

Horticulture Hotline

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HORTICULTURE

January 2008

Great Plants for 2008

Start planning your garden and landscape while the days are cold and getting outside isn't high on your priority list! Here are some winning plants to choose from for planting in the spring.



Roses:

http://www.rose.org/site/epa/ge/13595_429.htm

Dream Come True: is a stunning sight of catchy colors, which lures the likes of even non-rose lovers to its side. This

rose produces flawlessly formed yellow blossoms, blushed with ruby-red at the tips, all set amongst abundant matte green foliage. The big, bushy vigorous plant yields long-stemmed, long-lived blooms with mild tea fragrance, making it lovely in the landscape and a great choice for bouquets.

Dream Come True was hybridized by Dr. John Pottschmidt of Cincinnati, Ohio – only the 3rd amateur hybridizer to win the AARS Award in 67 years – and introduced by Weeks Roses of Rancho Cucamonga, Calif.

Vegetable:

<http://www.all-americanselections.org/>

Holy Mole Pepper: It is the first hybrid pasilla-type pepper, which is used to make the famous molé sauce. 'Holy Molé' showed improved vigor, earliness and considerably higher yield than the comparisons in side-by-side trials. Holy Molé' is resistant to two common viruses that stunt plants and reduce pepper production. The immature green peppers are 7 to 9 inches long and can be harvested in about 85 days from transplanting. If fruit is left on the plant, they will mature to a dark chocolate color. The pepper flavor is nutty and tangy. Mature plants are 3 feet tall; a perfect size for patio containers.

Annual Bedding Plant:

<http://www.all-americanselections.org/>

Petunia F1 'Opera Supreme Pink Morn': Iridescent pink blooms are the unique feature of this vigorous trailing petunia. A silvery shine causes blooms to shimmer

Daylilies:

<http://www.daylilyresearch.org/winners.html>

Lavender Vista: 40-135 Days of Bloom per Year, Good Rust Resistance, Reblooms until Frost! 5-6" Fragrant Blooms on 20-24" Tall Scapes, "Exhibition" All American 2007

LOW LIGHT HOUSEPLANTS

By Dr. Leonard Perry, Extension Professor; Ailene King, Student Intern; University of Vermont



Houseplants, like outdoor landscape plants, have different requirements for light. Although many factors affect how well indoor plants do in a given situation, it's quite possible that the reason your plants aren't surviving has nothing to do with whether you remember to water and fertilize them. They may just not be the right plants for your lighting situation.

If you have low light conditions in your home, then try Chinese Evergreen, Rubber Plant, Snake Plant, or Peace Lily. Although these plants all have different light requirements, they will readily adapt to low light conditions. In addition, they are generally tough, with low maintenance needs.

Chinese Evergreen (*Aglaonema*), which is native to Malaysia and the Philippines, gets its name from the Greek *aglaos* meaning bright, and *nema* meaning filament, which probably refers to the shining stamen parts of the flower. This plant usually grows one to three feet high as well as wide although size does vary with species and cultivar. The leaves are light to dark green, variegated silver, or gray, depending on species and cultivar. The flowers are non-showy and are less common indoors. Keep this plant out of reach of children and pets as all its plant parts can cause throat burn if ingested.

Aglaonema tolerates low to very low light. Warm temperatures are best, but they will adapt to cool temperatures as well. Water this plant moderately, and fertilize monthly. It does well in average humidity, but will tolerate drier air. However, if the air is too cold (within 10 degrees or so of freezing), or very cold water gets on the leaves, they will brown. Over time, the plant may get leggy. Simply cut the stems, remove some lower leaves, and try rooting them in a light, well-drained mix or vermiculite.

Rubber Plant (*Ficus elastica*) also is known as India Rubber Tree or Fig. It is native to Southeast Asia and is one of the original and best known large foliage plants. The Rubber Plant reaches six to 10 feet high and two to three feet wide. It may even be taller and require additional support. The leaves are glossy, dark green, leathery, and thick. A few cultivars have colored leaves. The sticky white sap may irritate skin

or the stomach if ingested. So, always wash hands immediately after touching the sap. The Rubber Plant grows well in full sun or low light in warm to average indoor temperatures. Just make sure you don't move it from one extreme to the other rapidly or it will lose its leaves. If too wet, too dry, or too drafty, the leaves may turn yellow and eventually drop. Water and fertilize moderately.

