

*"Autumn is the mellow season, and what we lose in flowers, we more than gain in fruits."*

-Samuel Butler

# Kewaunee County Newsletter

SEPTEMBER — OCTOBER

## Saving and Harvesting Seeds

Summer is swiftly swirling away from us. Because of the excess heat and not much rain, plants, shrubs, and trees are stressed, not to mention humans! Getting into our gardens we have perennials literally speaking to us via their seeds. They are saying ... 'It is time'. Whenever walking past false indigo, the seed pods rattle to let one know the seeds are ready to harvest.

Collecting fall seeds is something a family can enjoy together. Saving seeds is a great way to teach kids and grandkids about sustainability and the cycle of life. Harvesting seeds in fall is a great way to save money and share seeds with family, friends, neighbors, and seed libraries. Remember, also, that the KC Garden Club could use seeds for the garden kits that are given to 'wanna-be' gardeners in the spring.

When seeds are ready the seed heads are brown and dry, or when pods are firm and dark, they are ready to harvest. If seeds are white and soft, they are not mature. Good flower seeds to harvest: asters, black-eyed Susan, California poppy, coreopsis, cosmos, Shasta daisy, echinacea, false indigo, marigold, nasturtium, sunflower, sweet pea, and zinnias.

Before plunging in, make sure that you take seeds from healthy plants as you don't want to pass on any diseases. You will need a pruner, small bucket with disinfectant, bags or envelopes (labeled) to keep the seeds separated. Store the seeds in a cool and dry location.

Good vegetable candidates for seed harvesting are heirloom tomatoes, beans, peas, peppers, and melons. These are 'wet seeds' so will need to go through a different process. Place the seeds in a jar with water, swish around, and then place jar in a cool location. Swish the mix each day for three or four days. Strain the mix through a fine mesh, leaving just the seeds. Rinse to wash away any remaining gel so just the seeds remain. Place seeds on paper toweling to dry, then package in paper bags or envelopes labeling them as you go.



*"I was drinking in the surrounding air so crisp, you could snap it with your fingers and greens in every lush shade imaginable offset by autumnal flashes of red and yellow."*

-Wendy Delsol



Simon  
and  
Amber  
  
Glen  
Innish  
Farm Tour

July 23, 2024



# Programs and Events

**Saturday and Sunday, September 20 and 21**—Ag Heritage Days, Luxemburg Fairgrounds.

**Tuesday, September 24**—'Steam Canning' with Mary Novak at Dana Farm, Kewaunee 6:30 p.m.

**Tuesday, October 22**— 'Maple Syrup Making' with Kathy Daul

**Tuesday, November 26**—'Kissing Balls' with Barb Smith and Barb Thompson, KC Highway Department, Kewaunee

**December**—KC Garden Club Christmas Party (*place, date, and time TBD*)

**Tuesday, January 28**—Warren Hingst, program presenter

**Tuesday, February 25**—'Invasive Plants' (*updated*) with Sue Hingst and Barbara Piechocki

*"It was a  
beautiful,  
bright  
autumn day,  
with air like  
cider and a  
sky so blue  
you could  
drown in it."*

*-Diana Gabaldon*

## Volunteers Needed

If you are not available to volunteer for the Ag Heritage Days event September 20 and 21, you are still invited to enjoy the festivities to support this special event. If you can help out, please contact Cheryl Eberle at (920) 487-3848 or [CME@oldorchardcattle.com](mailto:CME@oldorchardcattle.com)

## Pumpkins/Fairy Garden Needs

Once again, we are in need of small pumpkins for the kids to paint for Ag Heritage Days. It is an activity that goes over very well with the attendees. Even some of the parents get into it! If you don't grow your own, Hillside Orchards has small, pie pumpkins.

Another activity for kids is the favorite 'fairy garden'. If you have any miniature trinkets, appropriate for a fairy garden, bring them to the event. They will be appreciated!



# September 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20 <small>Ag Heritage Days</small>	21 <small>Ag Heritage Days</small>
22	23	24 <small>KC Garden Club</small>	25	26	27	28
29	30					

**September Program:** 'Steam Canning' with Mary Novak at Dana Farm 6:30 p.m.



- Peonies
- Bearded Iris
- Hostas
- Daylilies
- Sedum
- Black-Eyed Susan
- Oriental Poppies
- Phlox
- Shasta Daisy
- Asters

# Kitchen Fertilizers

Keep these in mind for fertilizing your plants (*indoor and outdoor*) ...

