



Northumberland County Extension
Office, PO Box 400
Heathsville, VA 22473
(804)580-5694
www.nnmg.org

Northern Neck Master Gardeners (NNMG) offer free advice and solutions for all your gardening questions. This includes diagnosing plant, insect and disease problems; promoting safe use of pesticides and fertilizers to protect water quality and our environment; and teaching proper care of lawns, trees, shrubs and vegetables.

Mission: Trained and supervised by Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE), volunteers provide the community with research-based gardening and horticultural information through educational projects and programs. Services include Help Desks, Plant Clinics, seminars and workshops.

HELP DESKS

Call or bring in samples:

Northumberland Extension Office

Tuesdays, 9am – 12noon

January through December

(804)580-5694

Lancaster Extension Office

Thursdays, 9am – 12noon

April through October

(804)462-5780

Westmoreland Extension Office

Wednesdays, 9am-12noon

April through October

(804)493-8924

PLANT CLINICS

Bring your questions and samples:

May through October

Irvington Farmer's Market

1st Saturday of each month

9am – 1pm

Heathsville Farmer's Market

April through October

3rd Saturday of each month

9am – 1pm

Gardening in the Northern Neck:

A Handbook for Responsible

Gardeners - Written by local Master Gardeners, this is an invaluable reference for successful gardening in our area. Available for \$10 at Plant Clinics and Master Gardener events.

Please visit www.nnmg.org or call for more information.

Green Sleeves

Northern Neck Master Gardeners

July - September

NOW'S THE TIME

A Gardening Checklist for the Northern Neck

July

Vegetables & Herbs

- ☼ For a fall harvest of head cabbage and brussels sprouts, plant in mid-July. For a fall harvest of cucumber, carrots, and kale, sow seeds in mid-July.
- ☼ To preserve herbs by drying in a microwave, put a single layer between two paper towels and dry for two minutes. If not yet dry, continue to microwave at 30-second intervals. Store in an airtight container in a cool, dry place.

Annuals

- ☼ Get a second bloom from faded annuals by cutting back to approximately half their height, fertilize with ½ cup of 5-10-10 per square yard of planted area, and apply a generous layer of mulch.

Perennials

- ☼ Sow seeds of hollyhocks, English daisies, foxglove, violas, and Sweet William now for next year's bloom.
- ☼ Many plants are easily increased by layering. Verbena, euonymus, pachysandra, daphne, and climbing roses will root if stems are fastened down on soft earth with a wire and covered with soil.

Lawns

Sharpen mower blades to keep a lawn healthy. Dull or improperly adjusted mower blades tear grass, can cause a brown or grayish cast and weaken grass, making it more susceptible to fungal diseases. Increased mowing height in summer produces strong roots, and longer blades shade the soil to help prevent moisture loss. Never remove more than 1/3 of the height. Each turf grass has its own recommended mowing height to keep it healthy. Proper watering means deep soaking (wet soil to the bottom of roots). Leave clippings to decompose and provide nutrients. Avoid mowing if grass goes dormant due to lack of water.

Visit <http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/category/lawns.html> or contact your local extension office for more information. **Cool season grasses** (Kentucky bluegrass & tall fescue):

Apply lime according to your soil test. Apply crabgrass post-emergence control. Use sod webworm control if needed. **Warm season grasses** (zoysia, Bermuda): Fertilize as outlined in your fertilization program. Apply lime according to your soil test. Aerate as needed and control broadleaf weeds. Apply crabgrass post-emergence control. Insect and disease identification and control are critical.

Red, Hot & Green Summer Tips: If you can't water during hot, dry spells, it's best to do nothing—meaning don't prune or apply fertilizer or pest controls. Plants compensate for stress by relative inactivity. Cultural practices that encourage growth can induce further stress rather than being beneficial. Do: Water deeply—a minimum of 1" per week, applied at one time. Shallow watering doesn't produce deep roots to help plants survive drought. Use mulches and add organic matter to increase moisture retention. Remember, right plant—right place and consider water requirements when grouping plants in your garden.

