



# THE NEW HORT THYMES

**CLEVELAND COUNTY  
EXTENSION**

Serving Cleveland County, Oklahoma with the most up to date gardening, lawn, landscaping, and horticulture information.



## Cleveland County Extension Office

**Address**

601 E Robinson St  
Norman, OK 73071

**Phone**

405-321-4774

**Email**

[courtney.dekalb@okstate.edu](mailto:courtney.dekalb@okstate.edu)

**Website**

[www.oces.okstate.edu/cleveland](http://www.oces.okstate.edu/cleveland)

**Social Media**

Facebook:  
/clevelandcountyhort  
Instagram:  
@clevelandcountyhorticulture



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## Spring into Summer

There was one week last month where it rained all week and I thought to myself, “here we go again”. Last year it seemed like the rainy spring season lasted all the way into June. Summer didn’t start until July and when it did start, it was blazing hot. The 180° turn from cool and wet to hot and dry caused a lot of problems for garden plants. So when I saw rain was forecasted for all of Memorial Day weekend, my summer optimism started to falter. Not to mention that one week in May where it got into the 40s.

Now, it looks like the highs are in the low 90s, lows in the 70s. This is the time of year where spring turns into summer. A time of transition and a time of change. A perfect time to reflect and work on improving the garden. There are still cool season veggies to harvest, but we’re quickly trying to get warm season crops in the ground. Summer flowers are beginning to open as pansies and other spring flowers fade. And the weeds, oh how many weeds. It is important to stay on top of the weeds in our garden. If left unchecked, they can run rampant and spread throughout the whole landscape. They’ll rob nutrients and moisture from the other plants, so make sure to pull them up and get rid of them.

## Plants for Wet Garden Areas

After we receive spring rain, gardeners become more aware of low spots in their yard. These areas become a swampy mess for a day or two. If the plants can stay alive, they definitely don't thrive in the standing water. What can be done? Drainage systems can be costly and reforming the landscape topography can be daunting. The other option is to pick plants that can tolerate wet roots for short periods of time. For these areas, consider some of the following perennials:



**Blue False Indigo**  
*Baptisia australis*

Blue false indigo is an upright perennial with purple, lupine-like flowers. After blooming in the spring, flowers give way to charcoal colored seed pods for an added element of interest. It does best in full sun and can tolerate many soil types.



**Red Star Hibiscus**  
*Hibiscus coccineus*

Also called swamp hibiscus, red star hibiscus grows to about 6' tall and has showy, scarlet red flowers. It can tolerate light shade, but prefers full sun. Due to its height, it's best used as a backdrop in the garden.



**Indian Pink**  
*Spigelia marilandica*

Indian pink is an excellent plant for shady areas. It is upright, multi-stemmed clump forming perennial. Tubular red flowers are contrasted with yellow, star-shaped throats. Hummingbirds and butterflies are attracted to the flowers.



**Texas Columbine**  
*Aquilegia hinckleyana*

A compact plant (18-30" tall) with large bright yellow flowers that bloom in early spring. The foliage is bluish green. It is best planted in light to moderate shade. It is also a good selection for hummingbird gardens.



**Turk's Cap**  
*Malvaviscus arboreus*  
*var. drummondii*

Turk's cap is a multi-stemmed, bushy perennial with bright red flowers. The blooms will continue through the summer. It prefers full sun, but can tolerate some shade. White varieties are also available.



**Daylilies**  
*Hemerocallis* spp.

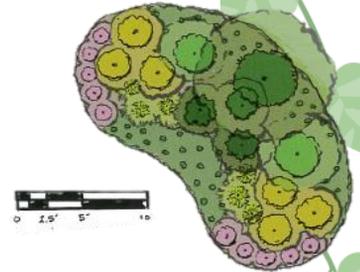
A relatively common garden plant, daylilies are tough and well-adapted to many situations. This includes large fluctuations of moisture. There are several varieties and many colors. Flowers will continue to bloom in the heat of summer.

# Creating an Edible Landscape

Most often, we think of our edible garden spaces in neat, raised beds. Plants are arranged in straight rows or in grids. It might not be the prettiest part of the yard, but we do appreciate it for its functionality. If you're looking to combine that functionality with aesthetics or simply don't have the space for a vegetable garden, edible landscaping might be a viable option. Edible landscaping is, quite simply, using edible plants with some ornamental value in the landscape. Our suburban landscapes have more potential for food production than we might initially think. Using a couple tricks and some simple steps, an edible landscape can be easy to achieve.

## Start Out Small

Re-doing landscapes for any reason is an undertaking. It can be expensive and time-consuming. The key with any new landscapes, including edible landscapes, is to start out small. Choose one corner of the yard to start. Draw a diagram to determine what should be planted in the area. This will make the process seem less overwhelming.



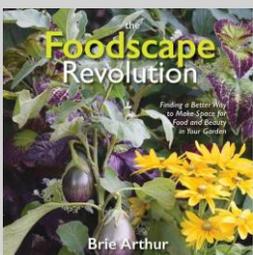
## Prioritize Diversity

Diversity is key in a healthy landscape. The edible landscape can have herbs, vegetables, fruit, and nut trees. It can also have edible flowers and flower to attract beneficial. Just because it's an edible landscape doesn't mean every plant has to be edible. Plants for shading, screening, or simply to add a nice pop of color do not have to be excluded from the edible landscape



## Use the Principles of Design

To effectively execute an edible landscape, our perspective needs to change. Just because a plant is functional and produces food does not mean that it's without ornamental attributes. Consider the ferny foliage of asparagus or the strikingly bright colors of hot peppers. Edible plants still have color, texture, and form. For an eye-pleasing color effect, consider pairing purple eggplants with yellow flowers for contrast. Coarse textured plants, like sweet potatoes or squash, can easily overpower a small space, where fine texture plants, like fennel or asparagus, can make a small space seem larger. Considering the color, texture, or form of a plant can make it easier to design the landscape.



