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Fall Veggies

Ideas for the Fall Vegetable Gardener

By Ami Dorn,
Behnke Staff



With your summer vegetable garden still going strong, it's now time to begin your fall plantings, to continue the harvest into the cooler months.

Perhaps you have used all available space for your initial spring/summer planting, so what can you do? Make intense use of your space. Bush beans, lettuce, peas, radishes, and cucumbers, for example, may be harvested fairly early in the summer season, yielding space for something else to be started (including more bush beans, cucumbers or other heat-tolerant vegetables). This is called "succession planting;" that is, never letting garden space go fallow (unused) while another crop could be growing and making food for you. Continue this into fall, with the introduction of cool-season vegetables that tolerate colder temperatures and shorter days.

Consider micro-managing the garden space. Even if you harvest cabbage or broccoli plants one at a time, you have enough

room to add a new transplant. Be sure to add soil amendments and fertilizer to the soil before putting in another crop.

Why should you bother? Price increases at the grocery store should be enough of a reason, but if they aren't, you have complete control over the types of vegetables the family likes and the picking time in your garden. No more tough green beans or bitter broccoli as your only choices. You can pick your produce at its optimum size before it gets tough or its seeds are too large.



What are the choices that I have for fall vegetables? The Maryland Home and Garden Information Center lists beets, bush and lima beans, black-eyed peas, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, celery, collards, corn, cucumbers, peas, garlic, kale, lettuces, mustard, spinach, Swiss chard, turnips, and tomatoes as some of the plants to grow again. Note that planting dates are important; tomatoes or cucumbers for fall

Continued on page 7

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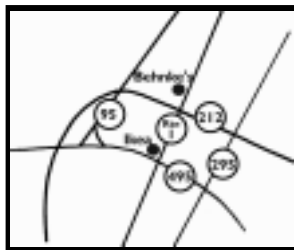
Miri Talabac

HOURS OF OPERATION:

Garden Center hours change seasonally. For the most current information, please consult our website, www.behnkes.com or call specific store locations.

BEHNKE'S AT BELTSVILLE

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Favorite Plants of Behnke Employees

By Larry Hurley,
Perennial Buyer

In fall, a gardener's fancy often turns to ornamental grasses. My favorite grass is slated to be the Perennial Plant Association's Perennial of the Year for 2009, *Hakonechloa macra* or Japanese Forest Grass. This is an interesting choice because, while they are terrific garden plants, they are a wee bit slow-growing and tricky to produce in the nursery, especially in the spring while it is cool. Generally demand exceeds supply.

That said, they can be spectacular in the garden; best sited in morning sun and afternoon shade, in good garden soil that receives regular moisture, they are the epitome of grace. They have a weeping form and the flowers are insignificant. The prettiest to my thinking is 'Aureola', gold with green stripes, height 12 to 15 inches.



I have a patch that is at least 15 years old, about 3 feet wide, five feet long. It is intensely gold when it emerges in the spring, fading a bit when it heats up. An all-gold form, cleverly called 'All Gold,' has a similar growth rate and habit. Taller and more vigorous at about 24 inches is 'Albo-striata', green with white stripes, and the species form, which is all green.



This is a grass that looks great from April to October, doesn't run and doesn't seem to seed. It is particularly attractive draping down over the edge of a low dry wall (as can be seen at the Bonsai Pavillion at the National Arboretum) or next to a backyard pond. Like all slow-growing plants, they are relatively expensive; however, I know that if you plant this grass, you will be delighted with the results. 🌿



Larry Hurley

Email Address update at Behnke Nurseries

Behnke Nurseries is updating our email files. If you do not get emails from us about advertised and unadvertised specials, upcoming garden center events, and special discounts, and would like to, please go to www.behnkes.com and click on Behnke's Weekly E-Mail Sign Up on the left side and enter your email address. You can also sign up to join our "Gardener's Advantage" Program through the web site. You do not need to be a member to receive emails; however, some offers are directed specifically to Gardener's Advantage Members and may require a membership card to be redeemed. You can also fill out the form below and send it to Behnke Nurseries, 11300 Baltimore Ave, Beltsville, MD 20705 or drop it off at any of our locations.

