



October in the Garden

This month in your garden:

- **Fall soon will be in the Air.** Refresh container gardens with snapdragons, dianthus, mums, petunias, lobelia, crotons & more.
- **Plant** fall and winter color – pansies, dianthus, snapdragons, alyssum, ornamental kale and cabbage, dusty miller, etc. Plant in cleaned out beds or in pots on deck or porch
- **Plant** fall veggies and herbs – Broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, lettuce, cabbage, peas, dill, cilantro, parsley, Swiss chard, mustard greens, etc.
- **Plant** trees, shrubs, rose bushes and perennials. Planting now will ensure better survival next spring/summer and earlier growth and blooms.
- **Plant** wildflower seeds through November – bluebonnets, paintbrush, larkspur, etc.
- **Plant** alliums - This is the best time to put in garlic cloves, multiplying onion sets and leeks.
- **Plant** bulbs by the holidays. Between Halloween and Thanksgiving: Crocus, anemones, freesia, ranunculus, alliums, lycoris, etc. Plant paperwhites in pots by November 11th (Armistice Day) for blooming in time for Christmas. Refrigerate tulips until New Year's Day, then plant every two weeks through Valentine's Day for longer bloom time.
- **Add edible flowers in your garden** – such as calendula, dianthus, marigolds, nasturtiums, pansies, violas, and violets. Also plant sweet pea seeds in November for better results in spring.
- **Birds** - Be sure to have nectar feeders or nectar plants for migrating hummingbirds and butterflies.
- **Garden planning** - Move and divide perennials and roses while they are dormant or growing slowly. They will be ready to burst into bloom in spring.
- **Replace dead grass** with St. Augustine sod. Weeds will sprout in dead patches if you don't. New sod will be well-established by spring. Winterize the lawn that you still have left. An organic, slow release fertilizer is just what the grass needs to get ready for cold weather. ***MORE ABOUT LAWNS ON PAGES 25-28**

Save The Date* All our meetings and field trips are on the NFWC calendar

October -

Meeting – Thursday, October 5th
Roxanne Yose's garden 1:00
guest speaker- Cheryl Langford
Color Specialist Landscaping
Tips for Creating Beautiful Pots*
*See article on page 16

Garden Workshop – Wednesday, October 11th
430 Hickory Post (in cul-de-sac) 4:00
Pumpkins and Prosecco – candle making workshop*
instructor- Rebekah Bostick
Sundance Candles

November -

Meeting – Thursday, November 2nd
Rebekah Bostick's Garden 1:00
guest speaker- Tricia Bradbury
Fort Bend Master Gardener
Growing Herbs

Field Trip – Thursday, November 9th
What to do now in Your Garden (they have a great selection of herbs!)
Arbor Gate – *meet in NFC parking lot 11:15
Or at nursery at 12:00

December -

Garden Workshop – Thursday, November 30th-?
Live succulent Advent Wreath*
Location: ?
*11:30 - to be confirmed – still working on this

Meeting – Thursday, December 7th
Saundra Hartgrove's garden 12:30
Plant Exchange

January -

Meeting – Thursday, January 18th
NFC clubhouse 1:00
guest speaker- Lucinda Owen
Montgomery County Master Gardener
Bullet Proof Plants Hardy for Inclement Weather

Garden Workshop – Thursday, January 25th* to be confirmed
NFC Clubhouse
Bee Baths & Honey Tasting
guest speaker- Jen Rose
<https://www.jenroseart.com/bee cups>

Garden Happenings this Month



<https://www.gchouston.org/bulb-plant-mart-info/>

The Bulb & Plant Mart will be held October 12th-14th 2023 at St. John's Church 2450 River Oaks Blvd.

Pre-Orders for Bulbs begin June 15th and end Monday, October 2, 2023.

All Bulb & Plant Mart Pre-Orders Must be picked up at the Mart held at St. John the Divine Episcopal

The public is encouraged to Pre-Order Bulbs on our website



Green Thumb Lecture Series

Second Monday, 10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

Houston Community College

Register in advance to receive the link: hccs.edu/community-learning-workshops

Second Monday of each month

October 9 – Trees and Tree Care

Third Tuesday, 11:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

Harris County Public Library Facebook Live

No reservation required. Watch on Facebook – facebook.com/harriscountyp/live

Third Tuesday of each month

October 17 – Trees and Tree Care





IN-PERSON



HERBS FOR HEALTH: A GUIDELINE TO MAINTAIN HEALTH IN AN UNHEALTHY TIME

📍 Urban Harvest Education Center

🕒 Oct 07 2023 10:00am - 11:30am

https://www.urbanharvest.org/stec_event/native-plants-of-southeast-texas/

https://www.urbanharvest.org/stec_event/herbs-for-health-a-guideline-to-maintain-health-in-an-unhealthy-time/



ONLINE LEARNING

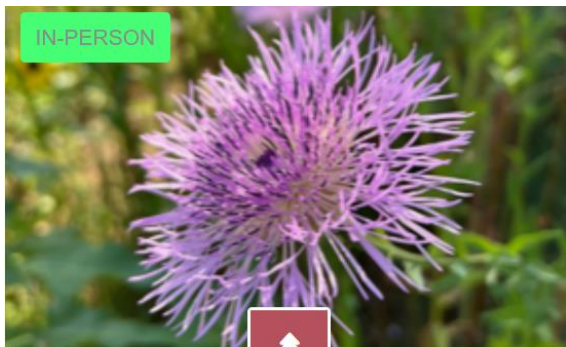


EAT YOUR LANDSCAPE

📍 Zoom Live Class

🕒 Oct 21 2023 09:30am - 11:30am

https://www.urbanharvest.org/stec_event/eat-your-landscape/



IN-PERSON



NATIVE PLANTS OF SOUTHEAST TEXAS

📍 Urban Harvest Education Center

🕒 Oct 24 2023 06:00pm - 07:30pm



ONLINE LEARNING



HERBS FOR POLLINATORS & PEOPLE PLUS ASK THE EXPERT

📍 Zoom Live Class

🕒 Nov 18 2023 09:30am - 11:30am

https://www.urbanharvest.org/stec_event/herbs-for-pollinators-people-plus-ask-the-expert/



Harvest Floral Workshop

Tuesday, Nov. 21st, 12pm-1pm

Join us for a Harvest Floral Workshop with Ponderosa Blooms!

In this workshop you will learn how to make a stunning floral centerpiece that will surely impress your guests!

Tickets TBA.



