

Get Your Home Orchard Ready for Winter

by James A. Fizzell, Sr. Ext. Adviser
Horticulture

From the numbers of questions coming to Extension offices, it is obvious that many gardeners are starting home orchards. Now is the time to prevent damage to fruit trees by preparing them for winter.

Remove all grass and weeds around the trunks of the trees. Use hand clippers on vegetation you cannot cut with a lawn mower. Be sure not to nick the bark. The vegetation provides protection for field mice which will live there all winter eating the inner bark of trunks and roots, frequently killing fruit trees.

Rabbits eat the bark off the trunks and any branches within reach, particularly on young fruit trees. However, they do not bother older trees which have developed heavy outer bark. Mechanical barriers are recommended for protection from rabbits. Use chicken wire or hardware cloth to form a cylinder around the trunk. The cylinder should be at least two inches from the trunk, and high enough to provide protection in the vent of heavy snow cover. Plastic spiral strips are satisfactory on smaller trees. Or, wrap the trunk with newspapers, water-proof paper, or tree wrap. Wrapping the trunk will also help protect the trunk from winter sun scald, and will benefit even older trees not subject to rabbit damage.

Trunk wrapping does not keep the trunk warmer, but shades it from the winter sun which would elevate the temperatures of the inner bark to the point where it begins growing even in mid-winter. When the sun sets, temperatures rapidly drop to freezing or lower; this causes ice crystals to form in the inner bark, killing it. Such injury usually occurs on the south or southwest side of the trunk, the area most likely to be warmed by winter sunlight, and may not become apparent until the next summer. Some nurseries are investigating white paint on the trunk as a protection from winter sun damage.

Remove the paper wrap when growth starts in the spring so it will not provide a hiding place for insects which may injure the trunk during the growing season.

Of major concern in winter survival of fruit trees is drainage. Fill low areas so water will not stand around the tree trunks and roots during the winter months. Such conditions are ideal for development of disease organisms which could attack the trees at the soil line and kill them.

Plant Now for a Beautiful Spring!

After a dreary Chicagoland winter, few things are more appreciated than the first signs of spring.

These first signs can appear as early as February with crocuses popping through the snow. And, even the most ordinary surroundings can be transformed into a beautiful scene as tulips, hyacinths, and daffodils burst into bloom.

Even though spring is months away, now is the time for preparation. In fact, spring bulbs **must** be planted in the fall. Planting can continue until ground freezes so solid it can't be worked.

Planting is simple. Just dig a hole, drop in the bulb and let nature do the rest.

Spring flowering bulbs are not fussy about soil. They will grow in sandy or clay soil — just so long as the soil drains well. If the soil is heavy, improve it by mixing in sand or peat moss to a depth of a foot or so. Rich soil isn't necessary as the bulbs contain food needed to produce foliage and flowers in the spring.

Plant a spring bulb garden in either sun or shade. Since the flowers appear early in the season, they are often finished and matured by the time trees leaf out and shade the garden.

Plant daffodils, hyacinths and tulips six inches deep and six inches apart. Fosteriana and Kaufmanniana tulips can be planted a little shallower, four inches deep and three inches apart.

Set the bulbs firmly in place, pointed ends up, and water liberally. Water again if a prolonged dry spell occurs in fall.

For best effect, plant in clusters of a dozen or more. Space these clusters throughout the garden — among shrubs, along walks, around trees or near entrances.

The tulips with classic shapes — Triumph, Darwin, Cottage — are especially suited for planting in garden beds and borders. These are the staples of the bulb garden and give a dramatic splash of color. Early blooming species tulips, which grow from 4 to 12 inches tall, are more effective in a casual setting such as rock garden or semi-naturalistic area.



TimberLine, Inc.

WE OFFER FAST, DEPENDABLE SERVICE — EXPERIENCED IN EXPANSION & RENOVATION OF TEES & SAND TRAPS, IMPROVEMENT OF PATHS, EXCAVATING, BACKHOE WORK, DIRT HANDLING & LEVELING.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR NEED REFERENCE OR TESTIMONIALS PLEASE CALL BUSINESS AND ANSWERING SERVICE 963-9088. HOME 963-4510.

Timberline, Inc., 1129 Jefferson, D.G. Ill. 60515, Bill Boyd

Country Club Greens Grade Fertilizers

Gold Cup quality for great-looking greens, tees & fairways.



PRODUCT	TURFGRASS USE	ORGANIC CONTENT	SQ. FEET COVERAGE
Country Club 18-4-10	Greens Tees Fairways	90%	9,000
Country Club 18-3-12	Greens Tees Fairways	70%	9,000
Country Club 18-0-18	Greens Tees Fairways	80%	9,000
Country Club 8-4-24* 100% Sulfate of Potash	Greens Fall Fairway Year Round	30%	12,000*

The particle sizing is a small homogeneous granulation for less mower pickup.

Brian McGuffin

Lebanon
TOTAL TURF CARE

1332 Reichert Road Crete, IL 60417 (312) 672-7537