First Name _____


Last Name _____

Email Address _____

Please Print Clearly. All information is kept for Behnke Nurseries' use only and will never be released. To avoid overloading your inbox, we generally send one email per week.

The Importance of Landscaping

By Sarah Mann



There are endless benefits to landscaping your yard. Landscaping makes dull areas pleasing. It is possible to make ordinary homes into spectacular ones and office buildings into warm, livable spaces.

Beautiful landscaping increases the property value of your home. The American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) recommends that you invest 10 percent of your home's value in landscaping. This investment in your property's appearance can grow to 20 percent of your home's value. This is certainly an area you do not want to neglect!

The first decision to make is whether you want to do this project yourself, or hire a professional landscaping company like Behnke's Design and Landscape.

There are a few things to consider before making such a decision:

1. Your experience with landscaping.
2. The size of the project. Larger projects can become very complex in both the staging of materials and installation.
3. Your understanding of how plants work together in the landscape. Using seasonal color, texture, form, and size in contrasting and complementary fashions creates balance and harmony.
4. Your understanding of technical landscaping aspects such as proper grading to avoid drainage problems.
5. How your lifestyle affects landscaping choices: e.g., outdoor living space requirements; areas for your children to play in; and the time you have available for maintenance.
6. The amount of time and energy you have to devote to your project.

If you are more "hands-on" and desire to do the project on your own, research the plants best suited for your needs. Many books, articles and websites can help you. Go to behnkes.com first! Make sure to note alternate plant suggestions, since not every plant you initially fancy will be available or suitable for your conditions. Of course if you visit Behnke's garden centers, our staff will help with your selections.

There are many other factors that influence landscape design. One of the most important is the protection of your home through proper grading. Improper grading leads to water drainage issues that can damage your home.



This in turn can cost you more in repairs than it would have to hire a landscape professional from the start.

A well-planned landscape is pleasing to the eyes and enhances the value of your property, while incorporating your ideas and needs; however, planning a landscape is not merely arranging plants on your property. You should have a written plan, which at the very least entails a design or sketch of the placement of the plants in the yard. Don't be afraid to experiment with new ideas. Have fun creating your own

design! This design should include:

1. Structural elements- such as walkways, patios or pergolas
2. Shade and flowering trees
3. Planting beds
4. Foundation shrubs and plants
5. Other landscape elements such as ponds, fountains, outdoor lighting or irrigation.

If you decide to have Behnke's design your landscape, work closely with the designer. The more of your personal expectations and preferences you communicate to the designer, the more satisfied you will be with the resulting design. In any case, remember the design is the base map for your final landscape but don't be concerned if some tweaking is required during the actual installation due to real site conditions.

After you have a final design, it is time to implement this plan! If you do not have the funds to finish your entire design at once, phasing in your design is fine. Begin with the structural and grading elements of the project. Follow with your shade trees, then the backyard, and finish with the planting of the foundations and the front yard.

Of course there is nothing more exciting for Behnke's Design and Landscape clients than to see their landscape transformed in a few days' time rather than the months it would take to complete a do-it-yourself project. Whatever you decide, remember autumn is an excellent time—and in many cases the best time—to create the beautiful landscape of your dreams. 🍂



Sarah Mann



Add Fruit Garden

Many a great garden delights your senses...the sights and scents of colorful flowers and the textures of leaves, the singing of birds, frogs and crickets that move in for the bounty...but what about taste—simple edibility? While edible gardening may conjure up images of orchards, vineyards, or full-fledged farms, it certainly doesn't have to be that extensive or monothematic.

Even the foundation or structure of the garden—trees, shrubs and vines—can serve both aesthetic and productive functions. Many have showy flowers and brilliant fall colors. Some are rarely bothered by pests and diseases—especially the varieties derived from native species. In fact, mixing fruiting plants with other ornamentals, rather than keeping them in one area, can reduce disease blights and pest outbreaks. Just as with an ornamental plant, in order to select the best candidates, pay attention to how much sun the area receives (most of these plants need a lot of sun for health and productivity) and soil conditions, plus how much space is available.