Snake Plant (*Sansevieria trifasciata*) also is known as Mother-in-law's Tongue or Bowstring Hemp. It is native to dry rocky habitats of west tropical Africa. Snake Plant is perhaps the easiest, most adaptable, and most tolerant of different conditions of all houseplants. It is also one of the most common. It withstands most conditions, except freezing and overwatering. It may grow anywhere from six to 48 inches high and 10 to 36 inches wide, depending on the cultivar. The flowers are nocturnally fragrant, creamy flowers rich with nectar. The leaves are upright, stiff, and fleshy. Taller varieties like 'Laurentii' produce clumps of flowers with broad yellow margins. Shorter varieties like 'Hahnii' produce rosettes with darker green crossbands. However, keep in mind that under low light conditions this plant rarely flowers. Snake Plant will tolerate bright to low light conditions and warm to cool temperatures. Allow the soil to dry between watering. Leaves will fall over or have corky growths if excessively watered. This plant is very tolerant of dry air commonly found in many homes.

Peace Lily or Spathiphyllum (*Spathiphyllum wallisii* 'Clevelandii') is native to the American tropics. Its name comes from the Greek *spatha*, meaning spathe, and *phyllon*, meaning leaf, referring to the leaf-like white spathe (the unusual cupped flower shape). The true species is rare in cultivation. The plant reaches a height of 18 to 24 inches and 12 to 18 inches in width. The leaves are dark green, elongated and on long stems. Spathiphyllum does best in bright to moderate light but adapts readily to low light. Too much light may cause yellowing, then browning of the leaves. It does well in average to warm temperatures with moderate watering and low fertility. Over fertilizing may cause brown leaf spots and no flowering. Spathiphyllum likes humidity but will tolerate dry air. Keep the leaves dusted using a damp cloth or rinse them periodically. The Chinese Evergreen, Rubber Plant, and Snake Plant also benefit from occasional dusting.



Bug Bytes

STORED PRODUCT PESTS IN THE PANTRY

Lee Townsend, Extension Entomologist

Stored product or pantry pests include several beetles, moths, and a mite that can infest whole grains or processed foods. Usually, the first sign of a problem is the appearance of small beetles crawling over counter tops, moths flying across rooms, or caterpillars crawling up walls or across ceilings. The solution requires finding and destroying all infested products in which these pests have developed, a general cleanup, and use of sealed storage containers to prevent recurring problems.

Some stored product pests feed inside whole kernels. These include the granary weevil, rice weevil, and the Angoumois grain moth. The weevils are 1/8- to 1/4-inch long, reddish brown to black snout beetles. Adults can live for 6 to 8 months and may be found some distance from infested articles. The larval stage is a legless grub that develops inside kernels of wheat or corn, or other whole grains or caked materials. Development from egg to adult takes as little as 1 month.

The Angoumois grain moth is 1/2 inch long and pale yellow brown. It may be seen fluttering in the house. As with the weevils, the larval stage develops in whole kernels or caked grain. Barley, rye, corn, oats, rice and various other seeds can be infested. Decorative ear corn is a common source of the insect. The life cycle takes about 6 weeks. The adult resembles a clothes moth but can be recognized by the finger-like projection of the hind wing tip.

A much larger number of insects feed on processed grains or broken kernels, or a variety of spices. Common pests include the red and confused flour beetles, saw-toothed grain beetles, drugstore beetle, cigarette beetle and Indian meal moth.

Red and confused flour beetles, cigarette beetles, drugstore beetles, and the saw-toothed grain beetles are 1/8 inch long red brown insects. The immature or larval stages usually occur only in infested products and usually are not seen. Flour beetles and the saw-toothed grain beetle cannot attack whole or undamaged grains but will feed on a wide variety of processed grains (flour, meal), as well as dried fruits, dry dog food, dried meats, candy bars, drugs, tobacco, and a variety of other products. The

life cycle of the flour beetles takes about 7 weeks. Adult females can live for several months to more than a year. Confused flour beetles fly and are attracted to lights; red flour beetles crawl toward light but apparently do not fly. Saw-toothed grain beetles neither fly nor are they attracted to light.

