Hello Fellow Gardeners! You are receiving this email because you have provided us with your email address either when subscribing to our quarterly newsletter, having your soil analyzed, or testing the horticultural prowess and investigative abilities of our incredibly well-versed staff at the UConn Home & Garden Education Center! Or, we just might have thought you would enjoy this e-newsletter. If you do not wish to receive our monthly email updates on gardening tips, pest problems, events and other information, please email us at ladybug@uconn.edu and ask to be removed from this list.

Pest Patrol/Current Concerns/Topics of Interest:

**Brown Lawns Due to Drought**

According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, we are about 50% below our normal precipitation for August. So far, September offers little reprieve. Fair skies in the forecast with a chance of thunderstorms later this week. What to do about the lawn and gardens? This may depend on whether the water is from a well or municipal source as well as the cost. It probably makes more sense to water the plants you value most. For some it may be gardens, for others lawns. Check out this fact sheet from UConn Turf Professor, Dr. Karl Guillard on watering lawns: http://www.ctiwr.uconn.edu/DroughtArticles/Guillard.htm

**Powdery Mildew on Squash**

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**Powdery Mildew on Squash**
According to plant pathologist, Joan Allen who runs the UConn Plant Diagnostic Lab, “Powdery mildew is a very common and damaging disease of cucurbit crops. As powdery mildew progresses, covering both upper and lower leaf surfaces with a white powdery growth, photosynthesis is reduced, impairing growth and reducing yield. Plants typically become infected around the time fruit begins to form and mostly on the older leaves. The powdery mildew that affects cucurbits is not the same fungus that causes powdery mildew on other, unrelated, plants. Disease is favored by warm temperatures and high humidity. Promote good airflow around plants to reduce humidity using ample plant spacing or vertical supports for vines. Spores are wind-borne and can travel long distances so crop rotation is not effective in this case.”

“Good scouting for those first small white spots will alert you that it’s time to apply preventive fungicides. There are a variety of active ingredients available including organic options such as biological fungicides (Bacillus subtilis QST 713), potassium bicarbonate, copper, or wettable sulfur. Conventional fungicides include chlorothalonil and others. These are preventive and must be used to protect plants, not as a curative solution. An alternative and effective solution is to look for powdery mildew resistant varieties for your garden.”

**Good Year for Peaches!**
Despite the drier conditions, 2015 has been a banner year for peaches. Many homeowners choose to grow ‘Reliance’ because this cultivar does reliably produce a bumper crop of fruit. According to UConn Fruit Extension Educator, Mary Concklin, other varieties for home owners to consider include Hale Haven, Red Haven, Sun Haven, Crest Haven, Garnet Beauty, Polly and Dwarf Alberta. One tree can easily provide enough peaches to can, make into jams, pies, cobblers and even to give away. Of all the fruit trees, peaches seem to produce even with no or few insect/disease sprays. Just give them sunlight, water and a bit of fertilizer. For information on growing peaches, check out: [http://www.ladybug.uconn.edu/reallypeaches.htm](http://www.ladybug.uconn.edu/reallypeaches.htm)

**Good Bug? Bad Bug?**
Vegetable Extension Specialist Jude Boucher sent this picture to Dr. Dave Wagner, a Lepidoptera specialist in the EEB Department at UConn who identified this hornworm as a white-lined sphinx moth larva. According to Jude, “It tends to feed on the understory of weeds, especially portulaca, commonly known as purslane. The books say that growers often mistake it for feeding on their crop plants, but it usually doesn’t do that unless all the weeds (its usual food source) are removed. I spent some time looking to see if this pest was feeding on carrots and hiding in the soil, as Jonathan’s workers had reported while pulling weeds, or if it was actually up on the weeds feeding. We only found it feeding on purslane, not on carrots. So far, it is not a pest.”

**News from the UConn Plant Diagnostic Lab**

Bacterial canker, a serious disease of tomato, has been confirmed on pepper for the first time this summer in some northeastern states, including Connecticut. Symptoms include large dark spots or lesions on leaves, dark stem lesions and raised fruit spots with distinctive white haloes (similar to tomato). The pathogen, *Clavibacter michiganensis* pv. *michiganensis*, can survive in plant debris in the soil and can be seed-borne.

![Image of pepper with bacterial canker symptoms](image.png)

Other items that the Center is getting calls or emails on include downy mildew on cucurbits, water testing, how to get rid of crabgrass, yellow jackets, garden cleanup and leaf-footed bugs. If you have specific questions, gardening queries or pest problems, check out our website, [www.ladybug.uconn.edu](http://www.ladybug.uconn.edu) or call the UConn Home & Garden Education Center (877) 486-6271 (toll-free in CT). You can reach us by email at [ladybug@uconn.edu](mailto:ladybug@uconn.edu). Your County Cooperative Extension Centers are also listed on the website.