Drop by the **SAT., OCT. 7: HOUSTON BONSAI SOCIETY FALL SHOW**, 9am-4pm, **Mercer Botanic Garden**, 22306 Aldine-Westfield. Free. Already into bonsai but not a member? Register/membership info: houstonbonsaisociety.com

Fall Plant Sale

October 27 from 9:00 am – October 28 from 2:00 pm



Friday & Saturday, October 27 & 28
9:00 am – 2:00 pm

Fall is one of the best times to garden in Houston, so get ready during our Fall Plant Sale! A variety of Texas natives will be featured, including perennial and annual wildflowers (including milkweed), grasses, shrubs, and trees – perfect for attracting butterflies, bees, and other pollinators to your yard or garden while helping to conserve water, reduce mowing, protect the soil, and save money on fertilizer and pesticides. Plant Sale proceeds benefit the Arboretum's conservation and education efforts. Members receive discounts on all plant sale purchases!

Be sure to check back for an updated plant list as the sale approaches.

<https://houstonarboretum.org/event/fall-plant-sale/>



SAT.-SUN., OCT. 14-15: 2023

SOUTHWEST BROMELIAD GUILD SHOW & SALE, Show — 2-

5pm Sat. & 11am-3pm Sun., Sale — 9am-5pm
Sat. & 11am-3pm Sun., Holiday Inn, 18530
State Hwy 249.

Free. bromeliadsocietyhouston.org



Pumpkin Succulents



Saturday, October
14, 2023
10:00 — 11:30 am
Horticulture &
Gardening
\$55

Amanda Barone of
Enchanted Forest
Nursery in Rosenberg –
a Texas Master Gardener
and mixed media artist
who loves to bring

nature into her art – will provide everything participants need – live pumpkins, succulent cuttings, moss, and fall decorations – to make succulent-topped pumpkins. When the fall holidays are over, you can remove the succulents from the pumpkin and place them into soil where they can continue to root.

Non-member fee of \$55 includes general admission to the Garden, supplies (choose from a large selection of pumpkins and succulents), and a finished succulent pumpkin to take home or gift. Members receive a \$10 discount.

<https://secure.hbg.org/gardening23/tinygardens4>

**Celebrating Conservation with
Doug Tallamy
Homegrown National Park: Building
Networks for Life
Saturday, November 11, 2023
3:00 — 7:00 pm
Nature & Conservation**



\$55 Doug Tallamy, the T. A. Baker Professor of Agriculture in the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware, is traveling the country promoting the [Homegrown National Park](#) concept to challenge all of us to rise to the occasion and create diverse ecosystems in our yards, communities, and surrounding lands by reducing lawn, planting natives, and removing invasives.

<https://hbg.org/events/celebrating-conservation-with-doug-tallamy-2023-11-11-15-00/>

October 2023



Lights Out, Texas!

Help protect migrating birds by going Lights Out! Turn off or dim all non-essential lights from 11 pm - 6 am every night through November 30 to help prevent bird collisions.



KTRH's popular gardening show has advice to keep your lawn, trees, and garden in top shape year round. Every Saturday and Sunday morning from 6 to 10, Skip Richter answers listeners' questions on everything from aphids to zoysias, offering help to listeners both with and without "green thumbs."

Details

Date: October 21
Time: 11:30 am - 1:30 pm
Website:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/6736243963102899>

Venue

Enchanted Garden 6420 Farm to Market 359
Richmond, TX 77406 US + [Google Map](#)





As the temperatures cool, why not check out one of the farmer's markets in the area? It is a good way to get fresh produce grown locally and shorten your food chain.

Farmers Markets for Fresh Fall Produce and More

Memorial Villages Farmers Market

Hunters Creek Village at First Congregational Church 10840 Beinhorn Road. Open Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Urban Harvest Farmers Market

2752 Buffalo Speedway. Open Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Rice Villiage Farmers Market

Kelvin Drive and Amherst Street. Open first and third Sundays of every month, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Heights Mercantile Farmers Market - 714 Yale St.

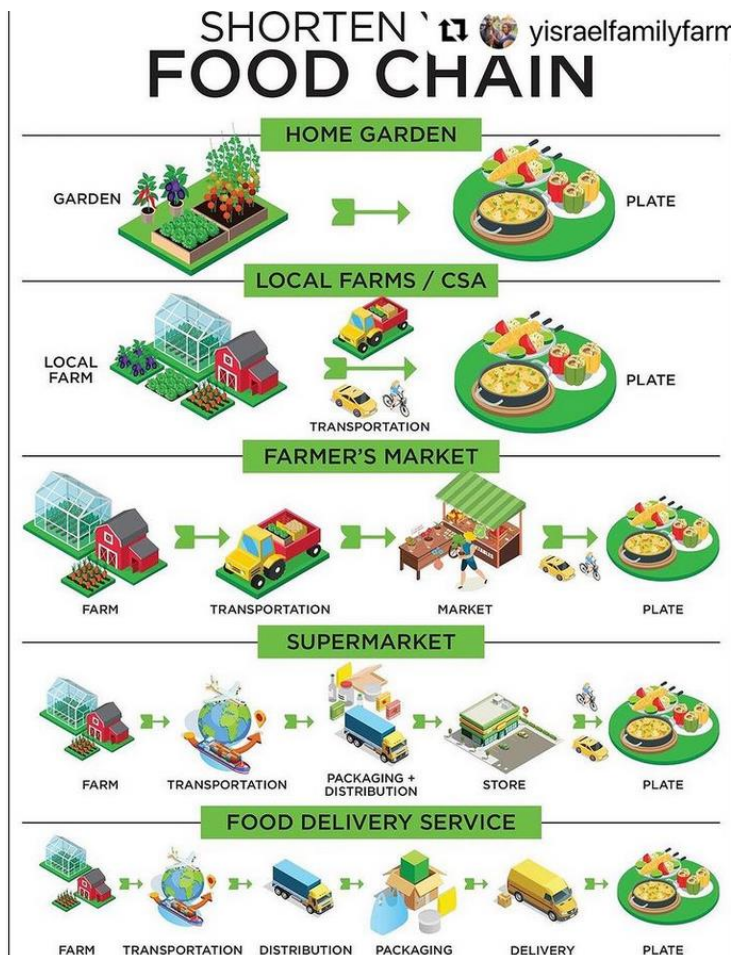
Every 2nd + 4th Sunday of the Month

Westchase District Farmers Market

10503 Westheimer Road. Open Thursdays from 3 p.m.

Tomball Farmers Market

205 W. Main St. Open Saturday's from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.



Garden to Kitchen –

Fall often conjures up images of pumpkins and their cousin squash. Both butternut squash and acorn squash can be found in gardens and markets this time of year, Contrary to popular belief, squash is botanically classified as a fruit, not a vegetable. This is because it grows from flowers and has seeds. Regardless of how you classify them, winter and summer squash are low in calories and fat, and both are excellent sources of vitamin C. They also contain fiber, B vitamins and important minerals such as potassium and magnesium. Squash are worth including in your diet. These recipes are tasty ways to give them a try!