Drugstore beetles and cigarette beetles attack almost any household food and spice and leather articles. Cigarette beetles are most commonly found in dried dog food and paprika. Drugstore beetles are often in bread, flour, meal, breakfast foods, and spices like red pepper. Adults of both species can fly and are attracted to light.

The Indian meal moth is a very common household pest. The distinctive 1/2-inch long adult is easily recognized by the pale gray and coppery brown front wings. The dirty white to pink larval stage is a caterpillar that crawls away from the infested products to find a place in which to transform to the adult. The caterpillars feed on the surface and produce silk webbing throughout the food source. The life cycle can be as short as 25 days. They can feed in dried fruits, powdered milk, chocolate, flour, meal, dried dog food, bird seed and a variety of food stuffs. They prefer coarse flours and corn meal.

While adults are the signs of an infestation, merely killing them is not the solution. Infested articles must be found and destroyed. Identification of the pest can provide clues on where to look but some of these insects can live on a wide range of materials. In general, the greater the number of insects seen, the older the infestation. Often the initial source is partially used boxes or bags of products that have been forgotten in the backs of pantries and shelves. The infestation spreads as the active adults search for new food sources. A thorough search is needed to locate all infested items. If they are not found in pantries or cupboards, then begin to look at such things as decorative items or bird seed.

Disposal of infested materials is the best way to eliminate the problem. Also check all items in pantries or on shelves. Often beetles can be found beneath cans and other items. Thoroughly vacuum the shelves, both upper and lower surfaces, and use a crevice attachment to clean cracks and crevices. It is better to do a very thorough job one time than to have to repeat a hasty inspection and cleanup.

After treatment, good sanitation and proper storage are keys to preventing future problems. Place products from cardboard, paper, or plastic containers into jars or other containers that can be sealed tightly. Decorative items such as Indian corn, dried flower arrangements, or bird feed may be treated with heat (155°F for about 20 minutes with the oven door propped open) or in a non-self-defrosting freezer at 0°F for 4 days



Home Hort Hints

Rick Durham, Consumer Horticulture Extension Specialist, University of Kentucky

Storing vegetable seeds.

If you are an avid gardener then you know that seed catalogues will soon be showing up in the mail box. But if you are like most people, you will have many seeds left over from the previous season. Are these seeds still viable? Is there a good chance they will germinate if planted? You bet. Most vegetable seeds remain viable or able to germinate for three years or more when stored properly. A few vegetables such as spinach, onion, and sweet corn, produce seeds that remain viable for a shorter period of time. In any case, storage conditions are very important. It's best to keep seeds as dry as possible. Enclosing them in a glass jar or other airtight container may be helpful. This will also protect against insect infestation and feeding by rodents. Although refrigeration is not necessary, keeping seeds as cool as possible, but not freezing, will also prolong their life. It's easy to check the germination ability of stored seeds and this might even be a fun family project. Simply remove a set of 20-30 seeds from each stored packet, wrap them in moist paper towels, place them in a zip-lock bag, and keep them in a warm place (70-80F). They should germinate in a week to 10 days. If half or more of the seeds germinated, it should be fine to sow them in the garden. Just increase the planting density accordingly to account for less than 100% germination. If germination is low, discard the seed lot and order or buy fresh seeds.

Woody plant care for the winter.

During periods of warm weather, continue to water newly planted trees and shrubs as well as established evergreens. This is especially true for plants on the south and west side of the house since they receive more winter sun than the rest of the landscape. This brings up another situation. If you are making plans now to transplant trees or shrubs in early spring, consider that the light situations in your landscape may differ between summer and winter. Areas that seem bright and sunny now may not be during the summer. Remember your evergreens during snow storms. Accumulating snow, especially when wet, may

seriously damage branches. A broom can be used to sweep off snow on lower branches. An upward sweeping motion is best, and be sure to watch out for power lines. It's better to prop up ice laden branches than to try to physically remove the ice. Such branches tend to be brittle in cold weather and may be damaged in the removal process. In other words, don't beat the ice off of branches with a stick! If severe winter damage occurs to limbs and branches, pruning can be done at any time to remove the damaged parts. Otherwise, wait until severe winter weather is over before doing maintenance pruning. In this way one can better judge and remove other branches that may have been damaged during winter.

