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Gardener's Corner, October 2023

It's time to ready the garden for winter. There are many tasks that must be accomplished to make sure you get a good start next spring.

A very timely article entitled *A Successful Spring Garden* appeared in the **Washington Post** on September 28, 2023. The article identifies 7 helpful steps for you to follow. These include:

1. Remove diseased material. They suggest you clean up leaves, branches, and seed pods on the ground to keep them from infecting them as winter brings rain and snow.
2. Check trees for disease and cut back dead branches to the branch collar.
3. Pull blooming weeds to remove them before they go to seed. This will help you with maintenance in the spring.
4. Don't forget to mulch. A couple inches of mulch, either regular or disease-free leaves, will do the job.
5. Fill in bare spots in the garden so that in the spring there is less chance the weeds will take over. You may be able to find plants at bargain prices now that will fill in the gaps.
6. Now is the time to spread grass seed. As noted in the Missouri Botanical Garden (MBG) Tips and Tasks, below, the type of lawn you have will dictate which grasses should be spread.
7. Protect your spigots and don't forget to drain your hoses.

Above all, clean your tools (loppers, trowels, pruners, rakes, etc.) with isopropyl alcohol. This will help to prevent the spread of disease as you prepare the garden for winter.

Tips and tasks from the **Missouri Botanical Garden** include continuing to plant evergreens. Some herbs (parsley, rosemary, chives, thyme, chives and marjoram) can be dug and planted in pots for inside winter growing. Perennials can be divided now as can peonies. Remember to enrich the soil with compost before replanting.

As for grass, cool-season lawns are best fertilized in fall. Also, thoroughly water established lawns if soil is too dry. If you reseed your lawn, don't cut it until the grass is at least 2 or 3 inches tall.

For more information on what to plant now, Garden Design has an article entitled, *What to Plant in Your Fall Garden*. You can find it here:

https://www.gardendesign.com/autumn/planting.html?utm_source=article-newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Fall-Planting-9-28-23

There is an online program and in person programs of interest this month. They include:

Thursday, October 12 – 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. *Container Gardening* offered by **Seed St. Louis** through the **St. Louis County Library**. Register at: <https://slcl.evanced.info/signup/EventDetails?EventId=339253>

The **St. Louis Herb Society** will present a program on *Indigenous Use of Native Plants*, 3 different times at the **St. Louis County Library** Florissant Valley Branch, 195 New Florissant Road. These will be on:

Wednesday, October 18 – 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday, October 18 – 2:00 p.m. and

Thursday, October 19 – 10:00 a.m.