BUTTERNUT SQUASH

Benefits

- HIGH IN ANTIOXIDANTS**
Researchers recommend it as an antioxidant food that may be used in the medical community as a natural treatment for oxidative stress
- BOOSTS IMMUNE SYSTEM & REDUCES INFLAMMATION**
The 9,369 beta-carotene in this creamy fruit promotes immune responses and helps you fight illness and disease
- HELPS PREVENT & FIGHT CERTAIN CANCERS**
One protein found in butternut squash has been found to inhibit the growth of skin cancer cells, making it a potentially potent anticancer agent
- KEEPS BONES HEALTHY**
The high potassium content in this fruit is an important part of having stronger bones, as high levels of potassium are associated with denser bones, along with the manganese content
- IMPROVES PHYSICAL PERFORMANCES & REDUCES FATIGUE**
Stocking up on Vitamin C foods is one of the ways to prevent upper respiratory infections that often follow heavy physical activity, such as running a marathon
- AIDS IN WEIGHT LOSS**
Especially with its fat-fighting qualities, butternut squash should be a go-to option on your list of life-giving foods
- REDUCES SYMPTOMS OF PMS**
Women with low levels of manganese experience more severe pain and mood PMS symptoms, which the dietary manganese in butternut squash may help to offset

Instant Pot Butternut Squash Soup continued



INSTANT POT BUTTERNUT SQUASH SOUP

★★★★★ 4.8 from 232 reviews

🕒 prep time: 12 MINUTES 🕒 cook time: 30 MINUTES

🕒 total time: 28 MINUTES 🍴 yield: 6-8 SERVINGS

DESCRIPTION

This delicious Instant Pot Butternut Squash Soup recipe is quick and easy to make in the pressure cooker, it's naturally gluten-free and vegan, and it's SO comforting and delicious! Feel free to add in more cayenne if you would like an extra kick.

INGREDIENTS

SCALE 1x 2x 3x

- 2 cup vegetable stock
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled and minced
- 1 carrot, peeled and diced
- 1 Granny Smith apple, cored and diced
- 1 medium (uncooked) butternut squash*, [peeled, seeded and diced](#)
- 1 sprig fresh sage
- 1 white onion, diced
- 1/2 teaspoon salt, or more to taste
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly-ground black pepper, or more to taste
- 1/8 teaspoon cayenne, or more to taste
- pinch of ground cinnamon and nutmeg
- 1/2 cup canned (unsweetened) coconut milk
- optional garnishes: extra coconut milk and a sprinkle of smoked paprika (or cayenne pepper)

NOTES

- i *A medium-sized butternut squash should weigh around 3-4 pounds.

<https://www.gimmesomeoven.com/slow-cooker-butternut-squash-soup-recipe/>



INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Add vegetable stock, garlic, carrot, apple, [butternut squash](#), sage, onion, salt, pepper, cayenne, cinnamon and nutmeg to an [Instant Pot](#) pressure cooker. Toss to combine. Close lid securely and set vent to “Sealing”.
- 2 Press “Manual”, then press “Pressure” until the light on “High Pressure” lights up, then adjust the +/- buttons until time reads 8 minutes. Cook. Then very carefully, turn the vent to “Venting” for quick release, and wait until all of the steam has released and the valve has dropped. Remove the lid.
- 3 Remove and discard the sage. Stir in the coconut milk.
- 4 Use an immersion blender to puree the soup until smooth. (Or you can transfer the soup in two batches into a traditional blender, and puree until smooth, being very careful when working with the hot liquid.) Taste, and season with additional salt, pepper and cayenne if needed.
- 5 Serve warm, with optional garnishes if desired.



Turkey sausage, white bean and butternut squash soup

Total Time	1 hr 5 min
Prep	20 min
Cook	45 min
Serves	12
Difficulty	Easy

This hearty soup combines sweet butternut squash, fresh sage, and spicy turkey sausage--a winter dinner power trio, if ever there was one! Cut prep time by buying already cubed butternut squash, and while this hearty soups simmers on the stove, you can toss together a salad to serve on side. It's a quick and easy recipe to pull together for lunch or dinner, and leftovers are great to take to work or school. The choice of sausage is up to you--sweet or spicy will both taste great in this dish. And if you prefer a stronger, slightly sharper grated cheese, swap pecorino Romano for the Parmesan.

Turkey sausage, white bean and butternut squash soup

Ingredients:

Olive oil 2 tsp, extra-virgin
Onion – 2 large chopped
Salt – 2 tsp., divided
Minced garlic – 2 tsp minced
Chicken broth – 8 cups
Grated Parmesan cheese – 2 Tbsp

Uncooked butternut squash – 2 ½ pound(s), cubed
Fresh sage – 1 Tbsp, minced
Ground nutmeg – ¼ tsp
Canned Cannellini beans -38 oz., rinsed and drained
Fresh lemon juice – 2 tsp

Instructions:

1. Heat oil in a large stock pot over medium-high heat. Add onion; sprinkle with 1 teaspoon salt and sauté until softened, about 5 to 10 minutes.
2. Remove casings from sausages; pull sausages apart into bite-size pieces with your fingers. Add sausage to pot; cook, stirring often, until browned on all sides, about 10 minutes.
3. Add garlic; cook, stirring, 1 minute.
4. Add broth, squash, sage and nutmeg; increase heat to high and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium and simmer until squash is fork tender, about 10 minutes. Add beans; stir and cook until heated through, about 10 minutes more.
5. Stir in lemon juice and remaining teaspoon salt. Serve garnished with cheese. Yields about 1 cup soup and 1/2 teaspoon cheese per serving.

Roasted Butternut Squash and Brussels Sprouts

Equipment

- 2 Large sheet pan
- Sharp knife
- Vegetable peeler

Prep Time	Cook Time	Total Time
10 mins	30 mins	40 mins

Ingredients

- 1 small butternut squash, peeled and cut into ½ inch cubes
- 1 ½ pounds Brussels sprouts, trimmed and halved from top to bottom
- Olive oil
- Kosher salt
- Ground black pepper
- 4 tablespoons maple syrup plus more for final drizzle
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- ½ cup pumpkin seeds

Roasted Butternut Squash and Brussels Sprouts continued:



Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees F.
2. On a large sheet pan, toss the cubed butternut squash with about 2 tablespoons olive oil, Kosher salt (about ½ teaspoon), and ground black pepper to taste. **Tip:** Use additional sheet pans if needed to avoid overcrowding. Overcrowding leads to steaming instead of roasting.
3. On another large baking sheet, toss the Brussels sprouts with about 2 tablespoons olive oil, Kosher salt (about ½ teaspoon), and ground black pepper to taste. Place the Brussels sprouts flat side down.
4. Roast the butternut squash and Brussels sprouts. Brussels sprouts for 15-18 minutes. Butternut squash takes 22 to 25 minutes. **Tip:** Try not to flip the sprouts as they roasts so the flat side can develop a golden brown color.
5. Remove from oven and drizzle about 2 tablespoons of maple syrup over each sheet pan and toss to coat, flipping the veggies for even browning on all sides. Return to oven and roast for an additional 5 to 8 minutes or until golden brown and tender. **Note:** Keep a close eye on the oven to make sure the maple syrup doesn't burn.
6. Let the roasted vegetables cool down slightly for just a few minutes. Then, in a large serving bowl, toss the roasted butternut squash, roasted Brussels sprouts, dried cranberries, and pumpkin seeds together. Finish with an extra drizzle of maple syrup to taste. Enjoy!

