

# UT Extension Sequatchie Co.

## Horticulture and Gardening Monthly News & Notes

August 2023

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### The 2023 Fall Gardeners' Festival is Scheduled for August 29

#### Home and Commercial Gardeners Are Invited to Attend This Annual Event



**The Fall Gardeners' Festival features a variety of presentations, educational workshops, exhibits, wagon tours, garden vendors and opportunities to Ask-the-Expert. Photo courtesy UTIA.**

CROSSVILLE, Tenn. – The University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture is excited to provide information throughout the year to make gardening a success for many home gardeners. This year's Fall Gardeners' Festival is even bigger and better than before with 15 scheduled presentations. UT Gardens, Crossville, in collaboration with UT Extension Master Gardeners will host the day-long event at Plateau AgResearch and Education Center. The event is from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. CDT, with registration beginning at 8 a.m., for those not pre-registered.

"We have more speakers, additional presentation space, and expect an even bigger crowd than ever before!" said

Shalena Durkot, garden coordinator at the Plateau AgResearch and Education Center. "There will be something for everyone at this free community event. Whether your interest is in edibles, ornamentals, wildlife or sustainability, we've got it covered."

Featured at the event are a variety of presentations, educational workshops, exhibits, wagon tours, garden vendors, and opportunities to Ask-the-Expert. Entomologists and plant pathologists will once again be available to answer questions. Mark Windham, UT professor emeritus of plant pathology, whose research heavily focuses on the rose rosette disease, will be on hand to discuss this most destructive ornamental disease in the U.S.

The Fall Gardeners' Festival is free to attend and food is available for purchase. The Plateau AgResearch and Education Center is located at 320 Experiment Station Road in Crossville, and you can visit [plateau.tennessee.edu](https://plateau.tennessee.edu) to learn more about the center's work and field day events. Online registration for the event is encouraged but not required. To register, visit [tiny.utk.edu/3olHE](https://tiny.utk.edu/3olHE).

More information on the Fall Gardeners' Festival presentations will be available closer to the event date.

Through its land-grant mission of research, teaching and extension, the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture touches lives and provides Real. Life. Solutions. [utia.tennessee.edu](https://utia.tennessee.edu).

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Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and resource development.  
University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating.  
UT Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

## UT Field Days 2023 Dates

- August 24, 2023, 8 a.m. CDT - Steak and Potatoes – Plateau AgResearch and Education Center at Crossville
- August 29, 2023, 8 a.m. CDT - Fall Gardener's Festival, Plateau AgResearch and Education Center at Crossville
- September 9, 2023, 10 a.m. EDT - UT Arboretum Butterfly Festival – Forest Resources AgResearch and Education Center at UT Arboretum in Oak Ridge
- October 5, 2023, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. CDT - Fall in the Gardens: Plant Sale and Garden Talks –and October 6, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. CDT, West Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center at Jackson
- October 19, 2023, 7 a.m. EDT - Woods and Wildlife – Forest Resources AgResearch and Education Center at UT Arboretum in Oak Ridge



## 4-H Poultry Show and Sale

Join us Saturday, August 12th for the Sequatchie County 4-H Poultry Show and auction. Support our local Chick Chain 4-Her's!

We will begin registration at 9:00 AM at the Sequatchie County Fair Building Gym located at 103 Heard St., Dunlap. Judging will begin at 10:00 AM CST and the auction will take place shortly after.

For more information, please call 423-949-2611 or email Dusty Ragland at [draglan3@utk.edu](mailto:draglan3@utk.edu) or Sheldon Barker at [sdbarker@utk.edu](mailto:sdbarker@utk.edu).

## Saving Seed This Fall

Are you saving seed this fall? Check out the article “How to Harvest and Store Seeds” by Aaron Steil, Consumer Horticulture Extension Specialist, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. The article can be found at: [https://hortnews.extension.iastate.edu/how-harvest-and-store-seeds?fbclid=IwAR0u-yIQ0ouWAXq5PB7LAYTx993kX8ILMVmNLauvBhMhYca51uqIK\\_pzYKQ](https://hortnews.extension.iastate.edu/how-harvest-and-store-seeds?fbclid=IwAR0u-yIQ0ouWAXq5PB7LAYTx993kX8ILMVmNLauvBhMhYca51uqIK_pzYKQ)

## 2023 Master Gardener Intern Class

Thursdays, September 7 thru November 16, 2023; 6:00 PM Central

Classes will be at the Sequatchie County Fair Building or other designated location in Dunlap.

The class will be a hybrid format – approximately 2 hours of recorded lectures and 2 hours classroom/field time.

Cost \$150.00/person

To register contact Sheldon Barker at [sdbarker@utk.edu](mailto:sdbarker@utk.edu) or 423-949-2611

# September Gardening Tips

“Gardening requires lots of water - most of it in the form of perspiration.”

