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What's Growin' On?: Get Prepped for Fall

-Ashley Tullis, USU-Iron County Staff Assistant & USU Extension Master Gardener

The cold snap that hit our area a few days ago should have served as a good reminder that our average first frost (October 5) is right around the corner! Here are some tips to consider for keeping your yard and garden in check and prepped for the colder months:

- Consider adding a smaller structure such as a low tunnel or a larger high tunnel to extend your growing season
- Plant garlic cloves from mid-October through early November
- Remove vegetable plants from the garden once harvest is complete to reduce overwintering sites for insect pests
- Protect tomatoes from early frost by covering the plants with a blanket or tarp
- Overwinter carrots, beets and parsnips in ground, by placing mulch over them. This prevents the ground from freezing
- Rototill leaves, compost and/or manure into the vegetable garden to enhance the soil microbe activity
- Limit pruning of roses to the heading back of excessively long canes to prevent damage from heavy snow loads
- Cut back ornamental grasses in snow prone areas once the foliage has dried down, otherwise leave them until spring and enjoy the vertical accent during winter
- Plant spring blooming bulbs through early November
- Fall is the best time to control tough perennial weeds such as field bindweed (aka morning glory)



Want more tips? Visit <https://extension.usu.edu/yardandgarden/> for more yard and garden information or to enroll in any of the online gardening courses offered through USU Extension.

KATHY'S CORNER

JUST A QUICK NOTE

If someone asked you what the best part going through a pandemic has been for you, how would you respond? There is certainly plenty to complain about or basis to feel a sense fear of the unknown but is there some sort of silver lining?

Go ahead and brainstorm- I dare you to find some good this forced change has brought upon you and your family. Whether it's a greater appreciation for what was once taken for granted, or having time to connect as a family; perhaps you've discovered a new hobby or gained additional technology prowess, things will get better.

While it may seem like "Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day," we as a human family are resilient.

All the best to you and yours-



Kathleen (Kathy) Riggs, Professor
USU Extension, Iron County
Family and consumer Sciences/4- Youth

✓ CHECK IT OUT

Don't forget the Clear Jel® -

Clear Jel® is the USDA approved thickening agent for canned pie filling. You can purchase a bag containing enough of the product (2 1/3 Cups) to make 7 quarts of pie filling for \$3.00 per bag from the county Extension Office. If you are fortunate to have a supply of peaches, raspberries, or apples, you'll love the home preserved pie filling using Clear Jel®.

OTHER GREAT READS INSIDE:

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LOOK WHAT'S COMING

USU Extension is promoting seasonal tips and "how to" information on their website. Currently, the emphasis is on Emergency Preparedness. For the latest research-based information see:

- <https://extension.usu.edu/preparedness/index>

Also available are topics from July/August related to home food preservation. The direct link is:

- <https://extension.usu.edu/preserve-the-harvest/canning>

All areas to explore with many great resources from Extension's home page (<https://extension.usu.edu>) include:

- Agriculture & Natural Resources
- Business & Community
- Food, Health & Wellness-Gardening
- Home, Finance & Relationships
- Utah 4-H & Youth

National Do Something Nice Day

October 5th (Monday, this year) is dedicated to being generous- Perhaps changing the course of a person's day by being nice. This can be accomplished in words or actions. Make a point to simply open a door for someone or send flowers; give an honest compliment or listen to someone who needs a listening ear.

THANK YOU NOTES- A THING OF THE PAST?

In this day of high tech social media and speedy text messaging, it's easy to forget common courtesies. One of those courtesies is to actually take time to write out and send (Yes, I'm talking "snail mail" here) a hand-written thank you note.

While it may seem like a chore to some, a written note is actually an opportunity to make the gift-giver feel appreciated.

For those who may join in believing this is a worthwhile practice, consider these tips:

Write immediately. Thank you notes become more difficult to write with each passing day. If you anticipate receiving gifts or service, be prepared with note cards, stamps, and even some well-thought-out sentiments.

Write by hand. This method of expressing your thoughts is preferred unless your hand-writing is absolutely atrocious. Send something printed off, if necessary.

Never begin with "Thank you for...." Start with some personal news or reference to the event or visit.

Always mention the gift by name. "Thank you for the gift" maybe hand-written but it does not show any acknowledgement of what was given. Always mention special moments. If you are thanking a host who let you stay with them, mention you are grateful for their hospitality and then name at least one specific item that made it special for you (best breakfast ever, relaxing atmosphere, etc.)

Don't spoil your thanks with a lame statement. Not every gift will be to your liking. There is no benefit that comes from sounding ungrateful and making the giver feel unappreciated.



