



Titusville Garden Club Horticulture Report November 1, 2023

Watering schedule for Fall

Change your irrigation timer to only run once a week when we turn our clocks back one hour to get off daylight savings time. Lawns don't require as much water through the winter.

Odd numbered addresses should set the irrigation clock to run on Saturday and even numbered addresses should run on Sunday.

You Can Grow In November

Planting dates here are based on the University of Florida IFAS Extension, and you can find more information on that here: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/vh021>

Bedding Plants: Flowers that can be planted this month include alyssum, calendula, dianthus, dusty miller, geraniums, flowering tobacco, pansy, petunia, phlox, snapdragon, stock, viola, sweet peas and ornamental cabbage.

Bulbs: Many bulbs (such as crinum, amaryllis, and daylily) like to get their start in November's cool weather.

Herbs: chives, garlic chives, fennel, rosemary, sage, salad burnet, dill, oregano, parsley, lemon balm, lavenders (sweet, Spanish and French are your best bet), Mexican tarragon, chervil (this is a winter annual, so grow it now,) cilantro, sage and thyme.

Vegetables: include arugula, beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, Chinese cabbage, collards, endive/escarole, kale, kohlrabi, lettuce, mustard, bunching onions ((green and shallots), English or snow peas, Irish potatoes, radish, spinach, Swiss chard and turnips.

Fresh produce available in November

Avocados, bell peppers, cucumber, grapefruit, orange, tangerine and tomatoes.

Pruning: Wait to prune fruit trees and shrubs!

Don't prune temperate fruit trees, shrubs, and vines until they have shed all their leaves.

Make use of those raked leaves

Rake your leaves up and use them as mulch, add them to your compost pile or put them in your worm bin to increase the fungal component of the worm castings.

How to Get Fall Colors in Florida...

Chrysanthemums

We don't get much in the way of traditional fall displays from changing of the leaves here in Florida, so how can you bring those autumnal colors into your fall landscape? Mum's the word, chrysanthemums that is. Often shortened to mums, chrysanthemums (*Chrysanthemum x morifolium*) are popular and colorful perennials that come in many colors and a variety of sizes.

Characteristics

Mums are easy-to-grow, herbaceous perennials that can live for years and continue to bloom. Generally these plants grow to be about 6 inches tall although they can reach 2 feet in height when flowering. Mums form rounded mounds that, when in bloom, are just bursting with color. Not only do mums come in an array of colors, they also come in a variety of flower forms. The *single* flower form looks much like a daisy, while the *pompon* form has more of a globular shape. There is even a *spoon* flower form where the flower petals are tubular and flatten out at the tips, resembling many little spoons. Mums are great for mass plantings and cut flowers. As a bonus, the flowers attract butterflies.

Planting and Care

When buying potted chrysanthemums, shop for "garden mums," which are hardier than those labeled as "florist" mums. Look for healthy, well-shaped plants with many flower buds. The more buds you see on your plant the more blooms you will enjoy in your garden. Garden mums are cold hardy and prefer full sun, but can also thrive with just morning or afternoon sun. Mums grown in containers are a great way to brighten up a porch, patio, or front door.

Plant your garden mums in soil that's well drained and has been enriched with plenty of organic matter. Water as needed and apply a slow-release fertilizer. To maintain a compact, well-branched form, lightly prune your mums from late spring through mid-August if they grow more than 6 inches tall. Dead heading will encourage new blooms and keep the plant looking attractive and healthy.

Mums naturally set buds and flower fall through spring, when the days are short. But garden mums can be purchased blooming at any time. You can even spread the "mum love" around by propagating your plants, either by division or cuttings

Crotons

Known for their bold, tropical foliage, crotons are perennial evergreen shrubs. Not only can these plants be grown outdoors in warmer parts of Florida, but some cultivars can be raised as decorative houseplants as well. The beautiful leaves of the croton are also used to enhance floral arrangements. This plant will draw attention with its stunning color and make a bold statement in your house or yard.

Characteristics

Grown for their fantastically marked leaves; crotons (*Codiaeum variegatum*) come in a wide variety of leaf shapes and colors which include reds, oranges, yellows, pinks, purple, greens, and white. Native to India and Malaysia, this tropical plant usually quite full and the leaves form clusters to create maximum color patterns. This shrub can grow up to 10 feet tall, but there are both dwarf and larger varieties. Crotons are easy to propagate, and are reasonably priced.

Many crotons grow best in full sun, but many cultivars can tolerate, and even prefer, light shade partial shade. Crotons are best grown in subtropical South and Central Florida. Frosts or freezes will damage them, but they quickly recover. When

used outdoors this plant looks most attractive when grown in groups. Use them to accent green shrubbery and add a splash of color to any yard or container.

As houseplants, crotons add texture and color to dull interiors. When used indoors choose a cultivar such as the petra croton, that can remain brightly colored in indoor light conditions. Even these cultivars will eventually lose partial color if adequate light is not available. Keep children and pets from nibbling on crotons' leaves, as they're known to possess irritating and poisonous qualities. The sap from this plant is also known to stain.

Planting and Care

Croton shrubs can be purchased at most garden centers. If grown in containers, use a good quality potting media that provides adequate water drainage. When used in landscapes, plants should be located 2 to 3 feet apart. Crotons thrive in warm, humid weather and should be watered frequently, but not excessively. New foliage will wilt when thirsty, and can be used as a watering guide. Plants located indoors will become dusty in time and should occasionally be taken outside into a shady location to be washed off. This will also help manage spider mites which are occasional pests.

Again, bright sunlight will maximize croton colors, but overexposure can cause fading and restrict proper foliage growth. For outdoor crotons, full or shifting sun is ideal. Acclimated indoor plants respond well to partial sun and will still provide continuous color.

To propagate a croton plant, use a stem cutting that is 3-4 inches long and has 3 to 5 leaves. Dip the cut end of the cutting in an off-the-shelf rooting hormone and plant them in a small pot. Keep the soil moist, but not over watered. Cuttings will root in less than a month if temperatures stay between 70°-80°F. Transplant your new croton plant when a new roots system has have been established and there is noticeable new growth. New foliage will begin green and will develop color with maturity.

Crotons are usually pest and disease free, but can occasionally have mealybugs, scales, mites, thrip, and fungal problems. Keep a close eye on your plant and learn to recognize changes in leaf texture and insect residues.

References:

<https://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/ornamentals>

Sally Scalera For FLORIDA TODAY

Happy Fall You All! 😊