Lou Erickson

## Trees, Shrubs and Flowers

- Work on a landscape plan for fall planting of trees, shrubs, and bulbs. Most of the planting should wait until late October and November, but supplies will be at their peak in garden centers in September.
- Fertilize roses one last time. Prune rambler roses and remove any diseased or dead rose canes.
- Root prune wisteria that doesn't bloom.
- Divide, transplant, and label perennials. Complete divisions by mid-October to allow the roots time to establish before winter. Be sure to keep newly divided plants watered.
- If you've grown tender bulbs this summer such as caladium and dahlia, this is the month to dig them and put them into storage for next year's use.
- Collect seed from perennials and annuals.
- Continue to cut flowers for drying, like yarrow, strawflower, and cockscomb.
- Remove and compost spent annuals and fallen leaves.
- Plant late-season annuals like pansies, snapdragons, Dianthus, ornamental kale and cabbage for color fall through spring.

## Lawn care

- De-thatch and core aerate lawns to promote root growth and improve fertilizer absorption and seed germination.
- Lime lawns if a soil test indicates it is necessary.
- Perk up your lawn by fertilizing with nitrogen fertilizers. These will speed lawn growth, thicken the lawn, and improve its color.
- If you have thin or bare areas in your lawn, seed and mulch them to reduce erosion and weeds.
- Introduce new, improved varieties or a tall-fescue blend. You need to seed by mid-October, but you can fertilize as late as mid-November.
- Get your Bermudagrass or Zoysia lawns ready for winter by increasing the cutting height this month. This helps buffer these grasses from cold damage.
- Apply a fertilizer with potassium to increase the hardiness of your warm-season grasses. Look for fertilizers formulated with a pre-emergence herbicide to prevent seeds of annual bluegrass and other winter weeds from germinating and competing with your grasses for light, nutrients, and water.
- If your lawn is too shady for grass, now would be a great time to remove lower limbs and dead wood from large trees. This can greatly increase the amount of light reaching your lawn.
- Remove algae and moss from a shady lawn by raking or applying copper sulfate.
- Since grasses growing in shade are usually weak and spindly, remove fallen leaves as soon as possible.

## Fruits and veggies

- If rain is lacking, continue to practice water-wise techniques for your cool-season garden.
- Add organic matter such as manure, compost, and/or leaf mold to improve garden soils.
- Keep harvesting herbs, especially tender herbs like basil.
- Harvest onions and garlic as soon as the tops fall over and begin to dry out.
- Continue planting cool-season crops including leaf lettuce, spinach, cabbage, broccoli, Swiss chard, parsley, and radishes.

# UT Gardens Plant of the Month

## August 2023

### Try Oakleaf Lettuce To Avoid Icebergs As You Sail Into Fall Garden Season

Submitted by Natalie Bumgarner, associate professor and Extension specialist, Department of Plant Sciences, University of Tennessee



**The chef type of oakleaf lettuce named ‘Salanova’ will bring a sophisticated gourmet touch to your table. Photo courtesy of Natalie Bumgarner.**

This fall would be a great time to take another look at lettuce and experiment with some new options in your fall garden. Lettuce (*Lactuca sativa*) is the vegetable cousin in one of the largest ornamental plant families, Asteraceae. As the third most consumed fresh vegetable in the United States, it hardly flies under the radar for gardeners. However, lettuce often doesn’t get the love it deserves because many gardeners may feel limited to leaf types if they have struggled with the more challenging iceberg or romaine lettuces. If that is you, this is the year to check out beautiful oakleaf lettuces that can be a tasty, productive and unique crop.

Oakleaf lettuce, as the name suggests, has a unique leaf shape as well as a more open head. This more open structure can help reduce the incidence of

tipburn on young leaves that can be a challenge on romaine and the larger head lettuce types. The most common oakleaf color is a vibrant light to medium green. Recent AAS winners ‘Bauer’, a darker green oakleaf, and ‘Sandy’, a unique deer tongue leaf shape type, have been strong against tipburn and have done well in Tennessee trials. There are beautiful red leaf cultivars, as well, such as ‘Oscarde’ and ‘Rouxai’.

While oakleaf lettuce can be direct-seeded, transplants can be a great way to reduce in-ground growing time and have a more consistent crop. You can also find a great selection of cultivars if you order seed and grow your own transplants. Late August and into September is the ideal planting time in Tennessee, so now is a great time to get seeds ordered and started. Lettuce prefers a site with 6 to 7 pH as well as good moisture and drainage. Oakleafs can be planted on 8- to 12-inch spacing in the garden, raised bed or container for good space efficiency. A steady supply of water as well as nutrients is important to support shallow lettuce roots, promote rapid growth and avoid the stress that reduces lettuce quality. It may take three to six weeks from transplanting depending on the conditions, but oakleaf heads can be harvested small. In fact, mini heads are increasingly popular in culinary circles. Row covers and low tunnels also work well with oakleaf to extend the growing season into the later fall.

You can see oakleaf lettuce growing in early fall this year both in the Helping Hands Kitchen Garden at the University of Tennessee Gardens, Knoxville, and at the UT Gardens’ location in Jackson, Tennessee.

So, give lettuce another look and try some beautiful oakleaf that is definitely not your mama’s iceberg lettuce!