

OPTIONS FOR DEALING WITH THE BIOMASS AFTERMATH OF YOUR GARDEN



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Garden's fall biomass: treasures and liabilities

- What is garden biomass?
 - Dead plant material from vegetable and flower gardens
 - Leaves from trees, shrubs, and vines
 - Grass and other ground covers (alive)
 - Weeds (dead or alive)
 - Plant supports, cages, poles, stakes, irrigation, synthetic covers
- How can we use biomass safely
- What needs to be discarded and moved away from home
- Effective ways to recycle organics and reap their benefits
- Preventing diseases and further problems next season
- Composting at home

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Discard liabilities

- **Discard**= Garbage and out of home
- Any diseased plant material
 - Leaves from trees and shrubs w/disease
 - Any production plant or flowers w/disease
 - Heavy insect-infected plant residue
 - Poison plant residues
- Tomato, cucumber, and any hard vines
- Share or discard excess material you can't store or handle
- Strongly avoid open-burning excess material just to get rid of it



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Vegetable gardens

- Pull and discard diseased plants
- Pull, clean, and store plant supports, cages, irrigation, etc.
- Pull and discard hard-vine plants and synthetic soil cover
- Collect desirable seeds
 - If a chipper/grinder is available, grind stalks and larger material
- All other plant material can go to the compost pile



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Vegetable garden cleanup and other critters

- Poultry are excellent allies for cleanup
- Goats, sheep, and swine can also help
- You can introduce them just after pulling diseased plants, irrigation, and plant supports
 - Introduce poultry again after clearing all
 - Take precautions to avoid contact with wildlife and animal diseases or injuries



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Flower gardens

- Pull and discard diseased plants
- Pull, clean, and store plant supports, cages, irrigation, etc.
- Collect desirable seeds
 - If possible, leave plant material on until spring
- Great habitat for desirable insects and wildlife during winter
- Monitor for pests (weeds, rodents and pest insects)



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Trees, vines, and shrubs' leaves

- They are a treasure, don't discard them! (unless a disease or infestation is present)
- Source of nutrients (C, P, K, micronutrients)
- Source of mulch
- Feed and protection for worms, desirable insects, arthropods, and wildlife
- Some portions can be processed and others stored
- Management is key



Trees, vines, and shrubs' leaves

Make it FUN!
Repeat during the falling season



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Trees, vines, and shrubs' leaves

- Don't wait until all leaves have fallen
- Repeat procedures 2 or 3 times during the season
- Mow leaves periodically during the season (mulch from 20% to 100% of leaves)



Earthworm Feeding Video
<https://youtu.be/CHZskMlgpHA?t=31>



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Trees, vines, and shrubs' leaves

- Mulch or add to garden beds in the fall
- Stockpile to add to compost or mulch
- Make small leaf piles around as insect and wildlife habitat



Stockpiling leaves for next season



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Other related fall tasks

- Time to fertilize with manures, compost, or leaves - 120 days rule
- Apply and incorporate
- Don't overdo it
 - One big application every few years
 - Small applications every year or two
- Plant cover crops



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Trees, vines, and shrubs' prunings

- Late winter/early spring task
- Prunings are a great source of woody material
- Fireplace, stove, fire pit, barbeque (flavors)
- Stockpile and cure prunings before using
- Chip it and use it as mulch or in compost



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