

The September
HORT REPORT
Helpful tips from
Barbara Chadwick
OSU Master Gardener
Ross Seed Company

FARMER'S ALMANAC 'Best Days in September'

- PLANTING ABOVE GROUND CROPS: 10, 11, 19.
- PLANTING BELOW GROUND CROPS: 1, 2, 28, 30.
- HARVEST ABOVE GROUND CROPS: 14, 15.
- HARVEST BELOW GROUND CROPS: 23, 25.
- PRUNE TO ENCOURAGE GROWTH: 12, 13.
- PRUNE TO DISCOURAGE GROWTH: 3, 4, 5.
- DESTROY PESTS AND WEEDS: 21, 22.
- CUT HAY: 21, 22.
- FISHING: 6 - 20.

Other important September dates:

- LABOR DAY: 6.
- GRANDPARENT'S DAY: 12.
- AUTUMN BEGINS: 22.

BORN IN SEPTEMBER? HAPPY BIRTHDAY MONTH!

Your September birth flower is the ASTER. Asters are mainly symbols of power and love. According to folklore, they were once burned to ward off serpents. Asters are a daisy-like perennial with star-shaped flower heads that range in color from white to blue to purple. They bring delightful beauty to the garden in late summer and autumn. They attract butterflies, hummingbirds, and bees, providing the pollinators with an important late-season supply of nectar. Aster is a sign of fall as sure as the changing leaves. This flower stands for patience and daintiness and the word "Aster" comes from the Latin word for star.

FULL "HARVEST MOON" IS SEPTEMBER 20TH

September's full moon is known as the HARVEST MOON or the FULL CORN MOON. This name is attributed to Native Americans because it marked when the corn was supposed to be harvested. Most often, the September full moon is referred to as the HARVEST MOON, which is the full moon that occurs closest to the fall equinox. Every two out of three years, the HARVEST MOON comes in September. Every third year, it is in October. At the peak of harvest, farmers can work late into the night by the light of this moon.

LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE

- The last nitrogen fertilizer application of the year should be applied no later than September 15, on warm-season grasses.
- Brown patch disease of cool-season grasses can still be a problem.
- Meet water requirements of turf.
- Continue Bermuda grass spray program with glyphosate products for areas being converted to tall fescue this fall.
- White grub damage can become visible this month. Apply appropriate soil insecticide if white grubs are a problem. Water product into soil.
- Pre-emergent applications for winter-annual weed control should be completed by the 2nd week of September. *NOTE: DO NOT TREAT AREAS THAT WILL BE SEEDED IN THE FALL.
- PLANT bluegrass, fescue, or ryegrass seed as needed in shady areas in LATE September through MID-OCTOBER. Fall is the best time to establish cool-season lawns.
- Choose spring flowering bulbs as soon as they become available... **SPRING BULBS ARE ON THEIR WAY!!!** Watch our Facebook and website... we will let you know as soon as they arrive! Everyone should experience the beauty of SPRING through Tulips, Daffodils, and Crocus. Planting in the fall, and patiently awaiting the snow to melt off them so they can emerge in the SPRING is one of the many GARDEN MIRACLES I enjoy!

HOW'S YOUR GARDEN?

It is still planting time for a few fall crops. Try lettuce, spinach, radish, kale, turnips, beets, and I even have a fall pea if you're game! We should be getting ONION BULBS and GARLIC for FALL PLANTING around in mid-September. If you are interested, I'm taking names and phone numbers and will call you to let you know when they arrive... just call (405) 262-3456 and add your name to the list today!

FINISHED FOR THE SEASON? THINK AGAIN...

It is about time to PLANT FALL COVER CROPS. COVER CROPS are fast growing plants, usually grains, legumes, or grasses, that are utilized by farmers and gardeners for one or more of their beneficial qualities. They are not intended to be planted as food crops. Cover crops are usually worked into the soil and many of their benefits are realized in concert with each other.

There are many BENEFITS to planting COVER CROPS:

- **ABOVE GROUND WEED CONTROL:** Because of their fast-growing nature, cover crops are often able to suppress weeds.
- **DISEASE/PEST CONTROL:** Cover crops displace disease organisms by replacing their preferred host. Weeds often harbor insects that prey on the garden. By suppressing weed growth with cover crops, you can suppress pest and insect populations as well.
- **SOIL FLORA AND FAUNA:** The best-known benefit of cover crops might be their effects on soil. Cover crops decay and leave behind organic matter that acts as a food source for earthworms and other beneficial soil microorganisms. Increased diversity of soil life=healthier plants.
- **PHYSICAL BENEFITS:** Cover crops are grown to improve the physical characteristics of the soil. Crops like buckwheat, oats, and crimson clover have very fine roots that can penetrate tough soils. They loosen the hard soil as they penetrate and when the roots die, they leave behind looser soil and organic matter.