Most fruit trees have showy spring flowers and, due to common grafting practices, stay dwarfed and manageable while still producing respectable crops. There are trees small enough to keep on a patio in a large pot, like dwarf peaches, or large enough to cast some shade, like persimmons. Nut trees such as walnut,



pecan, hickory and chestnut grow to be large canopy trees that provide a great resource for wildlife and cast shade to cool the house and garden.

Smaller by nature, fruiting shrubs will tuck into garden spaces more easily than dwarf trees and can be even easier to care for. The most well known is probably the blueberry, and with good reason. Spring flowers, vibrant fall foliage and sunset-hued winter stems make them year round attractions in the garden. Raspberries and blackberries can sometimes be thuggish if left to their own devices, rooting about the bed, but their thorns can make a great security barrier. To free up more garden space and make it easier on yourself at harvest time, tie them up to a fence or trellis...the fruit will stay cleaner and be easier to reach. Some new blackberry varieties are more upright growing and thornless.

Fruit bearing vines are a special treat, since you can train them on practically anything convenient in the yard. Fence, arbor, pergola, trellis, wall, an old tree, a deck rail, an old swingset, a motionless sunbather...you get the idea. Grapes are certainly the most recognized and long-grown of these plants. While vineyards have

perfected the art and science of grape-growing with cordons and tying and the like, worry not—the process doesn't have to be so complicated. You needn't aim for flawlessness, and the plants will perform admirably with less meticulous care. For the more exotic, some kiwi vines will produce fruit here, but despite public interest they are uncommon due to somewhat invasive tendencies. They may be better suited to city or roof top gardens, where their spread will be limited. One

overlooked candidate for a tasty twiner is the passion flower. *Passiflora incarnata* is native to the southern Chesapeake region. While not always easy to find, they add a welcome flair of the tropical to the garden and the palate.

t to Your Palette

By Miri Talabac,
Woody Plant Dept. Manager,
Beltsville

While selection will vary throughout the year, fall is a great time to plant these trees, shrubs and vines. The soil will still have its summer warmth for good root growth and the cooling air is less stressful to the plants as they prepare for dormancy. With spring and fall deliveries, look for a wide variety of fruiting woody plants.

Common fruit trees offered include peach, nectarine, apricot, apple, cherry, pear, plum, persimmon and fig. Recently we have added some pawpaw and experimented with a few quince, jujube, English walnut and Chinese chestnut.



Our regular flowering tree selection includes serviceberry, a native becoming more popular as it produces quantities of sweet berries in early summer. There are shrubby and tree forms of this plant that make great additions to the edible landscape.

Our fruiting shrubs commonly include blueberry, raspberry and blackberry. Occasionally we dabble in more marginal options, like cranberry, currant and gooseberry that prefer cooler summers, or dwarf pomegranate that prefers warmer winters (look for these in the spring instead). Some of the species and native wild roses produce tasty and nutritious hips (seed pods) if their flowers are not removed.



Several varieties of the native fox grape, *Vitis labrusca*, make up most of our fruiting climber selection, with occasional European varieties for those interested in trying their hand at wine-making. Passion flower will be stocked when we can find some, which will most likely be in spring.



Even some non-woody edibles come in the early deliveries of spring and are worth keeping an eye out for: asparagus, rhubarb and strawberries make an early appearance and sell out fast. Asparagus is best left to grow for a couple of seasons before you begin harvest, and the fine, airy foliage texture they provide is well worth scattering about the garden like baby's breath in a bouquet. Rhubarb makes a great statement with its large leaves and is a great addition for visual impact alone. Strawberries are wonderfully nostalgic spilling out of strawberry jars on a patio or deck, but can be incorporated into the garden mixed with other groundcovers, added to mixed annual hayracks or to window boxes with herbs. They can be more short-lived compared to other fruiting plants, but this gives you more flexibility in placement and experimentation with different varieties.

