

Timely Turf Tips

October 2010

The Pepper Tasting Results are in! Thanks to all the patrons that came out for our first Pepper Tasting! Everyone had their favorite; however, out of the 32 pepper varieties that were sampled, these were ranked at the top of the class: Big Fresno, Big Bertha Red, and Doe Hill. Pepper plants are very easy to grow, offer high-yields, and are tolerant of a variety of sites. Look to purchase these pepper plants at the Mill next spring!

Lawn Care:

- Early October can still be an excellent time for controlling those pesky perennial broadleaf weeds such as dandelion and creeping Charlie. Best control with Weed Free Zone and/or Speed Zone is achieved when nighttime temperatures are above 45° F but less than 85° F during the day.
- As a general rule-of-thumb, it is best to avoid fertilizing during late September to mid-October. Succulent growth associated with higher nitrogen levels, can contribute to increased incidence of snow mold over winter.
- A late season application of nitrogen fertilizer should be put down late October. At this time of year, the nitrogen is taken up into the plant and stored in the crowns, rhizomes, or stolons where it can be quickly accessed next spring by the growing grass plant. It is often easy to tell which lawn has had a late season application of nitrogen as they will usually be noticed as the first lawns with healthy growth and a dark green color in early spring.
- Reducing mowing heights to 2.0 - 2.5 inches for the last two or three lawn mowings of the season.

Garden Tips:

- Plant spring-flowering bulbs outdoors before nasty weather makes the job too difficult.
- Keep Christmas cactus and potted azaleas outdoors until nights drop to the high 30's. Cold helps set flower buds and they'll bloom shortly after you bring them in to a bright location.
- Harvest homegrown pumpkins before frost.
- Remove plant debris once its frost damaged.
- As temperatures cool, Box Elder Bugs may cluster on the warm, sunny sides of buildings. Spraying them outdoors will reduce the number that come inside through cracks and become a nuisance indoors.

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