Notes

- **Use separate sheet pans to roast each vegetable.** Brussels sprouts tend to cook faster than squash, so this way it's easier to manage roasting times.
- **Make sure to give the vegetables ample space** on the sheet pans. You want the heat to circulate freely for that caramelization to develop.
- **Roast at 450 degrees F** for best results. If your oven tends to run very hot, 425 degrees F is fine too, but they may need an extra few minutes.
- I would NOT recommend making this dish days in advance as the roasted vegetables can get soggy in the fridge. However, you can prep-ahead the ingredients.
- **Prep ahead:** Trim and cut the butternut squash and Brussels sprouts up to 3 days in advance and keep refrigerated.

Substitutions and variations:

- Add-ons: Walnuts, pecans, diced apples, pomegranate seeds, bacon, feta or goat cheese.

Benefits of **ACORN SQUASH**



Acorn Squash is rich in vitamins and minerals, with high levels of Vitamin A, B6, and C, Pantothenic acid, Thiamin.

TOP BENEFITS INCLUDE:

Strengthens Immunity

Inhibits Cancer

Elevates vision

Fortifies the bones

Skin Care

Obesity

Digestion problems

Lowers high BP

Acorn squash bread

Prep Time	Cook Time	Total Time
10 mins	1 hr 30 mins	1 hr 40 mins

Course: Breakfast Cuisine: American Keyword: Bread, Breakfast
Servings: 10 Author: Eva Bakes



★★★★★
5 from 2 votes

Ingredients

- 1 small-medium acorn squash
- 1 ½ cups granulated sugar
- ½ cup mild olive oil or vegetable oil
- 2 large eggs
- 1 ½ cups all purpose flour
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp ground clove
- ½ tsp freshly grated nutmeg
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp salt
- ½ cup chopped pecans or hazelnuts optional
- Coarse sugar for sprinkling

Instructions

1. Cut the squash in half and scoop out the insides with the seeds and stringy stuff. Put the squash cut sides down on a high sided baking tray and fill the tray with ½ an inch of water.
2. Preheat your oven to 350°F. Roast for 45 minutes to 1 hour, or until the squash is very tender.
3. Remove from the oven and let the squash cool (keep the oven on). Scoop out the fleshy bits with a spoon puree in a food processor or blender until smooth. Set aside 1 cup of the puree for the bread.
4. In a medium size bowl, blend together 1 cup of the squash puree, sugar, the oil, and the eggs.
5. In a separate bowl, sift together the flour, spices, baking soda, baking powder, and salt. Slowly add this to the squash mixture and mix until no longer lumpy. Stir in the nuts (if you are adding them).
6. Grease and flour your bread pan and pour in the batter. Generously sprinkle the top of the bread with the coarse sugar. Bake in your preheated 350°F oven for 45-55 minutes until set. A toothpick inserted into the center of the bread should come out clean.
7. If you want to make the bread super awesome, you can add a layer of streusel topping.

Chef Eric Greenspan's Mac 'n' cheese with Creamy Squash Sauce

Total Time 1 hr 45 min
Prep 25 min
Cook 1 hr 20 min
Serves 6
Difficulty Easy

While this recipe has all the traditional mac 'n' cheese ingredients, it also got a few healthy additions. The roasted acorn squash is blended into a creamy cheese sauce—using strongly flavored feta helps stretch the cheese flavor. Some cauliflower helps to replace some of the pasta. A sprinkling of buttery herb breadcrumbs and cheese adds a crisp topping that's a welcome counterpoint to the vegetable-enhanced cheesy pasta mixture. When buying acorn squash, it should feel heavy for its size with smooth, dull skin and no soft spots. A lighter squash means its lost moisture and will be drier.



Ingredients

Cooking spray

4 spray(s)

Uncooked acorn squash

1 medium, (1 lb 10 oz)

Table salt

1 tsp

Black pepper

¼ tsp

Panko breadcrumbs

⅓ cup(s)

Grated Pecorino cheese

2 Tbsp

Unsalted butter

1 tsp, melted

Fresh thyme

1 tsp, or 1/4 tsp dried, chopped

Vegetable broth

1 ¼ cup(s)

Reduced fat cheddar cheese

1 cup(s), shredded, sharp variety

Crumbled feta cheese

¼ cup(s)

Plain fat free Greek yogurt

¼ cup(s)

Paprika

1 tsp, smoked

Uncooked macaroni

6 oz

Cauliflower

3 cup(s), chopped, small florets

Instructions

- 1 Preheat oven to 400°F. Spray rimmed baking sheet and 9-inch square baking dish with nonstick spray.
- 2 Cut squash in half through stem end; remove seeds. Spray cut sides with nonstick spray and sprinkle with 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/8 teaspoon pepper. Place squash cut side down on prepared baking sheet. Bake until fork-tender, about 40 minutes. Cool 10 minutes.
- 3 Meanwhile, combine panko, pecorino Romano, butter, and thyme in small bowl.
- 4 Peel and cut up squash; transfer to blender. Add broth, Cheddar, feta, yogurt, paprika, remaining 3/4 teaspoon salt, and remaining 1/8 teaspoon pepper; puree.
- 5 Bring pot of salted water to boil. Add pasta and cauliflower; return to boil, stirring occasionally. Cook half the time of package directions for pasta. Drain. Place in large bowl. Stir in sauce. Spread in prepared baking dish; top with panko mixture. Bake until top is golden, about 25 minutes.
- 6 Serving size: 1 cup

October 2023



https://cookingformysoul.com/wprm_print/5991/

Fall Harvest Salad

This easy and delicious fall harvest salad is perfect for the holidays. It is made with fresh seasonal ingredients, such as apples and roasted acorn squash, and tossed with a homemade apple cider vinaigrette.

