



## Black Creek Garden Resource Network 2017

### **Fall Garden Clean Up Tasks, Preparing Your Garden for Winter**

#### **CHECK LIST:**

##### **RECORD KEEPING**

- 1) Draw a map of your garden, including where you planted each type of vegetable. The more detailed the better, but even a rough map is better than nothing. This map will help you plan your garden and crop rotation next spring by reminding you where things were planted this year, so that you DON'T plant in the same spot. (Reminder: crop rotation means each season, not planting the same plants in the same spot, rotating your vegetable locations throughout the garden, to avoid pests, diseases, and nutrient deficiencies)
- 2) Jot down any important notes from the season (if you didn't keep a garden journal throughout the season). What worked well? What didn't? What questions do you have? Winter is a good time to research, read, and gather new information to improve your knowledge and skills for next season.

##### **SEEDS**

- 1) Store seeds in a dry and tightly sealed container. Best is glass jar. Next best option is ziplock bag or wrap up and seal your seed packs in plastic bags with tape.
- 2) Store the container or package in a cool, DRY, and dark place. Eg: freezer or fridge (only if your packages or containers are tightly sealed to prevent humidity. Or place in a dark drawer or closet in your house.

- 3) Keep it at the same temperature. Do not take the seeds in and out of storage until you are ready to use them in the spring.

## **PLANTS**

- 1) Root vegetables & cold hardy vegetables (carrots, garlic, leeks, parsnips, radishes, turnips, kale, cabbage, mustards, arugula) can be left in the ground until the first frost. After this, harvest and clear these plants out of the space. (Optional: mulch root crops for winter harvest)
- 2) Herbs & perennials - see preparing herbs for winter guide below. Look up info for specific perennials.
- 3) Remove tomato, squash, pea, beans, and all other plants not listed above. If they're disease-free, compost them. If any are diseased, either burn them or discard separately. Clean and put away the stakes in a cool dry place.
- 4) Before the ground gets too hard, remove all weeds and debris. This gets rid of over-wintering sites for insects and disease.

## **ALL THINGS SOIL-RELATED: SOIL ORGANISMS, COMPOST & MULCHING**

- 1) Gently till the soil to expose any insects that might overwinter underground; this will reduce pest troubles in the spring and summer. ("Gentle tilling" can be lightly disturbing the soil with a hoe, shovel, fork. Use these tools to loosen and stir up the top 3 to 6 inches of soil).
- 2) Once most of the garden soil is exposed, add a layer of compost, leaves, manure (if you have it), and lime (if you need it). Gently mix into the top 6 to 8 inches of soil.
- 3) Option to cover the soil over the winter to reduce spring weeds from sprouting up. You can cover your growing area with black plastic or a layer of cardboard or a thick layer of fall leaves or straw.
- 4) When adding vegetable plants residue from the garden to your compost pile, break down the plants if possible. This will speed up decomposition. Try to have 2 parts green (fresh leaves, and other green materials) and 1 part brown (twigs, dried up plant matter) in your compost for effective decomposing ratio. DO NOT add any diseased plants into your compost. You risk building up unwanted

diseases in your final compost and spreading that in your later next season.

Discard diseased plant matter separately, away from your garden.

## **TOOLS**

- 1) Clean, sharpen, and put away all tools in a cool and dry area. You can also oil any metal tools with vegetable oil to avoid rust.
- 2) Repair broken tools so they're ready to go in the spring.

## **OTHER TASKS**

*(from: <https://www.almanac.com/content/preparing-your-garden-winter>)*

- 1) Empty all of your outdoor containers to keep them from cracking during the winter. Store them upside down.
- 2) On a mild day, run your garden hose up over a railing or over the shed to remove all the water. Then roll it up and put it away.
- 3) Don't leave fallen leaves on the lawn. Rake onto a large sheet or tarp, then drag to your compost pile in thin layers mixed with old hay and other material. Or, rake the leaves into loose piles and run the mower over them to turn them into mulch for perennial and bulb beds.
- 4) Cover your compost pile with plastic or a thick layer of straw before snow falls.

## **PREPARING HERBS FOR WINTER**

*(from: <https://www.almanac.com/content/preparing-your-garden-winter>)*

- Sage is a perennial in most areas and does not need special treatment for the winter. Before frost stops its growth, cut a branch or two to dry and use in stuffing at Thanksgiving!
- Rosemary is a tender evergreen perennial that should be sheltered or potted up and brought inside for the winter.
- Thyme is fairly tough. A perennial, it will go dormant in the fall, then revive by itself in the spring.
- Parsley, a biennial, will withstand a light frost. Cover it on cold nights. It has a long taproot and does not transplant well.
- Chives are hardy perennials. Dig up a clump and pot it, then let the foliage die down and freeze for several weeks. Bring the pot indoors to a sunny, cool spot.

Water well and harvest chives throughout the winter. Then you can replant it in the spring.

## **PREPARING STRAWBERRIES FOR WINTER**

- Cover [strawberry](#) beds with straw or hay.