- **NUTRIENTS:** Cover crops are often referred to as “Green Manure” because they add organic matter to the soil and increase its fertility. The humus that they add to the soil helps hold nitrogen for plants to utilize and prevents it from leaching away. Crops like WINTER PEAS can take nitrogen from the air and turn it into a form that plants can use as food. Others, like BUCKWHEAT, are adept at gathering phosphorus from the soil and making it available to other plants upon decomposition. These two nutrients, NITROGEN AND PHOSPHORUS, are major contributors to plant health and production and are also often added as fertilizer. Therefore, cover crops can reduce or eliminate the need to add fertilizer.
- **NATURAL CHOICE:** Cover crops are used in many areas after fall harvest to enrich the soil and prevent erosion. But they can be used any time of the year. It seems that for any problem in the garden, there is a cover crop solution. Come in today and let me show you the way to better garden performance with less input of extra water, fertilizer, and insecticides. Cover crops are the NATURAL choice for garden improvement.
- **MY THREE FAVORITE COVER CROPS:** Austrian Winter Peas, Buckwheat, and a Crimson Clover Combo!

COMMON GARDENING TERMS

In our August newsletter we went over common gardening terms beginning with A-C. Here is the second go to help you understand some additional, “Common Gardening Terms”.

This month we will cover D-F ...hope it helps!

- **DAYS TO EMERGE:** Number of days, on average, that it will take a seedling to emerge from the soil, or medium, in favorable conditions.
- **DAYS TO HARVEST:** Number of days from sowing (or transplant) to harvest.
- **DEADHEADING:** Cutting spent flowers off a plant, encouraging the plant to bloom again. Deadheading extends the bloom period.
- **DETERMINATE:** Describes tomatoes that stop growing when fruit begins forming from the topmost flower bud, making them more compact at around 3–4 feet. Most of the crop ripens within a couple of weeks-time, making these a great choice for canning.
- **DIRECT SOW:** Sowing seeds directly in their permanent growing space.
- **DISEASE RESISTANCE:** Exhibiting less susceptibility or immunity against specific diseases, as compared to other varieties.
- **DISEASE TOLERANCE:** Ability to thrive with the stress of infection, as compared to other varieties.
- **DROUGHT TOLERANT:** Ability to survive or thrive in low-water conditions. Also known as “water-wise”.
- **ETIOLATION:** Characterized by lanky, weak, or pale plant growth, resulting from planting conditions that allowed only low or no light.
- **FAIRLY DROUGHT TOLERANT:** Ability to survive or thrive in low-water conditions, but to a lesser extent than “drought tolerant” plants.
- **FROST TOLERANT CROPS:** Crops that tolerate some cool weather and even frost, although the amount of tolerance varies between crops and even varieties.
- **FROST SENSITIVE CROPS:** Crops that are not frost tolerant and will die if exposed to freezing temperatures.
- **FRUIT:** A seed capsule that emerges from a flower, such as a tomato or melon.
- **FULL SUN:** Six (6) or more hours of direct sunlight, per day.

I HAVE A PASSION...

To provide quality plants to our customers, for education and inspiration, for helping people achieve their goals for a successful gardening experience, and **FOR FALL BEAUTY... I LOVE AUTUMN!**

It's almost time! As soon as it cools down a bit, the colors will start to change, the air will be crisp, and the OSU COWBOYS AND OU SOONERS will be playing football! Time to plant FALL BEAUTY... We are anticipating the arrival of Pansies, Mums, Ornamental Cabbage, Kale, Dianthus, Snapdragons, Ajuga, Pumpkins, Straw Bales, and Cornstalks for FALL decorating... YEA!

PANSY INFORMATION

Pansies are known to prefer cool temperatures with thick layers of sunshine. In our area (Zone 7), these easy-care, colorful flowers do best in fall, winter, and spring. The heat of the summer is the culprit here. These tough plants are grown as an annual here in Oklahoma. The newer pansy varieties can survive temperatures down to the single digits. They can FREEZE SOLID, and then go on to re-bloom in early spring. Pansies come in many colors, and they are absolutely THE perfect pick-me-up during the worst part of winter. When I can see them bloom through the ice and snow, I know by then, spring is right around the corner. If you are new to fall pansies, come in and visit with us. We will show you the beauty of these colorful little gems!

HARDY MUMS... A BEAUTIFUL FALL TRADITION

I love the way residents and businesses create colorful entrances with straw bales, pumpkins, and hardy mums. They come in a rainbow of fall color hues and most people don't realize it, but these are hardy perennials that shouldn't be discarded after the season is over. These great plants can be placed in the ground to repeat their show each autumn if you wish.

Mums, or CHRYSANTHEMUMS, are significant in many cultures around the world. In some parts of the world, they are known as a funeral flower, but in the U.S. the Chrysanthemum is a symbol of a celebration of harvest and Thanksgiving.