The most beneficial element of this whole endeavor is, of course, the easily harvestable, tasty, nutritious, money-saving benefit of edible fruits, berries and nuts. You can grow crops as organically as you'd like; there are no gas costs in getting them to your kitchen (if they make it that far!); no bruises from shipping or lackluster flavor from under-ripe disappointments. You can't get any better than fresh-picked, fruit from your own garden. 🍷



Miri Talabac



Behnke Nurseries'

Fundraising Opportunities

By Stephanie Fleming

Tired of your coworkers shuddering when they see you coming their way, waving a catalog of over-priced chocolates? Raising money can be tough on your self-esteem! But everyone loves flowers, and at Behnke Nurseries, we have fundraisers to fit your group's needs. For generations, our professional growers have consistently produced high-quality, long-lasting, and the most beautiful plants. It's no wonder that Behnke's is the first choice for quality seasonal plants in the Baltimore/Washington area.

"Behnke Signature Mums" are ideal for your fall fundraising campaign. Our generously-sized mums come in a rich palette of autumn colors.


"Behnke Signature Poinsettias" set the standard for Christmas plant décor. We offer four colors of poinsettias for fundraisers: red, pink, white and marble; available in multiple sizes. Fresh Evergreen Wreaths round out the offering, allowing your customer an additional choice.

"Known for Quality Plants:" Behnke Nurseries will take care of all your fundraising needs!

The "Behnke Spring Bedding-Plant Fundraiser" offers a wide selection of colorful Behnke-grown annuals in cell packs and pots.

Easiest of All: "Behnke Nurseries' Fundraiser Days" may be scheduled year-round. Members of your group shop at Behnke Nurseries on your selected day, and identify themselves as members of the group at checkout. For all non-sale items purchased on that day by your group, Behnke Nurseries will rebate up to 20% of the purchase price to your organization!

Everyone at one time or another either fundraises or buys from a fundraiser... what better way to raise money for a group or to support a group, than with beautiful Behnke plants?

For further information, including forms, contact Stephanie Fleming, at Sfleming@behnkes.net, or 301-937-1100. 

Pico de Gallo Recipe

By Tilly Gruman



English

1 cup chopped tomato (approximately one large tomato)
 1/2 cup onion finely chopped
 2 tbsp. lime juice (approximately one lime)
 2 cloves of garlic finely minced
 3 tbsp. cilantro minced
 1/4 tsp. salt (of to taste)
 1/2-1 tsp. of jalapeño pepper finely minced without the seeds (optional)

Mix all the ingredients together.
 Makes approximately 1 1/2 cups of pico de gallo,
 or about 10 servings of 2 tablespoons

Español

1 tasa de tomate (aproximadamente un tomate grande),
 cortado en pedazos pequeños
 1/2 tasa cebolla cortada en pedazos más pequeños,
 2 cucharadas de jugo de limón (aproximadamente un limón)
 2 dientes de ajo bien picado
 3 cucharadas de cilantro picado
 1/4 cucharadita de sal (o al gusto)
 1/2-1 cucharadita de jalapeño bien picadito sin las pepas (Opcional)

Mezclar bien todos los ingredientes.
 Rinde aproximadamente 1 1/2 tasas de pico de gallo, o
 10 porciones de 2 cucharadas.

Marian Parsley's Recommendations for Fall Vegetables

By Marian Parsley,
Seasonal Plants Buyer



***Broccoli 'Packman' F1** hybrid—Early maturing hybrid; massive 8" sage green heads. Delicious small to medium beads are densely set on domed heads. Reaches maturity in 55-57 days. Great for freezing!

***Brussels Sprouts 'Royal Marvel'**—Firm, dark green well-wrapped sprouts. Earlier Jade Cross type. Tightly wrapped sprouts tend to resist insect damage. 85 days to harvest.

***Cabbage 'Dynamo'** Blue-green tightly wrapped heads 2-2 ½ lbs. Crunchy sweet flavor. Low fat, low calorie food when eaten raw. Perfect for small space gardening. Reaches maturity in 70 days. All America Selections Winner.