**CT 10% Campaign: Take the pledge!**

Pledge to spend 10% of your food dollars locally at [http://www.buyctgrown.com/ct-10-percent](http://www.buyctgrown.com/ct-10-percent). Locally grown food sustains CT’s farming community but more importantly, locally grown and raised food will also increase food security in our Northeast region and support local economies.

**LET’S CELEBRATE! 2015 is the INTERNATIONAL YEAR of SOILS**
Watch the International Year of Soils: Soils Protect the Natural Environment

Which soil is under your feet? Well, that depends on where you are. But no matter where you live, soils protect the natural environment around you. No matter where you live, there is soil under you. And, it is a resource we need to protect, because soils sustain life.

Download our September Soils Protect the Natural Environment video - it's also excellent for use in classrooms and any other event/activity that will benefit from video! You can also view it directly on YouTube. Feel free to share widely!

Learn more about International Year of Soils at www.soils.org/IYS

“Each soil has its own history. Like a river, a mountain, a forest, or any natural thing, its present condition is due to the influences of many things and events of the past.” -Charles Kellogg, The Soils That Support Us, 1956

Like the UConn Soil Testing Lab on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/pages/UCONN-Soil-Nutrient-Analysis-Laboratory/111473772212603

Ten Tips for the September Gardener:

1. Remove bagworm egg masses from evergreen shrubs to eliminate the spring hatch from over-wintered eggs.
2. If rain is lacking, continue to thoroughly water trees, shrubs, planting beds, and lawn areas. It is especially important to keep newly planted evergreens watered.
3. Plant shallots and garlic outdoors.
4. Use a mulching blade to finely chop fallen leaves and let them decompose on the lawn. Core aerate to reduce thatch on lawns.
5. Limit herbaceous plant material located a few feet away from the house to eliminate hiding places for insects and mice that could wind up indoors as temperatures plummet.
6. Beets, parsnips, and carrots can be covered with a thick layer of straw or leaves and left in the ground for harvest, as needed, during the winter. This may not be an option in areas with heavy vole populations.
7. Avoid the spring rush and have your soil tested now by the UConn Soil Nutrient Analysis Laboratory (www.soiltest.uconn.edu). Incorporate recommended amounts of limestone and fertilizers into the vegetable and flower gardens for next year’s growing season.
8. As tomatoes end their production, cut down plants, pick up any debris and put dead/diseased plant parts in the trash or take to a landfill. Many diseases will over-winter on old infected leaves and stems so these are best removed from the property.
9. Weed and mulch perennial beds using a loose organic material such as bark chips or leaves to keep down weeds, preserve moisture, and give roots a longer time to grow before the soil freezes.
10. Outwit hungry squirrels and chipmunks by planting bulbs in established groundcovers. Lift and store tender bulbs, i.e., cannas, dahlias and gladiolus after first frost.

Events/Programs/Save the Dates:
UConn 2015 Master Composter Program

Almost 25% of household waste can be recycled through composting. The purpose of the Master Composter program is to educate and train residents about the basics of small scale composting and in exchange for the training, volunteers will pass on their knowledge to others through outreach activities such as talks, demonstrations, tabling at events, providing promotional activities, working with schools or community gardens etc. Master Composter classes will be held at the Middlesex County Cooperative Extension Center in Haddam. There will be 4 week night lectures, Worm Day and 2 Saturday field trips with only one being mandatory. The cost of the program is $100. The Master Composter brochure with registration information is available at www.ladybug.uconn.edu or call (860) 486-4274 for more information.

Worm Day, Saturday October 10th

Curious about earthworms? Want to learn more about the invasive ones that are creating havoc in our forested ecosystems as well as in some folks’ lawns and gardens? Would you like to explore vermicomposting? Participants can leave with their very own worm bin. Go to www.ladybug.uconn.edu for more information and registration.
Cornucopia
Join us Sunday, October 4th at the UConn Storrs campus for Cornucopia, a free festival showcasing the College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources. Find out about the programs, opportunities and research-based information the College has to offer. Be sure to bring ½ cup of soil for a free pH test. Horticulturists will be on hand to answer your garden and pest questions. Learn about the UConn Master Composter program and much, much more. Look for information on the UConn website soon.

UConn Blooms’ Hardy Garden Mum Sale!
UConn Blooms has spectacular hardy garden mums grown right here on the UConn Campus. Bronze, white, yellow and rust bring all the colors of late summer and fall to your office, home or garden. These plants average about 75 flowers per plant, 20 inches high and 20 inches wide. Decorate your table, place them on your steps or deck at home, put in the foyer of your office - they just shout out Autumn. These large plants are $7.99 each, 2 for $15.00, 3 for $21.00, 5 or more at $6.50 each, and 10 or more at $5.99 each. Call us at 860-486-6000 to reserve your plants now. Limited quantities available!

Our UConnBlooms' greenhouses are stocked with tropical houseplants to decorate your office or home. From shade loving, to sun loving, our plants can accommodate any environment. Our cooler is full of beautiful fresh cut flowers to bring a smile to anyone's face. Surprise a friend with a beautiful arrangement or just a simple rose bud vase to celebrate a birthday, anniversary, good bye, or just a simple thank you!

