

By Susan Brackney, *Hobby Farm Home* contributing editor and passionate gardener



FALL

- Ready houseplants for overwintering inside. Check for insect pests or disease, and repot if necessary.
- Rake up falling leaves, reseed bare patches in the lawn and fertilize.
- Dig late-season potatoes. Give them a couple of weeks to cure in a cool, dark root cellar or pantry before storing them for the winter.
- Once temperatures dip, pick any green tomatoes still on the vine and allow them to ripen indoors.
- Rake up any remaining fallen leaves and stray sticks. Send them through a chipper-shredder, then compost.
- Because it turns a deep red, poison ivy is easier to spot now. Find a safe way to eradicate; if you're very careful, you can glove up and pull it out along fencerows and garden borders. When you're done, throw away gloves and any contaminated clothes.
- Before the soil becomes unworkable, plant hyacinths, snowdrops, lily of the valley, crocuses, and other spring-flowering beauties.
- Choose a sunny, well-draining spot to excavate for your living Christmas tree. Cover the hole with a large board to prevent accidents until it's time to plant.
- Prune dormant trees and shrubs. Add an extra layer of protective mulch.
- Ready tender roses for cold weather by erecting windbreaks and mounding a light soil mix around the base of your plants.