CHOOSING THE BEST MUMS for your display isn't hard. Although we are tempted to pick the containers in full, glorious bloom, it is much better to select plants where all the flowers are just starting to open. This gives you a longer lasting display since the containers at peak will fade shortly. Treat the container mums like any other potted plant in your collection. Make sure they have ample water and plenty of sunshine. If they are situated in the shade, the blossoms will open, but not with the same numbers as those placed in full sun.

Once the show is over and the flowers fade, you can incorporate the plants into your perennial beds. Transplant them as you would any other perennial, making sure to untangle the roots and place into moderately fertile soil in full sun. Remember... if they are planted too close to streetlights or other artificial lighting, that can impact the flowering schedule. The soil shouldn't dry out, but remember, mums hate wet feet so good drainage is essential. When the frost kills the tops back, you can trim the dead foliage and mulch lightly. Come spring when the new shoots appear, dress with OSMOCOTE fertilizer (14-14-14) to ensure healthy growth. Once the plants are about 6 inches tall, pinch the growing tips to encourage branching. Do this every 6-weeks, until the end of June, to allow the flower buds to form.

ENJOY the FALL SEASON and cooler weather with hardy mums in your gardens. Mums are inexpensive and easy to grow. Our first shipment is due to arrive around September 15th! Be sure to LIKE/FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK and INSTAGRAM as we will post pictures as soon as they arrive.

UPDATE ON THE NEW GARDEN CENTER BUILDING

It looks like the final touches are happening so that we may have a great fall in the new building. Painters are finishing, new doors are on the way, lighting and heating are in place, and my excitement grows with each day as we get closer to moving in completely.

RAISING THE BAR AGAIN

Many who came through the garden center this year were first time customers. We work hard to make sure our customers have a positive experience when shopping with us so that they will return on their own. We try to make an important connection with each customer to let them know about our plants, supplies, and knowledge. We know that every customer makes a conscious decision to shop with us and that it is a privilege to serve them, and we do not take that lightly.

ROSS SEED COMPANY ...BEYOND LOCAL BUSINESS

From its humble beginning in 1918 until now ...over 100 years later, they remain COMMITTED and ROOTED in FAMILY, FAITH, AND FRIENDSHIPS.

For the ROSS FAMILY, business goes way beyond making a profit. This is a family that looks after each other, its community, and cares about what's best for all. I think this is how you define that it is something deeper than just a local store. With over 100 years invested, this family operated business is a community staple. Our goal is to simply make the community better by pooling our resources and knowledge and sharing it as best we can.

We all work hard to be a beacon in our community. Inspiring others to participate in creative and sustainable plant care and design practices, provides refreshment to the mind, body, and spirit.

As the world continues to change under our feet, and the effects of COVID are felt well into the future, the trend in our industry is becoming an intersection of three roads:

1. Conscience consumerism... locally sourced, family-owned, and environmentally friendly.
2. Safe family experiences.
3. Plants that enhance our lives and homes, inside and out.

I take great pride in our plants, products, customer service, and our TRUE VALUE brand. We provide our customers with a level of education and attention you will not find in any big-box store.

THE NEXT 50 YEARS

The ROSS FAMILY BUSINESS has been in a constant state of growth since its beginning. The building has never stopped, whether it be adding additional square footage, building new structures, or building their community.

As the fourth (4) generation begins moving into the daily operations, we are all confident they are ready to lead the company into the next 50 years. Although faces may change, the values will remain the same... GREAT PRODUCTS, GREAT PLANTS, GREAT SERVICE, and eyes to the future honoring the same core values they always have... building their business every day and finding ways to improve and grow while taking care of every customer.

I believe it all starts from the foundation it is set on: staying focused on getting better and better and doing things the right way EVERY DAY. If you do the right things every day, chances are the customers will continue to come back. THANK YOU, WALTER ROSS, for teaching me that.

LET'S TALK

Our Saturday morning "Let's Talk" sessions have gone well so far. Thank you to all those who have come in with your questions and needs. I will be at our Chickasha store to answer questions on September 4th and 18th from 10AM - 1PM and in El Reno September 11th and 25th. Come see me and LET'S TALK!

VERY IMPORTANT SEPTEMBER DATES

Here are the super important September dates you knew nothing about:

- September 2... BACON DAY
- September 5... BE LATE FOR SOMETHING DAY
- September 10... SWAP IDEAS DAY
- September 16... WIFE APPRECIATION DAY
- September 20... PEPPERONI PIZZA DAY
- September 28... GOOD NEIGHBOR DAY

**Till next month... be careful
out there in the heat! And
remember to keep everything
watered well!**

**Be sure to like and follow us on Facebook and follow our
Instagram! To download this month's newsletter, visit
www.rossseed.com.**