To learn more about edible landscaping, check out Brie Arthur's book **The Foodscaping Revolution: Finding a Better Way to Make Space for Food and Beauty in Your Garden**. Or visit [www.briegrows.com](http://www.briegrows.com).

Photos on this page are from The Foodscaping Revolution.



## June Plant of the Month: Tickseed

A delightfully cheery plant to add some brightness to the garden

Tickseed, also known as coreopsis, is a delightful addition to sunny spots of the yard. It is native to prairies, glades, and roadsides throughout the southeastern United States. It grows in a clump and puts out 2' tall slender stems with daisy-like flowers. There are many varieties of tickseed, with yellow, orange, red, or two-toned flowers. Butterflies are attracted to their 2" flat flowers. Bloom period can be extended if the plants are regularly deadheaded.

It requires medium moisture and well-drained soil. It is tolerant of heat, humidity, drought, and a little bit of neglect. Tickseed is a relatively short-lived plant, living for only two or three years. It can spread from rhizomes, but most often reseeds to perpetuate itself in the garden.



**Deadhead** /dedhed/: to remove dead flower heads from a plant to encourage further blooming

## Garden Tips for June

- Mulch ornamentals, vegetables, and annuals to reduce soil crusting, and to regulate temperatures and moisture
- Deadhead tired annuals to increase future blooms
- Continue scouting for insect damage in flower and vegetables beds – spider mites become prevalent this time of year
- Scout for diseases – powdery mildew can be prevalent after excess moisture
- Pinch back fall blooming perennials to create fuller plants with prolific blooms
- Fertilize warm-season grass at 1 lb of nitrogen per 1000 sq. ft. to maintain a thick, green lawn; do not fertilize cool season grasses
- Recruit someone to mow the lawn and water the bed if leaving for vacation
- Seeding of warm-season grasses should be completed by the end of June
- White grubs will soon emerge as adult June beetles; watch for heavy populations
- Protect trees from lawnmowers and weed eaters by mulching or using protective aerated covers
- Stay on top of weeding in the vegetable bed; weeds rob vegetables of nutrients and decrease the yield
- Remember to prune tomatoes – this increases airflow and limits disease pressure within the canopy
- Side dress vegetables with compost or fish emulsion to give them a boost
- Repeat plantings of vegetables for extended harvest later on
- Renovate overgrown strawberry beds after the last harvest by mowing off the top foliage

## Eat Seasonally

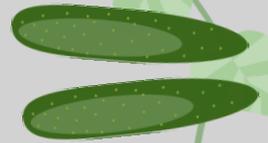
In-season produce is fresher, cheaper, more nutritious, and better for the environment. These are some of the seasonal crops for June:

### Blackberries



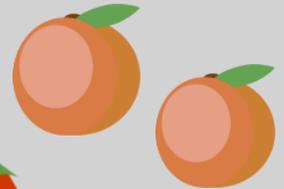
### Corn

### Cucumbers



### Green Beans

### Peaches



### Peppers

### Purple Hull Peas



### Strawberries

### Summer Squash



# Upcoming Events

## June 4<sup>th</sup>, 6:30pm to 8:00pm – Tips and Tricks for Homegrown Tomatoes

Tomatoes are one of the most beloved garden vegetables. They can also be one of the harder ones to grow. If you're looking to have better luck this year, join us for a webinar to cover tips and tricks for better tomatoes. Varieties, trellising systems, and troubleshooting will be discussed.

The class is free, but registration is required. To register, visit

[https://dasnr.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcscO6oqzqgHtD\\_pVm-XCTimxCEzNuiCzm](https://dasnr.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcscO6oqzqgHtD_pVm-XCTimxCEzNuiCzm)

## June 16<sup>th</sup>, 6:30pm to 8:00pm – Improving Garden Soils

Soil quality is determined by the combination of physical, chemical, and biological properties of the soil and its capacity to support plants and animals. In other words, soil is more than just dirt! Join us for a webinar on how to improve garden soils, manage them organically, and promote beneficial soil organisms. Learn more about soil testing and how it adds to your garden success.

The class is free, but registration is required. To register, visit

<https://dasnr.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcucuirqzliGt1DTMI2tU17dDwfGc0jQhzX>

## June 24<sup>th</sup>, 6:30pm to 8:00pm – Xeriscaping and Water-Conscious Landscaping

Water is a key component in a healthy landscape, but come summertime, we can end up with some very thirsty plants. There are several ways to overcome this, including planning the landscape and using the appropriate plants. Join us for a webinar on xeriscapes and water efficient landscapes.

The class is free, but registration is required. To register, visit

<https://dasnr.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcpcemuqT8rHdDuu6EQ5FUfg7-5PX2FWQ8>

### About the editor...

Courtney DeKalb-Myers has been the Cleveland County horticulture educator since August 2018. Her position handles homeowner inquiries, master gardener advisement, and other horticulture education programming throughout the state. She is originally from Norman, Oklahoma and developed a passion for gardening at a young age. She went onto study horticulture at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater with an emphasis in entrepreneurship. After graduating from OSU, she moved to Raleigh, North Carolina to attend NC State for graduate school. Her research was heavily focused on vegetable production, specifically processing tomatoes for a local salsa product. The emphasis on local products motivated her to move back to Oklahoma and she is so excited to now serve the town that raised her.

