



# Wisconsin Horticulture

UW-MADISON DIVISION OF EXTENSION



## What's happening in Horticulture? December 2025

Greetings gardeners,

With December comes winter weather. Recent snowfall across Wisconsin has prompted heavy use of salt and sand to keep roads and sidewalks safe—but these materials can take a toll on landscape plants, among other things. This [Winter Salting Guide](#) demonstrates smarter deicing practices that maintain public safety while protecting local wildlife and freshwater resources. Keep reading for upcoming events and timely resources to stay connected to nature during winter.

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### Upcoming Online Programs

- **Registration Opens: Plant Diagnostics Online Horticulture Course**  
Tuesday, Dec. 9 | [Learn More](#)
- **Ask Your Gardening Question: LIVE**  
Monday, Dec. 15, 1:30–2:30 p.m.  
Zoom webinar | [Learn More](#)
- **Ten Cool Diseases You Can Learn to Love (and Identify by Eye)**  
Wednesday, Dec. 17, 6:30–8:30 p.m.  
Zoom webinar | [Learn More](#)

[View more upcoming events](#)



[Amaryllis](#) bulbs are often used as holiday gifts; if properly cared for, they can bring joy and cheer for many years.

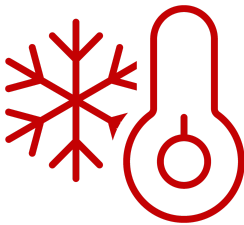
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## Timely Articles



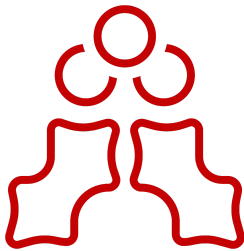
### **Choosing the Right Christmas Tree**

Believe it or not, a live Christmas tree can be a more sustainable choice than an artificial one. When you bring a fresh tree into your home, you'll want to make sure it lasts. Learn how to identify a healthy tree, determine which tree species suits your needs, and care for your tree once it's indoors. [\*\*Read more...\*\*](#)



### **Winter Salt Injury and Salt-Tolerant Landscape Plants**

During winter, deicing salts are used extensively to melt ice and snow on roadways and sidewalks. However, most of these products pose significant hazards to the environment. Learn how to prevent plant damage, find environmentally friendly alternatives, and choose salt-tolerant landscape plants. [\*\*Read more...\*\*](#)



### **► WATCH: Maintaining Your Festive Houseplants**

Do you know the right way to water a holiday cactus? Or get a poinsettia to successfully rebloom? This recorded presentation covers practical tips and common pitfalls to keep your festive plants healthy and vibrant beyond the holidays. Gain a deeper understanding of Norfolk Island Pine, holiday cactus, and poinsettia. [\*\*Watch now...\*\*](#)

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**Save the date! Registration opens Dec. 9.**



## Plant Diagnostics: The Step-by-Step Approach to Identifying Plant Problems

Course dates: Feb. 1–April 30, 2026  
100% Online | Self-Paced

Prepare yourself for next year's growing season by learning the process of identifying plant problems. This course explains the basics of the plant diagnostic process in an easy-to-understand way. Gain a deeper understanding of insect and wildlife damage, plant diseases and disorders, management options and more.

[Learn More](#)

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## Master Gardener Onboarding

Feb. 16–March 29, 2026 | 100% Online

Onboarding is an online course for individuals wishing to join the Wisconsin Extension Master Gardener Program. It is **Step 2** in the **process to become a Master Gardener.**

[Onboarding Information](#)



## **Wisconsin Yard & Garden**

A weekly column of horticulture education and activities for Wisconsin gardeners. Read the latest articles from this past month.

- [Pros and Cons of Snow for Plants](#)
- [Spruces in Wisconsin Landscapes & Forests](#)
- [Reducing Deicing Salt Damage This Winter](#)
- [Plant Dormancy a Dependable Process](#)

## In the News

**Why is there so much asparagus growing along the side of the road in Wisconsin?** | Wisconsin Life  
| Featuring Mark Renz





**Invasive tree-killing pest 'highly likely' to show up in Wisconsin, expert says** | Wisconsin Public Radio | Featuring PJ Liesch

► **Listen: Why We Should be Thankful for Bugs** | Wisconsin Public Radio | Featuring PJ Liesch

**More Extension Horticulture in the news →**




Hardy **fountain grass** species make excellent specimen plants, providing winter interest in an otherwise stark landscape.




PLANT HEALTH ADVISING PROGRAM


# Have a gardening Question?




Lawn and garden questions




Plant diagnosis




Soil testing information




Landscape and gardening information



Plant identification



Plant disease testing information



Insect identification

[hort.extension.wisc.edu/ask-a-gardening-question](http://hort.extension.wisc.edu/ask-a-gardening-question)

### UW-Madison Division of Extension Horticulture Program

Find articles, resources, educational events and more at [hort.extension.wisc.edu](http://hort.extension.wisc.edu)

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