***Cabbage 'Ruby Perfection' F1** hybrid—Beautiful 4 lb. red cabbage. Crisp and flavorful. High Yielding. Red color enhances any salad or cole slaw. Reaches maturity in 85 days.

***Cauliflower 'Snow Crown' F1** hybrid—Pure white, fully domed curds on a head that is 7"- 8" across. Mild and sweet; vigorous grower. Reaches maturity in 50 days.

***NEW!!! Cauliflower 'Cheddar'** F1 hybrid—Beautiful orange dome-shaped heads. Offers 25% more beta carotene than standard white types. Color holds even when cooked. Sure to create a stir at the dinner table. Reaches maturity in 68 days.

***Lettuce 'Bistro Blend'**—Gourmet salad blend; exotic leaf shapes and textures. 60-65 days to harvest.

***Lettuce 'Buttercrunch'**—Luscious, buttery texture. Soft heads are creamy yellow inside. Compact heads with some heat resistance. 50-55 days to harvest. Bibb type.

***Lettuce 'Red Sails'** Early, red fancy leaf lettuce, a salad lover's dream. Bronzy-red leaves taste as good as they look. 45 days to harvest. Looseleaf type.

***Swiss Chard 'Bright Lights'** Unique yellow, gold, orange, pink, violet, green and striped stems create a beautiful display in the garden. Tender, flavorful burgundy and green leaves. All America Selections Winner. Reaches maturity in 60 days.

*Behnke Nurseries also stocks varieties of Celery, Green & Red Kale. 🌱

**Recommended Vegetable Cultivars for Maryland Home Gardens:*
http://www.bgic.umd.edu/_media/documents/bg70.pdf

Ideas for the Fall - Cover story *continued*

harvest need to be planted by mid-summer, while lettuce, cabbage, and spinach will yield well if planted in September. Garlic cloves should be planted from mid-October to mid-November for the biggest yields. Behnke Nurseries' web site (www.behnkes.com) offers a convenient way to buy your vegetable seed from your home.

When it's time to plant the next crop, clean out all the plants and rake up any remaining debris. Turn in organic material like Leaf-Gro, manure, composted yard waste or peat humus. Always feed the soil first with regular incorporation of organic matter. Organic matter improves soil structure, slowly releases nutrients, and increases beneficial microbial activity.

Next, work in either organic or inorganic fertilizer into the row or plant locations. Mix into the top 4-6 inches of soil. Plant seed or transplants, and water the area well.

Plan your garden size to match your time. Wouldn't a small group of plants well-cared for and actively yielding be better than a larger plot where you can hardly see the vegetables for the sea of weeds? A garden needs time for weeding, watering, perhaps fertilizing again (called side dressing), picking crops and finally, removing the spent plants to make room for the next crop of vegetables.

What if you live in an apartment? If you have a balcony which gets at least

6-7 hours of full sun, try growing your vegetables in large pots. In summer, dwarf varieties of cucumber, squash, tomatoes, peppers and okra can be grown in pots, while in the fall, you can try greens like lettuce and spinach, harvesting repeatedly over a period of weeks.

Maybe you have been growing a balcony garden and would like to move up to a small plot. Some community centers, county extension offices, neighborhood schools, and places of worship have land for gardening. In the city, neighbors take advantage of cleared lots to grow just about everything! You can too. 🌱



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To learn more, visit www.behnkes.com. For more information on Classic Homes involvement in this project, visit www.classicextreme.net.



Behnke's designed and installed the hardscapes and plantings for the 4,800 square foot home, built by Classic Homes of Maryland, in Poolesville, MD. Materials and labor for the landscape installation were donated by Behnke Nurseries and our suppliers and contacts in the nursery and landscape industry. This episode will air as the two-part season premiere of "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" on the ABC Television Network September 28, 2008.

Behnke Nurseries' Landscape Design and Installation Department is proud to have been the landscaper of choice for "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition."

DESIGN & LANDSCAPE



See Behnke Nurseries on
"Extreme Makeover: Home Edition"

Sundays 8/7c on ABC

