade and begins blooming in Janu-

Send a picture of **your** favorite garden bench to mg@uga.edu and have it featured in one of our bimonthly newsletters!