Other gardening activities for winter.

Clean and sterilize tools, pots, and other items you use around plants. You can use a 10% solution of household bleach (1 part bleach to 9 parts water) or rubbing alcohol (straight from the bottle) for this purpose. Soak or allow the bleach to stay on the item for about 15 minutes, then rinse with water and let dry. The alcohol will evaporate quickly so rinsing is unnecessary. If salt deposits have accumulated on clay pots, soak them for a few hours in a solution of 1 cup household vinegar and 1 cup household bleach added to 1 gallon of warm water. Some scrubbing with iron wool may be required to remove heavier deposits.

If you have decorative pottery in the landscape, move it to the garage or basement to prevent damage during cold weather. If containers are too large to move, cover them with plastic or turn them upside down to prevent water from collecting and freezing during the winter.

Check out your garden sprayer to see if rubber/leather washers or the plunger needs to be replaced. It may take some time to locate replacement parts. By doing this in winter your sprayer will be ready when you need it.

Make festive arrangements from evergreen foliage, dormant branches with various textures, and seed pods. When kept watered, such arrangements will last for several weeks indoors.

Calendar of Things to Do



January 19; Garden

Gurus X: Roger Swain and Felder Rushing; Cherry Civic Center -

Paducah, KY. Contact: Purchase Area Master Gardeners, <http://www.pamga.org/GurusX2008.htm> or McCracken County Extension Office, 2705 Olivet Church Road, Paducah; 270.554.9520; e-mail:

CES-MCCRACKEN@LSV.UKY.EDU

January 16-19, 2008; The Practical Tools and Solutions for Sustaining Family Farms Conference; Galt House; Louisville;

Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group (Southern SAWG) holds its seventeenth annual conference in Louisville, Ky., January 16-19, 2008 in the Galt House Hotel and Suites. Joel Salatin, keynote speaker; also featuring Wendell Berry, Kentucky farmer and author. Pre-Conference Sessions include eight intensive short courses, five field trips and six new hands-on activities. Friday morning, the conference begins and includes 62 practical sessions and twenty U-Pick networking meetings for sharing and learning from each other.

Conference schedule available at www.ssawg.org

or call 678-494-0696 to request brochure.

February 8-11; American Nursery & Landscape Association Management

Clinic; The Galt House Hotel and Suites, 141 North Fourth Street, Louisville, KY. Contact: American Nursery & Landscape Association; 202.789.2900; url, <http://www.managementclinic.org>

February 21; Ten Months of Color in the Shade

Garden; Hear Gene Bush of Munchkin Nursery and Gardens speak. Mr. Bush of DePauw, Indiana, is a well known writer and lecturer. His main interests are in shade gardens using rare and unusual plants and in native and non-native perennials. He specializes in woodland and dwarf wildflowers with attention to color variety. Gene Bush, Munchkin Nursery and Garden- www.munchkinnursery.com The lecture is sponsored by Friends of The Arboretum and it will be held at the Gluck Equine Center Auditorium at 7 pm. The program is open to the public. Admission is free to Friends of The Arboretum and \$5 for all others. FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Marcia Farris, The Arboretum, (859) 257-6955, mfarr2@uky.edu

February 21; Green Tools for Green Schools: Green

Schools 101-A Community Forum

6-8pm, Fayette County Public School Central Office, Norsworthy Auditorium, 701 E. Main St, Lexington

This forum will provide; 1) comprehensive overview of the components of KY Green and Healthy Schools initiative (www.greenschools.ky.gov), 2) examples of efforts in Lexington to create a

greener and healthier school environment and culture, 3) ideas and opportunities to join task groups for community involvement, 4) questions & answers and input. Presentations by staff, students, teachers and community members will describe greening efforts in Lexington such as building design, outdoor classrooms, gardens/edible school yards, rain gardens/LID, recycling & composting, curriculum & standards, future directions and green collar jobs.

Teachers, parents, students, staff, community...Everyone welcome! Come to **listen, learn and ask** questions. For more info: 859-312-7024, greenschools@sustainlex.org

www.sustainlex.org

www.greenschools.ky.gov

www.greenschools.ky.gov



Kids Corner



Don't forget plants and gardening just because there is snow covering the ground. There are many fun and educational activities that you can do with plants in your classroom to make the winter months go faster.