August

Vegetables & Herbs

☼ Plant broccoli, cauliflower, and kohlrabi in early August. Plant celery, collards, leeks and parsley in mid-August, and plant lettuce toward the end of August. Sow seeds of bush beans, beets, collards, turnips and potatoes in mid-August and sow endive and radish seeds in late August.

☼ Continue to pick summer squash and zucchini every day or two to keep plants producing.

☼ Snap bean, tomato and pepper flowers may fail to develop fruit when daytime temperatures rise above 90°.

☼ Potatoes continue to grow as long as the tops are green. Dig only as many as you need for immediate use. Tubers keep better in the ground than in a warm, dry home.

☼ Plant winter cover crops as early as August 1 to decrease soil erosion during the winter, add organic material when incorporated in the spring, and add valuable nutrients. Annual rye, red clover and hairy vetch are good choices.



Annuals

☼ Remove bedding plants that have finished blooming. Replace with hardy annuals or mums.

☼ Don't let hybrid annual flowers go to seed—it weakens the plants and reduces bloom. Seeds are not desirable to save, as the resulting plant will be different from the parent and often of poorer quality.

Perennials

☼ Keep roots of lilies cool for best growth. If leaves from surrounding plants do not shade the roots, mulch with grass clippings or other weed-free material.

☼ Now is a good time to move and divide perennials. Oriental poppies can be planted, transplanted, or divided. Do not mulch dormant oriental poppies as they prefer hot, sun-baked ground while resting.

☼ Order spring-blooming bulbs now. A good guideline regarding bulb size for high quality show is ***the bigger the better***. Bargain bulbs may be small and of poor quality.

Lawns

☼ **Cool season grasses:** Begin fertilization as outlined in your fertilization program about mid-August. Apply lime according to your soil test. Mow throughout growing season. As needed, water deeply and aerate (coring aerators recommended). Lightly mow vertically after aeration to destroy plugs. If needed, apply grub control and sod webworm control. Address disease control as problems occur. Start broadcasting overseeding after surface preparation in mid-August. Sod damaged areas if adequate moisture is available.

☼ **Warm season grasses:** Fertilize as outlined in your fertilization program and apply lime according to your soil test. Mow throughout the growing season. Water deeply as necessary. Aerate as needed (coring aerators recommended). Overseed (perennial ryegrasses work best) in mid-August. Mow vertically if overseeding. Control broadleaf weeds. Apply crabgrass post-emergence control. Insect and disease identification and control are critical.

Shrubs

☼ Water to a depth of 5-6" once a week. Many plants, including camellias and rhododendrons, are starting buds for next season's bloom. Immature berries of holly and pyracantha may drop if plants are water stressed.

September

Vegetables & Herbs

☼ Cucumber beetles, squash bugs, Colorado potato beetles and European corn borers overwinter in debris left in the garden. Remove dead plant material and compost it or plow it under to limit your pest population next year to insects that migrate into the garden.

☼ Plant asparagus, basil, bok choy, and kale in early September; plant endive mid-September. Sow seeds of onions (seeds and sets) and spinach in early September; sow seeds of arugula and garlic (clove) mid-September.

☼ Sow lavender seeds outside in the fall; seedlings will appear in early spring.

Perennials

☼ Planting a mass of spring bulbs of one type or color produces a more pleasing effect than a mixture of multiple colors.

☼ Many perennials and rock garden plants may be planted, divided or replanted during the fall. Set them out early to establish roots before the ground freezes. Divide phlox about every 3rd or 4th year.

Lawns

Apply lime according to your soil test. Mow throughout the growing season. Water deeply and aerate as necessary. **Cool season grasses:** Fertilize as outlined in your fertilization program. Begin broadleaf weed control in mid-September. Direct disease control as problems occur. Continue to broadcast overseeding after surface preparation. **Warm season grasses:** Overseed (perennial ryegrasses work best). Mow vertically if overseeding. Insect and disease identification and control are critical.