Source: "How Rude! By Alex J. Packer, PhD.

WHEN SOMEONE HURTS YOU (VERBALLY OR EMOTIONALLY)

The first governor of Utah, Brigham Young, is credited with stating:

He who takes offense when no offense is intended is a fool and he who takes offense when offense is intended is a greater fool.

While many times it is a lesser person who intends to verbally injure or offend another, sometimes the intended target/person, needs some reference points to help him or her deal with the offense in a new more effective way to avoid triggering a negative reaction.

Dr. Gregory L. Jantz, PhD posted the following tips in Psychology Today

(<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/hope-relationships/201602/9-ways-respond-when-someone-hurts-you>)

1. Recognize the offense for what it is- Is it intentional? A misunderstanding?
2. Resist the tendency to defend your position. If you must defend your point of view, do so without sounding defensive or hostile.
3. Give up the need to be right. Sometimes you just disagree with another person- no one is right or wrong.
4. Recognize and apologize for anything you may have done to contribute to the situation. However, don't assume responsibility for past behaviors that were previously resolved. Be in the present.
5. Respond, don't react. This action will require you to pause long enough to think and evaluate the situation. Someone may be "pressing your buttons" but recognizing that is what may be occurring can help form a more proactive response.
6. Adopt an attitude of bridge-building as opposed to attacking or retreating. Strive to keep the door to reconciliation open.
7. Realize that you may be the target of someone's anger but not the source of it. You may simply be the scape goat that set someone off.
8. Create personal limits. You have the right to define what your limits are- and insist they be respected.
9. Realize that even if someone has hurt you, that need not take away your personal happiness.

HOME CANNING FAQ'S

Q. Is Monk fruit an acceptable natural sugar?

A. The sweetness of monk fruit does not come from the traditional fructose sugar molecule in the fruit...the monk fruit sweetener chemicals are extracted from the monk fruit and then blended with something to bulk it up. So, each product might be different regarding pH and pH buffering capacity. For now, safest is to measure pH after addition of it to a recipe. We realize that this is not something most home canners have the tools to do, so for now, it is best not to use monk fruit in home canning.

Q. Why should jars be stored without the screw bands?

A. Storing without screw bands does a few things, including allowing you to clean the food gunk from under the screw band. Also, if the lid ever comes unsealed, storing without the screw band can help you notice better if the seal failed (no screw band to hold a false seal in place). Also, storing without bands is recommended since if there is any moisture underneath, the rings will rust.

Q. When the jar doesn't seal within an hour or two, is it appropriate to turn it upside down to encourage the sealing to take place?

A. No, this is not a safe practice and turning the jars upside down may not provide a good vacuum seal. Sometimes it takes a few hours to seal. Wait patiently for the natural vacuum seal to happen. If it isn't sealed after 12-24 hours—reprocess or freeze. (Depending on the food.)

Q. Can I use less lemon juice or citric acid in my salsa if it is pressure canned?

A. The processing times listed for pressure canning salsa in the guides assumes you are using the recommended amount of added acid. So, no, less acid is not an option. You can always add sugar or more salt or spices when you prepare the foods using those tomatoes/tomato products. If you also don't want to acidify you can always freeze. Cooked salsas freeze great.

CASE LOT SALES- IS THIS A GOOD TIME TO BUY

September is a typical time of year to see many grocery stores/supermarkets advertising case lot sales. Before you participate in these sales, consider:

- How much can I afford to spend? If you have only budgeted \$30 toward bulk or case lot sales, stay within your means.
- Are other stores also having case lot sales? If so, compare prices.
- Take inventory of current supplies & make a list of what you need before you step inside the store.
- Only buy what you will use. If the price is listed for a case but you will only use ½ case, get a store clerk/worker to divide the box for you.
- Ignore other sales for items you do not use or seldom use. This will cut down on eventual waste.
- Where will you store what you buy? Do you have space?
- If you see baking items included in September sales, keep in mind that flour, sugar, spices, and more will also be on sale for the holiday season.

5 COVID-19 SCAMS AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT THEM

SCAM 1- Undelivered Goods- Stick to sites you know and trust. Watch for "https" when checking out along with the padlock symbol.

SCAM 2- Fake Charities- You can find your state charity regulator at www.nasconet.org

SCAM 3- Fake Emails, Texts, and Phishing. Do not reply or provide personal information- do use authentication software.

SCAM 4- Robocalls- Don't recognize the number or feel uncomfortable with the person on the other end of the line? Hang up!

SCAM 5- Misinformation and Rumors. Do not believe everything you hear or read on social media! Use trusted sources.

<https://utahmoneymoms.com>, Amanda Christensen