1. **Tea Bags:** It improves soil texture and helps the roots. Tea leaves make the soil porous and create a favorable environment for the growth of flowers. Tear open some tea bags and disperse the contents around the plants.
2. **Egg Shells:** Great calcium boost, speeds up the overall growth of plants and promotes bigger blooms. Eggshells strengthen the walls of plant cells and help them in resisting the entry of pathogens. The calcium content promotes healthy foliage and strengthens root systems. Crush eggshells and scatters them around the base of plants.
3. **Banana Peels:** Ripe banana peel decompose easily and rapidly releasing valuable minerals such as sulfur, calcium, potassium, magnesium, and trace elements into the soil. Grind 4-6 banana peels into a smooth paste using water and mix it in the soil.
4. **White or Apple Wine Vinegar:** Helps the plant to fight diseases. Vinegar lowers the pH of the soil. Keep in mind that vinegar lacks nutrients and adding it regularly in large amounts can have harmful effects on plants. Add 1 to 2 teaspoons of vinegar to a gallon of water. Use it on plants once every 2 to 3 months.
5. **Vegetable Cooking Water:** Instead of throwing vegetable cooking water, use it to fertilize plants. Do not add salt to the water which is harmful to plants. Cool down water before watering plants.
6. **Baking Soda:** Keeps plants safe from fungal diseases. Baking soda helps prevent downy mildew, black spot, and other fungal diseases. Mix 1 teaspoon and a few drops of liquid dish soap in a gallon of water. Mix well and spray the solution on the infected parts of the plant. It will keep the infection at bay, resulting in more flowers.  
  
Baking soda also helps keep pests away. Dish soap kills aphids, mealybugs, and mites by destroying their protective, waxy cover and leaves them vulnerable to weather effects. Add 1 to 2 teaspoons of dish soap to a gallon of water, then spray on the pests directly.
7. **Coffee Grounds:** Speed up the plant's growth by improving soil texture. Mix 3 to 4 teaspoons of coffee grounds in the soil. Alternately, mix 2 cups of coffee grounds into 2 gallons of water and water plant soil.
8. **Bone Meal:** Gives better growth and more flowers. Do not throw away the bones of chicken and meat the next time you cook them. They are an excellent organic feed for plants. It is a great source of phosphorus the helps plants bloom. It has an NPK ratio of 3-15-0. Grind the bones after boiling them to make a fine powder, toss a cup of the powder in the planting hole.

## **What You May Not Know About Pumpkins...**

1. Pumpkins originated in Central America.
2. A pumpkin is a fruit ... most people think of it as a vegetable.
3. Pumpkins are 90% water.
4. Pumpkins are grown all over the world on six of the seven continents, with Antarctica being the sole exception. They are even grown in Alaska!
5. Pumpkins were once recommended as a cure for freckles.
6. They were used as a remedy for snake bites.
7. Pumpkin seeds help avoid prostate cancer in men.
8. Halloween evolved, in part, from the Celtic tradition of All Hallow's Eve.
9. The largest pumpkin ever grown was over one ton.
10. The largest pumpkin pie weighed 3,699 pounds and was 20' in diameter.
11. Native Americans fed pumpkins to their horses.
12. Pumpkin flour can be used in place of wheat flour. It has many health and medicinal benefits.
13. Pumpkins are gluten-free.
14. At the first Thanksgiving feast in 1621, the pilgrims did not serve pumpkin pie. Rather, they made a stewed pumpkin.
15. Food manufacturers use tan-colored pumpkins to make pumpkin puree.

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		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	<b>22</b> KC Garden Club	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

**October Program:** 'Maple Syrup Making' with Kathy Daul

## October Gardening Chores

1. Refresh vegetable garden/raised beds
2. Clean out garden/beds—prevent pests and diseases to linger over winter.
3. Clean all garden tools and store until spring.
4. Add compost to beds or plant cover crops such as peas or clover.
5. Expand gardening area now so it's ready for spring planting!

**Officers:****President:** Tom Zenner**Vice President:** Cheryl Eberle**Secretary:** Sue Hepp**Treasurer:** Ann Brunner**Marketing Committee:**

Tom Zenner

Barb Smith

Cheryl Eberle

Nancy Lamack

Joel Weichelt



*"The leaves fall, the winds blow, and the country slowly changes from the summer cottons into its winter wools."*

- Henry Beston

## Propagation?



If seed saving isn't your thing, why not try propagation?

It is never too early to start new plants for the KC Garden Club spring plant sale. It is just a smart way to save certain plants to replant next spring. Fall propagation is best achieved after plants have finished blooming and are getting ready to store energy for the winter.

**Some plants to propagate:** coleus, rosemary and other herbs, geraniums, lavender, silver mound artemisia, roses, salvias, clematis, etc. **Shrubs:** Forsythia, viburnums, dogwood, and boxwood.

Early morning is the best time to take cuttings, because the plant is fully turgid. To prevent transmitting diseases from infected plant parts to healthy ones, dip the cutting tool into rubbing alcohol or a mixture of 1 part bleach to 9 parts water. Keep the cuttings cool and moist until they are prepared for rooting. Choose a healthy plant with soft new growth to trim for cuttings. Cut off an approximate 4" to 6" piece of each plant. Either place the cutting directly in water to root or into prepared soil in a pot. You eventually will be planting it in soil so it might be beneficial to place it directly in the soil. Insert the cuttings one-third to one-half their length into the soil. Then, cover the container with a plastic bag. Check every few days to see if it has rooted. If the cutting stays secure when you give it a gently tug, it is starting to root. Once it is rooted, take off the plastic bag and place the container in a sunny spot. Water as needed.