Prep Time	Cook Time	Total Time
20 mins	25 mins	45 mins

Course: Salad Cuisine: American Servings: 6 people
Calories: 249kcal Author: [Tania](#)

Equipment

- [Sharp knives](#)
- Medium sheet pan
- [Mason jar](#)

Ingredients

- ½ an acorn squash
- Olive oil
- Salt and pepper
- 1 large bunch lacinato kale ribs removed and thinly sliced
- 2 cups fresh Brussels sprouts trimmed and thinly sliced
- 2 honeycrisp apples, sliced
- ¼ cup chopped pecans or to taste
- ¼ cup pumpkin seeds or to taste
- ¼ cup crumbled blue cheese or to taste

Apple Cider Vinaigrette

- ⅓ cup extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup apple cider vinegar
- 1 clove garlic, finely minced
- 1 tablespoon honey or maple syrup
- ½ teaspoon Dijon mustard
- Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Cut the acorn squash into ½ inch slices (no need to peel the skin, but do remove the seeds). Arrange on a sheet pan, and drizzle with some olive oil and sprinkle with some salt and pepper. Roast for about 20-25 minutes, or until softened, flipping halfway through. Once ready, remove from the oven and let it cool slightly.
2. **Meanwhile, make the apple cider vinaigrette:** Add all the vinaigrette ingredients in a mason jar. Shake well until combined. You can adjust the ingredient quantities to taste too. Set aside.
3. In a large bowl, toss the sliced kale and Brussels sprouts with some of the prepared vinaigrette. This will help soften the kale and Brussels sprouts.
4. **Arrange the salad:** on a platter, arrange the prepared kale and brussels sprouts along with the sliced apples, roasted acorn squash, cheese, pecans, and pumpkin seeds. Drizzle with the remaining apple cider vinaigrette. Serve immediately. Enjoy!

Notes

- **Cheese:** aside from blue cheese, you can use feta, gorgonzola, shaved parmesan, white cheddar cubes or goat cheese.
- **Prep ahead:** Slice the kale and Brussels sprouts the day before. You can also slice the acorn squash the day before. The vinaigrette can be made up to 3 days ahead.
- **Add-ons:** Try pears, radicchio, pomegranate seeds, quinoa, farro, or dried cranberries.
- **Make it a meal!** Add grilled chicken to it.

GARDEN CREATIONS - Make Your Own Succulent Pumpkin

MATERIALS:

Pumpkin – Available Buchanan’s, HEB, Randalls,

Glue – [Glue gun](#), E6000 Craft Adhesive, or Elmer’s Spray

Variety of **Succulents** & [Succulent Cuttings](#)

[Moss](#)

Knife

Scissors

Acorns – if desired – can be spray painted clear to protect, or gold for more effect

Box - to use as tray for cutting and cleaning succulents

About succulents – here are some types that work well for this project:

ECHEVERIA SUCCULENTS



- They are full and flat which makes them a great choice for your main focal point!

Etsy is a great source for succulents – Also Buchanan’s And online sources like Mountain Crest Garden, Succulents Depot and Leaf and Clay.

HANGING SUCCULENTS



- Hanging succulents are perfect to add around the edges! They give the pumpkin great character and a finishing touch!
- My favorites are:
 - [String of Dolphins](#)
 - [String of Pearls](#)
 - [Ruby Necklace](#)

FILLER SUCCULENTS



- I love to use filler succulents to make the arrangements more full and to fill in empty spots!
- Most of my favorite fillers are sedums:
 - Stonecrop Sedums
 - Sedum Spurium
 - Donkey Tail



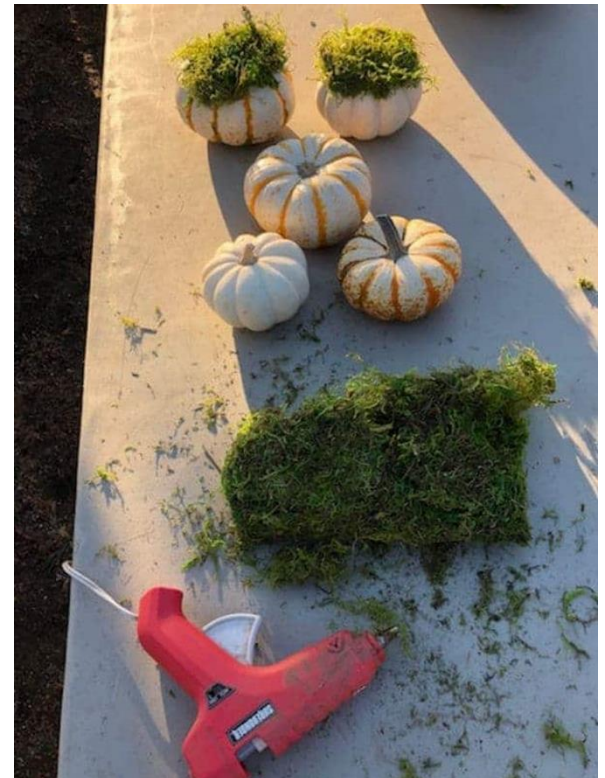
MAKE IT!

Step 1: Choosing Your Pumpkin

Choose any size and colored pumpkin that you want to use.

Keep in mind that pumpkins with a flat top are easier to work with, but you can definitely add succulents to any size or shape of pumpkin that you want.

The bigger the pumpkin, the more succulents it will need and the more expensive your project will be.



Step 2: Adding the Moss

You can purchase moss or go to bayou and pull some Spanish moss off the trees (take a stick and a bag)

Use either a hot glue gun or spray Elmer's spray glue on top of the pumpkin, and glue moss right on top of the pumpkin. Don't carve the pumpkin, just add the moss right on top.

The only thing you will need to do to the pumpkin is cut off the stem if it is too long.

If using purchased moss, fluff it before gluing to pumpkin.

Continue that process until the entire top of the pumpkin is covered with moss.





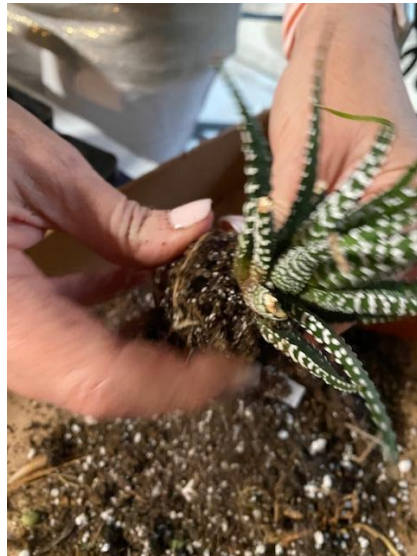
Step 3: Picking Out Your Succulents

Pick out a variety of succulents that you want to design your pumpkin with.

For a large pumpkin I will usually use 1-2 large succulents, 3-4 medium/small succulents, and 5 small succulents for hanging off the edge and filler.

For a small pumpkin, I use 1-2 large or medium succulents, and 2-3 small succulents.