Recycle and Reuse. Many of the foods we eat will grow into a new plant after we have consumed the edible portion. Turn last night's dinner into classroom houseplants or encourage the students to eat healthy fruits and vegetables that will yield the plant parts that can develop and grow into new plants in your classroom. According to Millicent Selsam and Deborah Peterson, authors of *The Don't Throw it Grow It Book of Houseplants* (Random House, 1977. ISBN: 0394733088), the tops, seeds, and roots of many fresh fruits and vegetables will sprout and re-grow. This is an excellent opportunity to teach the children about plant parts and their function in the plant.



Avocado. Some of your student may not be familiar with an avocado. Select a soft, ripe avocado. Peel it and spread on saltine crackers and have them sample it. Show the children the size of the seed inside the fruit. The large size may surprise them. Wash the pit to remove the brown papery skin and any flesh residue. Poke three toothpicks evenly around the middle (equator) of the pit. Use those tooth picks to support the pit on the rim of a clear glass or plastic cup with the pointed end up. Fill the water so that the bottom third of the pit is covered in water. Place the clear glass in a bright, warm location, but out of direct sun. Change the water once a week. In a few weeks, the pit will split open, the roots will grow out the bottom, and a shoot will emerge from the top.

Sweet potato. Select a healthy sweet potato tuber, preferable one from a local gardener or one in which you can see some buds. Sometimes they are treated to prevent sprouting. Stick three toothpicks around the middle of the tuber and support them on the rim of a clear glass or plastic cup with the plumper or rounded side of the tuber facing up. Fill the glass with water so that the bottom of the tuber is in water. Change the water weekly and replenish what evaporates. The roots will develop on the tapering bottom end of the tuber and the stem and leaf buds develop at the top.

Carrot. Select fresh, large-sized carrots (not "baby" carrots) for this activity. Do not use those that are sold with the tops still on them. Remove the top two inches of the root (carrot) and enjoy eating the rest. Put a one-inch layer of pebbles or pea gravel in a saucer. Place the carrots on top of the gravel, cut-side down, and add more pebbles to hold them in place, leaving about an inch or two of the carrot root exposed above the pebbles. Space the carrots about two inches apart in the saucer. Add water to the top of the pebbles and maintain that water level at all times. The carrots will develop feathery green leaves that grow out the tops. They do not grow roots.

More information can be found at: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/GrowingintheGarden/kids.html>

~A Note from Kim~

Winter is the time for planning gardens and landscapes, studying garden seed and plant catalogs, and attending gardening classes and conferences! Planning is an essential part of successful gardening, so be sure to read, watch, and learn during the colder months to be ready for spring. Check out the calendar and web links for opportunities for learning in locations around the State or call the Extension Office for copies of schedules. Stay warm!

Kim



Kim Cowherd
CES agent for Horticulture

Useful Web Links



<http://www.ca.uky.edu/fruitfacts/index.htm> UK's Fruit Facts Newsletter- all about growing fruits and nuts

<http://www.ca.uky.edu/HLA/Dunwell/HortMemo.html> UK's Hort Memo Newsletters and list of commercial horticulture conferences and meetings

<http://westsidegardener.com/howto/hoophouse.html> How to build a hoop house for your garden- a great season extender

<http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Horticulture/wkgnewsletter.html> UK's West Ky Vegetable Growers Newsletter, great vegetable information for all Kentuckians

<http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/fruit/treeIndex.html> University of Illinois Tree Fruit basics

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Quibbles 'n' Bits

The greatest gift of a garden is the restoration of the five senses.

-Hanna Rion

The love of gardening is a seed that once sown, never dies.

-Gertrude Jekyll

If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant.

- Anne Bradstreet

We come from the earth, we return to the earth, and in between we garden.

- Author Unknown

Contact the Extension Office at 695-9035 if you would like to receive our newsletter via email or email requests to ann.gill@uky.edu or kim.cowherd@uky.edu

If you DO NOT want to receive this newsletter, please call the Extension Office, and let us know!

HAPPY NEW YEAR

A yellow starburst graphic with multiple points, positioned above the 'Y' in 'YEAR' and below the 'H' in 'HAPPY'.