Emerald Ash Borer - Reports of EAB damaged ash trees have been coming in from around the state.

Starting Veggie/Flower Seeds – Get a head start on the growing season by starting your seeds.

Be On the Lookout: Spotted Lanternfly

The spotted lanternfly is an invasive insect that attacks grapes, apples, stone fruits, and pines. This non-native invasive pest was first detected in the United States in 2014 in Berks County, Pennsylvania but is spreading to other counties in the state. Maryland residents should be on the lookout.

Adults lay eggs on multiple flat surfaces including the outsides and undersides of vehicles which allows them to spread. Egg masses will hatch in the spring. Both nymphs and adults of spotted lanternfly cause damage when they feed, sucking sap from stems and leaves. This can reduce photosynthesis, weaken the plant, and eventually contribute to the plant’s death.

If you should see this insect in Maryland, contact the Home and Garden Information Center. Go to ‘Ask
African Violets - Brighten up your indoor spaces with some color.

Maryland's Garden Experts' to report your sighting. Attach a digital photo of the pest with your question.

Resources:
The Spotted Lanternfly, Penn State Entomology
Spotted Lanternfly: What to Look For - Photo Gallery
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)
Additional Information from Penn State Entomology
Journal of Integrated Pest Management: A New Invasive Pest in the United States

From the GIEI Blog

2017 is GIEI's Year of Small Fruits

Every year we celebrate a particular group of edible plants, and this year we're moving out of the vegetable world into small fruits!

Small fruits such as blueberries, strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, currants, grapes, and many others can be long-lived, attractive, and productive additions to your garden. They don't require a lot of labor once a site has been prepared well and the young plants cared for. Watering, weeding and mulching will be regular but not strenuous tasks. Most small fruits require pruning once or twice a year. A few plants (such as grapes) will need pest control, but on the whole, small fruits are easier to care for than tree fruits, and the results are delicious and nutritious.

Read our Getting Started with Small Fruits page for more information and links to care instructions for particular plants. Soon we'll have a page up for 2017's Year of Small Fruit - expect an update here on the GIEI Blog when it's ready! And start perusing your catalogs for small fruit plants you might find room for in your garden.

Posted by Erica Smith

--- Read more of the GIEI Blog

Featured Video

How to Make a Paper Seed Packet
Check out this easy to make seed packet for storing your seeds!

Download the template

A fun suggestion to add some style: trace the template onto wrapping paper, or use old greeting cards.

Thanks to University of Maryland Extension Garrett County for the template!

Q&A

Q In my travels around the state I see so many trees being overwhelmed and natural areas being overtaken by heavy vines. Am I the only person who is noticing this and is there anything being done about the problem?

A You are not alone in noticing this issue but there are many folks who are not aware of the problem. Numerous invasive plant species exist in Maryland, several of which are vines. Kudzu (pictured right), Oriental bittersweet, Japanese honeysuckle, Chinese and Japanese wisteria, and English ivy are among the worst offenders. We encourage private homeowners to control invasives on their property and to not plant invasive plants. There are environmental groups which conduct or perform invasive plant control in addition to county maintenance crews. Some counties even have initiated programs and offer training for people who are interested in becoming 'weed warrior' volunteers. See our section on Invasive Plants for more information.

Have a plant or pest question? University of Maryland Extension's experts have answers! Send in your questions and photos to Ask an Expert.

Have a suggestion for a topic to cover in the HGIC newsletter? Send in your suggestions.
anyone because of race, age, sex, color, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry, national origin, marital status, genetic information, political affiliation, and gender identity or expression.

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