Then use scissors or a knife to cut off all of the succulent stems, leaving only about 1/4 of an inch to hot glue into the moss. It is good to have a cardboard tray for this to collect the mess.



Step 4: Glue Succulents Onto Your Pumpkin

On a large pumpkin, begin in the center of the pumpkin with your largest succulent, place a dab of hot glue (or whatever glue you are using) onto the stem and stick it into the moss. Then hold it in place until the glue is dry.

Then continue gluing your largest succulents into the moss working your way from the center to the outside

edges.

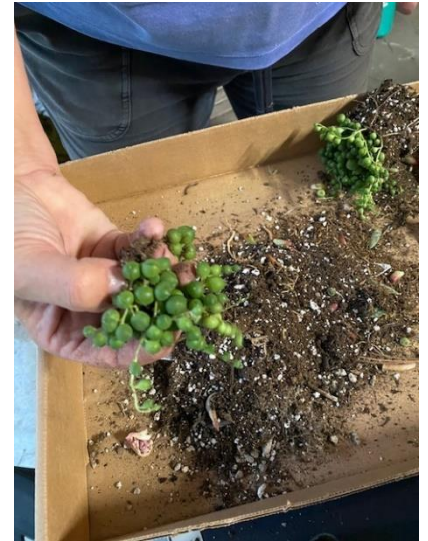


Use your larger succulents first and work your way down to the smaller hanging and filler succulents.

Use the hanging succulents to drape over the side.

October 2023

If using *string of pearls*, break off dirt. Carefully separate strands. Bunch some strands together and stick them so drape off the side of pumpkin. Using the end of scissors helps push “pearls” onto dab of glue.



Step 5: Finishing Touches

Check to see if there are any spots where the hot glue shows. If there is, take small portions of stretched out moss and place it over the glue to hide it. Then your succulent pumpkin is complete!

Succulent Pumpkin Care

You can put your succulent pumpkin anywhere you would like. Although, they will do best in a shady covered area that gets partial sun. Or inside where they can receive some filtered light and be out of the weather. Then once a week to every other week lightly spritz the succulents with water at the base of the stem. Over time you'll notice that the succulents will start to grow roots into the moss which is perfect because later on you'll be able to plant them.

How Long Do Succulent Pumpkins Last?

If you start with a healthy pumpkin the entire arrangement should last a minimum of 2-3 months. But I have had succulent topped pumpkins last over 6 months!



What to Do When the Pumpkin Gets Soft

As the pumpkin begins to get soft it is time to take the succulents off and plant them.

This is one of my favorite things about succulent topped pumpkins.

For months you will have a beautiful pumpkin centerpiece but then you get to plant the succulents!

There are a couple ways to go about planting the succulents.

1. You can carefully remove the succulents from the moss and plant them in their own pot filled with a good quality succulent soil.
2. You can remove the entire piece of moss from the pumpkin with all of the succulents attached and place the entire thing in a pot filled with succulent soil.

By the time you are taking the succulents off of the pumpkin and planting them, they should have already grown roots into the moss.

But every now and then a succulent will not root.

So you can still plant it and after about a month or so, gently tug at the succulent to see if it's started to grow roots into the soil.

After you plant the succulents, do not water them for at least a few days.

When [succulents are transplanted](#) their roots get disturbed and they need to callous over before getting water which prevents the roots from rotting.

Also note that most succulents cannot tolerate frost, full sun, or too much water.

So be sure to keep them out of full sun and in a place where they won't be damaged by frost. Then only water once every 1-2 weeks.

Have fun creating your succulent topped pumpkins! Remember there is no perfect way. It's all about being creative and having fun!

<https://audreyslittelfarm.com/succulent-pumpkin/>



***Plant of the Month – ruellia* - There might not be an easier flower for your pots or garden beds.**



Though most common in Texas, they're quickly making inroads into the rest of the South, especially among gardeners who want lots of bloom with little fuss. The flowers resemble small, thin-textured petunias, although they are of no relation. This shrubby perennial grows up to 4 feet tall and blooms in early summer with purple or blue flowers that will attract butterflies and hummingbirds. Ruellia blooms from early summer through fall, and it's hardy in Zone 7 (USDA) and below.

Ruellia is easy to grow in full to partial sun, and it grows equally well in wet soil and dry soil. In fact, it can be found in traffic islands or growing wild by the road where it receives no care and continues to grow well. Because it

needs so little, ruellia can spread with ease. It forms large clumps with spreading roots, and its seed capsules scatter seed. In wet and unmanaged areas, it can be invasive.

Plant Attributes

Common Name Mexican petunia, wild petunia, Texas petunia, Britton's Wild Petunia, Mexican bluebell

Botanical Name *Ruellia brittoniana*, *R. malacosperma*, *R. tweediana*

Family *Acanthaceae*

Plant Type Perennial

Mature Size 3-4 ft. tall

Sun Exposure Full, partial

Soil Type Loamy, sandy, moist but well-drained

Soil pH Acidic, neutral

Bloom Time Summer, fall

Flower Color Blue, purple

Hardiness Zones Zone 8-10 (USDA)

Native Area North America, South America, Caribbean

There is a Dwarf version of Ruellia known as Katie Ruellia or

Katie Purple Dwarf Mexican Petunia is a cute dwarf Ruellia that produces loads of pretty, petunia-like, lavender-blue to purple flowers that contrast nicely against the glossy, dark green, narrow leaves. In frost-free zones it will nearly bloom year round. In cooler climates it blooms from late spring to frost. At only 12 inches tall, this durable perennial that will grow in moist to wet soils, and even tolerate drought when established, quickly fills in as a border or ground cover. Also a great solo or mixed with other plants in containers. The butterflies, hummingbirds and other beneficial pollinators will thank you for planting this season-long bloomer! It is not as invasive as normal Ruellia. These reliable perennials bloom for an extended period, making them a great replacement for old-fashioned border plants like Monkey Grass and Liriope. <https://texassuperstar.com/plants/ruellia/ruellia.html>

The Good the Bad and the Ugly – insects in the garden Mealybugs



Have you seen some white fluff on your plants lately? Have your plants started looking poorly?

It could be that you have an infestation of mealybugs

Mealybugs are **soft, oval, wax-covered insects** that feed on many plants in garden, landscape, and indoor settings. Usually found in colonies, they are piercing-sucking insects closely related to soft scales but lack the scale covers.

These little pests are so good at hiding in the nooks and crannies of plants that you might not even realize you have an infestation before it's too late. They will slowly suck the life out of your plants, and can be a pain to fully get rid of depending on the severity of their infestation.

If you notice tiny, white cotton-like masses on center leaf veins, under the leaves, or at the joints where a leaf meets the petiole, you've got mealybugs, or mealies for short. Mealies are a type of scale insect found all over the world in moist, warm climates, and there are over 200 species in the US alone!