UConn Blooms is located in the Floriculture Building on Route 195 (1395 Storrs Road) across from the yellow barn. Parking is available alongside our greenhouses in the driveway. We are open from 10:30 to 5:00 Monday through Friday and we will deliver on campus. Call us at 860-486-6000 to order early. Look for us online at https://web9.uits.uconn.edu/uconnblooms/ or email uconnblooms@uconn.edu.

CT Hort Society’s Plant Sale & Fall Auction
Friday Sept. 25 at 7 pm at the Tolland County Agricultural Center in Vernon www.cthort.org.

Garden Master Classes (open to all, fee, http://mastergardener.uconn.edu/)

The Art and Practice of Saving Seeds Wednesday, Sept 30, 2015 from 10 am to 1 pm. Bartlett Arboretum, Stamford, CT. Deadline for Registration: Sept. 23. Instructor: Shanyn Siegel

Grow Your Own Meadow Thursday, Sept 24, 2015 from 3 to 5 pm. Windham County Extension Center. Deadline for registration: Sept. 17. Instructor: Kathy Connolly

**Hardy Japanese Maples** Wednesday, Sept 30, 2015 from 6 to 8 pm. Tolland County Extension Center. Deadline for registration: Sept. 23. Instructor: Kevin Wilcox

**I Like It, I Love It and Deer Don’t Eat It** Saturday, Oct 3, 2015 from 10 am to noon. Litchfield County Extension Center. Deadline for registration: Sept. 25. Instructor: Adam Wheeler

**Lawns Into Meadows** Monday, Oct 5, 2015 from 6 to 8 pm. Tolland County Extension Center. Deadline for registration: Sept. 28. Instructor: Judith Dryer

**RI 2015 Native Plant Symposium**

Saturday, September 19, 2015 | 9:00 am to 5:00 pm
Brown University | Providence, RI

The Rhode Island Wild Plant Society invites nursery and landscape industry professionals, landscape architects, ecologists, land managers, and plant enthusiasts to attend a day-long conference: *Growing Awareness: planting biodiverse + resilient landscapes* on Saturday, September 19th, 2015 at Brown University in Providence.

Native plants provide the landscape with a sense of place. Over thousands of years these plants have adapted to the local conditions - in sync with the needs of local wildlife with which they have co-evolved.

- Learn the importance of collecting, saving, and propagating genetically diverse local seed to create biodiverse and resilient landscapes.
- Using native plant communities as a model, explore the intersection of ecology and traditional horticulture with design examples from late 19c practitioners to today.
- Discover techniques to help your landscape expand and thrive using existing plant material as the source.
- Hear regional panelists share the rewards, and respond to the challenges, of propagating locally native plants for conservation and design.

Consider native plants from a new perspective.

Register Now: [RIWPS.org](http://RIWPS.org)
KNOWLEDGE TO GROW ON!

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Spice of Life?


Want to Lower Your Blood Pressure? Try Blueberries

How clean is your spinach?

CLIMATE CORNER

Wicked Winter Coming This Way Says Latest Farmer’s Almanac

End-of-century Manhattan climate index to resemble Oklahoma City today

WHO KNEW?

Chinese corn spies hit Iowa


http://www.fix.com/blog/health-benefits-of-gardening/

Pesticides: More toxic than previously thought? (to jumping spiders)

Plastic in 99 percent of seabirds by 2050
Insecticides Similar to Nicotine Found in about Half of Sampled Streams across the United States [link](http://www.usgs.gov/newsroom/article.asp?ID=4300#.Vd0YvtGh3lX)

UCONN SUSTAINABLE LIVING WEBSITE: [link](www.sustainableliving.uconn.edu)

UCONN EXTENSION WEBSITE: [link](www.extension.uconn.edu)

UCONN FOOD SAFETY WEBSITE: [link](www.foodsafety.uconn.edu)

ROYAL RED SALVIA

With all this heat and dry weather, it’s great to find a plant with vibrant red blooms that is resistant to deer and attracts hummingbirds and pollinators. ‘Windwalker Royal Red’ is hardy from zones 5 to 9 and blooms from summer into fall. The plants grow 40 to 50 inches tall and are drought tolerant once established.

Photo from Plant Select.

We Need Your Support!

If you enjoy our efforts to keep you informed about horticultural and College-related items, please consider showing your support by liking us on Facebook [link](https://www.facebook.com/pages/UConn-Home-Garden-Center/136211899745967), checking out our weekly blog [link](www.uconnladybug.wordpress.com), or SUBSCRIBING TO OUR PRINTED, 20-PAGE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR $10/YEAR. Find the subscription form at [link](http://www.ladybug.uconn.edu/newsletter/index.html)

THANK YOU LOYAL READERS – PLEASE SHARE WITH YOUR FRIENDS!!

“An equal opportunity and program provider”

September 2015, DMP