

## President's Corner – September 2022

The nights are getting cooler and the days, shorter. So, we know that summer is almost over. The question is what do we do in the garden now?

There are lots of tasks to perform to assure you get a healthy lawn and garden next year. I've listed just a few of these here.

The **Missouri Botanical Garden (MBG)** suggest you begin fall seeding or sodding of cool-season grasses (Kentucky bluegrass, fine, tall and creeping fescue, and annual and perennial ryegrass). Seedbeds should be raked, dethatched or core-aerified, fertilized and seeded. Don't forget to keep your newly planted lawn areas moist, but not wet. It is also time to fertilize your existing cool-season lawns. **MBG** also suggests you can make up to 3 applications between now and December. Continue planting evergreens now. If soils become dry, established lawns should be watered thoroughly to a depth of 4-6 inches.

As for annuals, they suggest cuttings can be taken now to provide vigorous plants for overwintering. And you can overwinter your herbs (parsley, rosemary, chives, thyme, and marjoram) by digging them from the garden and putting them in pots to grow indoors this winter.

Except for tulips, you can plant spring bulbs when they are available. Wait until late October to plant tulips, and make certain you keep them in a cool, dark place until you are ready to put them in the ground.

It's also time to think about bringing houseplants indoors—they should be brought in at least a month before you turn your heat on. The best way to assure you are bringing in healthy houseplants is to prune extensive growth and any roots that are protruding. Check for pests and treat if necessary. An easy, first step to assuring no pests are brought in is just spraying plants with water. The **University of Minnesota Extension** suggests picking off any debris you find on the soil surface such as old leaves, spent blossoms, etc. to discourage any insects.

Perennials, especially spring bloomers, can be divided now. Enrich the soil with peat moss or compost before replanting. Also, divide peonies now. Replant in a sunny site and avoid planting deeply. Autumn is a good time to add manure, compost, or leaf mold to garden soils for increasing organic matter content.

Some virtual programs that may be of interest to you are:

September 14, 2p.m. – 3 p.m. Season extension and winter gardening will be presented on-line by **Seed St. Louis** through the **St. Louis County library**. You can register here: <https://slcl.evanced.info/signup/EventDetails?EventId=298265>

September 24 – 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. There will be an Autumn Plant Swap at the **Oak Bend Branch** of the **St. Louis County Library**. Bring your plants, seeds, bulbs, tools, books, and other gardening supplies to swap with fellow gardeners. Plants should be divided, brought in containers, and labeled. U. of Illinois Extension: Dahlias: Digging, Dividing, and Diseases

September 27 - 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Dahlias: Digging, Dividing & Diseases. Presented by the **University of Illinois Extension**. Register at: <https://web.extension.illinois.edu/registration/?RegistrationID=26177>