Mealies feed on the juices of a plant and in bad cases, they will cause leaves to yellow, curl, and drop. As mealies feed, they secrete a clear, sticky substance called "honeydew," which is made up of sugar and other compounds. The honeydew alone doesn't harm the plant, but it does tend to attract other pests! It's like a little alarm for bugs saying "hey, here is a plant that you can eat just in case you missed it!" Sometimes you'll see the honeydew before the actual mealybugs, which is your first warning to get the pests under control before it's too late. This is also why it's a good idea to check up on your plants weekly.

How to get rid of mealys:

- Pruning: use clean, sharp shears to snip off any parts of the plant that are clearly suffering from mealybug damage.
- Rubbing alcohol: rubbing alcohol is a tried-and-true method that works well on smaller mealy infestations. Dip a cotton swab in rubbing alcohol and gently wipe the mealies off the leaves and stems, making sure to check joints where mealies like to hide. The rubbing alcohol dissolves the waxy white coating that protects the mealybug, but doesn't harm the plant. Check back every 3-4 days to make sure that no more mealies pop up. Rarely will you only do one application of any pest control method - it usually takes a couple tries to fully eradicate them.
- Neem oil: Neem oil is a natural pesticide that usually comes in a concentrated form that you mix with water. Spraying it on the plant not only helps kill pests, it helps prevent them as well.

- Insecticidal soap: if the neem oil or rubbing alcohol isn't working, sometimes spraying down your plant with insecticidal soap can often do the trick. Make sure your plant tolerates the insecticidal soap by checking the label! Some species of mealybugs are also more tolerant to chemical insecticides than others, so this method can be hit-or-miss depending on the type of mealybugs you're dealing with.
- You can learn more here: <https://www.thespruce.com/how-to-control-mealybugs-1902890>

These Are a Few of My Favorite Things

Kelly Higgins shares one of her favorite things for the garden.



Do you remember some of those old slogans we used to hear for products on t.v., like “Pop, pop, fizz, fizz,” and “The quicker picker upper?” What about for those long, yellow industrial-looking latex gloves that came with the slogan “They make your hands look like you don’t even do dishes!” Well, this vintage idea applies to one of my favorite things, my long gardening gloves. Whenever I used to do even a minor task in the garden - deadheading flowers, pulling some weeds –I would often be left with itchy splotches on my forearms. If doing something more significant, like trimming jasmine vines on my trellis, my

spots could put a giraffe to shame well into the next day. And did you know pretty little drift roses have tiny ninja thorns that can always dart their way to your forearms no matter how careful you try to be? But not with my long garden gloves! When I put these on in the garden, no more splotches or thorns- no signs that I've been gardening! I got these extra-long ones on Amazon. Happy gardening!

https://www.amazon.com/dp/BOC2ZM33S7?ref=cm_sw_r_apin_dp_BZ51G9P74TWEDTT0Q4FZ&th=1

Some Articles of Note for This Season:

Halloween is Pansy Planting Time

<https://www.beaumontenterprise.com/entertainment/article/Halloween-is-pansy-planting-time-15667654.php>

Monarch Butterflies Navigate Through Texas via the sun and innate magnetic compass

<https://www.houstonchronicle.com/lifestyle/home-garden/article/Monarch-butterflies-navigate-through-Texas-via-17468427.php>

Plant Your bulbs by the Calendar

<https://www.chron.com/life/gardening/article/Plant-your-bulbs-by-the-calendar-1577569.php>

How to Grow Spring Bulbs in Houston

<https://www.houstonchronicle.com/life/gardening/article/How-to-grow-spring-bulbs-in-Houston-15698609.php>


Dragonflies Migrate South Like

<https://www.houstonchronicle.com/lifestyle/home-garden/article/dragonflies-migrate-south-like-songbirds-18351465.php>

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/CxtYDuWJK06/?igshid=MTc4MmM1YmI2Ng%3D%3D>


Bungalow blooms talks about her flowers - she talked to us last year





Saturdays & Sundays 6-10 a.m.

Skip Richter's Lawn Care Schedule*



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Fertilizing (synthetic)	** Soil Test every 3-5 years		*** Fast release for early greenup (1)	Apply a slow release fertilizer (2)	If you miss any fertilizer application go ahead and apply it when you can.	Apply a slow release fertilizer (2)				Apply a fall type fertilizer (3)		
Apply a trace mineral supplement once per year unless a soil test indicates otherwise (4)												
Fertilizing (organic)	** Soil Test every 3-5 years			Apply a 3-1-2 or 4-1-2 ratio fertilizer (5)	If you miss any fertilizer application go ahead and apply it when you can.	Apply a 3-1-2 or 4-1-2 ratio fertilizer (5)				Apply a fall type fertilizer (6)		
Aeration	Core aerate & apply finely screened, high quality leaf mold compost. If soil is dry, apply 1/2" of irrigation 3 days before aerating.											
Mowing	Collect leaves for mulch & compost	Mow with bag to collect cool season weed blooms & seeds	Mow frequently with a sharp blade to build turf density. Remove no more than 1/3 of grass blades with each mowing. Return clippings to the lawn to recycle their complete & balanced nutrient content. When prolonged rainy periods delay mowing, mow once at a taller height and then again at the desired height, or bag clippings for composting or mulching garden beds.									Collect leaves for mulch & compost
Watering	The numbers below are the <i>historical average</i> inches of water a Houston lawn needs <i>per week</i> IN THE ABSENCE OF RAIN for each month of the year.											
	0"	0"	1/2"	3/4"	1"	1"	1"	1"	3/4"	1/2"	1/2"	0"
Deep, infrequent watering promotes deep rooting, saves money, & minimizes disease & insect problems, compared to light, frequent watering.												
Water until just before runoff begins, let soak for 45 min, repeat this "cycle & soak" until you've applied 1". Allow soil to dry out for a week before watering again.												

Note: All the products below are listed in alphabetical order.

(1) Quality **fast acting fertilizer** examples:
Nelson's TurfStar Bruce's Brew 18-4-9
Nitro-Phos Imperial (red bag) 15-5-10
Southwest Lawn Special 15-5-10

(2) Quality **slow release fertilizer** examples:
Nelson's Turfstar Slow 'n Easy 22-2-10
Nitro-Phos SuperTurf (silver bag) 19-4-10
Southwest Premium Gold 15-5-10

(3) Quality **fall fertilizer** examples:
Nelson's TurfStar Carbo-Load 10-10-20
Nitro-Phos Fall Special (brown bag) 8-12-16
Southwest Premium Winterizer 16-8-12

(4) Quality **trace mineral product** examples:
Azomite
Nature's Way Remineralizer

(5) Quality **organic fertilizer** examples:
MicroLife (green bag) 6-2-4
Nelson's NatureStar Organic Tree & Turf 8-1-2
Nitro-Phos Sweet Green 11-0-4
Organic Food Complete 4-4-3 (The Arbor Gate)
Southwest Fertilizer Earth Essentials 5-1-3

(6) Quality **organic fall type fertilizer** examples:
MicroLife Brown Patch (brown bag) 5-1-3
Southwest Fertilizer Earth Essentials 5-1-3

* See *Skip Richter's Pest, Disease, & Weed Management Schedule* for more info.
 ** <https://soiltesting.tamu.edu/files/urbansoil.pdf> *** Optional application.

LAWNCARE for OCTOBER

Advice from Enchanted Gardens for Your Lawn



CLICK
TO WATCH
OUR FALL
FERTILIZER
APPLICATION
TRAINING VIDEO

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/CxQB-EZr46m/?igshid=MzRIODBiNWFIZA%3D%3D>

<https://gardeningwithskip.com/lawn-schedules/>

Post-Drought Lawn Recovery Plan

Fall 2023

Drought can cause root death and when soil moisture returns, iron deficiency often follows. Nutrients need to be available in sufficient quantities and microbial populations need to be optimized for root and plant health. Stressed lawns are more likely to be attacked by Take-All root rot, and a thin turf leaves room for cool season weed seeds to germinate in October and November.

Late September/Early October

- Apply Barricade Pre-Emergent (each bag covers 5,000 sq ft)
- Apply MicroLife MicroGro Bio Inoculant (each bag covers 2,500 sq ft)

Early to Mid October

- Apply Nitro-Phos Total Brown Patch Control (each bag covers 2,000 sq ft)
- Apply Nitro-Phos Fall Special Fertilizer (each bag covers 6,000 sq ft) **OR** Organic MicroLife Brown Patch (each bag covers 2,000 sq ft)

Brown Patch in your lawn? How to avoid, prevent and cure it

By Mike Serant

Owner of MicroLife Organic Biological Fertilizers

<https://www.microlifefertilizer.com/>

Brown Patch, caused by *Rhizoctonia Solani*, is a turfgrass disease that may affect St. Augustine and Zoysia grasses in the Fall. The Brown Patch disease likes cool temperatures, high humidity, excess water all of which is brought on during Fall. 'May affect' are the operative words because Brown Patch is largely an avoidable problem. In the Organic world we do not see Brown Patch as a major problem. Conversely if the property is maintained chemically then Brown Patch is most likely to occur each and every year.

Avoiding and preventing Brown Patch: It's all about soil health. Healthy soils will prevent Brown Patch from taking hold as the good microbes 'beat up' on the bad microbes. Good microbes need oxygen and a clean environment. Just like us! Soil pathogens (soil diseases) are anaerobic and like the exact opposite.

Soils go anaerobic when they are compacted and too much water is applied. Most turfgrass areas are maintained on compacted soils. Chemical applications further compact the soil and the property owner generally applies way too much water. The result: Anaerobic soils that are conducive to Brown Patch growth. The solution for many homeowners and lawn professionals is to apply a chemical fungicide in response. That is absolutely the wrong thing to do! Chemical fungicides are toxic poisons that kill good microbes and only temporarily abate Brown Patch.

Without the good microbes to protect the turfgrass, Brown Patch becomes a recurring problem. The Organic approach, by solving the core issue of soil health, will solve the problem on a permanent basis and will do so safely. This is important because all chemical fungicides are dangerous to humans & animals.

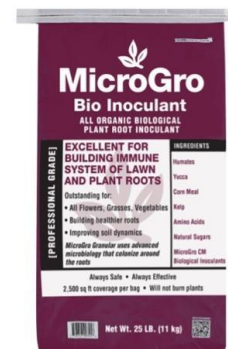
To avoid and prevent Brown Patch is easy, just follow these steps:

- Never use chemical fertilizers as they compact the soil.
- Never use chemical fungicides as they kill off the natural enemies of Brown Patch.

- Remember the Fall Equinox, September 23. At that date turfgrass physiologically changes. It goes from active growing to its dormant state. This means it needs much less water.
- Avoid too much water! Most people, remembering the hot Summer, forget to turn their turf irrigation water down. As a general rule, after September 23, turfgrass does not need more than one irrigation per week.
- Throughout the year only use quality Organic fertilizers like MicroLife to loosen the soil and increase the good microbes population numbers.
- To further prevent and treat Brown Patch apply a well proven Bio Inoculant like MicroGro Granular which colonizes around the root system, protecting the plant from harmful root pathogens.

Fall Fertilizer and fight Brown Patch at the same time. A great product for this is MicroLife Brown Patch 5-1-3. It will correctly feed your turf in the fall, reduce compaction and add billions of protecting microbes.

Active Brown Patch, what to do? At this point apply MicroGro Bio Inoculant at 10 lb per 1,000 sq ft. to the active area and a 5' perimeter around the affected area. Also make sure that the irrigation is turned down. If the turf is treated early enough, then we will still have a chance for the turfgrass to grow before it goes completely dormant.



From Texas Gardener's Seed Newsletter

PLANTING TIME!

October

Transplant Veggies	Seeds - Direct Sow	Transplant Herbs
artichoke	arugula	chives
broccoli	beets	cilantro
brussels sprouts	carrots	dill
cabbage	garlic	lemon balm
cauliflower	leeks	mint
collards	lettuce	oregano
kale	mizuna	parsley
kohlrabi	mustard	rosemary
swiss chard	radish	sage
	snap peas	thyme
	spinach	
	turnips	



	Vegetable Garden Planting Dates for Harris County											
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
ASPARAGUS, Crowns												
BEANS, Lima & Snap Bush												
BEANS, Lima & Snap Pole												
BEETS												
BROCCOLI, Plants												
CABBAGE, Plants												
CAULIFLOWER, Plants												
CARROTS												
CHARD, Swiss												
CHINESE CABBAGE												
COLLARDS												
CORN												
CUCUMBER												
EGGPLANTS, Plants												
KOHLRABI, Plants												
LETTUCE												
MUSKMELON, Cantalope												
MUSTARD												
OKRA												
ONION, Bulb-type sets												
ONION, Transplant for scallions												
ONION, Multipliers												
PARSLEY												
PEAS, English & Snap												
PEAS, Southern												
PEPPER, Plants												
POTATO, Irish												
POTATO, Sweet												
PUMPKIN												
RADISH												
SPINACH												
SQUASH, Summer												
SQUASH, Winter												
TOMATO, Plants												
TURNIP												
WATERMELON												



On a Lighter Note



Instead of carving the jack-o-lantern myself this year, I poked a bunch of small holes in a pumpkin and stuffed the holes with peanut butter. I then let the squirrels go at it for two days. The result is something truly disturbing