We all know the killing frost is not far away and some gardeners will be thankful to have a bit of a break. I pulled some weeds and picked up some buckeyes yesterday. The Black walnuts are still falling and hitting the roof of the house and scaring poor Miss Kitty. She has been sleeping downstairs in the basement to avoid the loud thumps! My Raised beds are still producing, and I am giving a pep talk daily to the green beans and cucumbers that are in full bloom. They are enjoying the warm days. I would love to eat some October green beans and sliced cucumbers!

I planted garlic yesterday and realized that I hadn’t included the information for a great Fact Sheet, Growing Garlic in the Garden, written by Timothy Malinich, that can be found at ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/hyg-1627.

As I have been in and out of my garden shed the past few weeks, I realized it is time to get organized (again). At the end of the growing season I put things in the shed and say to myself, “I will go through things this winter.” Maybe this year will be the year, instead of waiting until the spring!

According to a gardening newsletter I receive from Hudson Valley Seed Company, “October is the garden gate of the season. It’s the dividing line between one year’s bounty and the next. With its arrival comes the end of the planting period for most crops, and the last call for many others. But October also heralds harvests of squash, sunflowers, and fall greens. And it offers us the opportunity both to plant seeds to overwinter and to pamper our growing spaces so our gardens will be better than ever come spring. It’s a month of appreciation for what we’ve worked so hard to achieve over the past growing season, and an investment in the year to come.”

The pumpkins have been added to my flower beds and it is time to start putting our gardens to bed for the winter.

October’s tasks for the gardens include:

1. Have your lawn and garden soil tested. You can contact the OSUE Brown County office for more information at 937-378-6716
2. Rake up fallen leaves and add them to your compost heap.
3. Mulch areas intended for early spring planting.
4. Plant trees and shrubs and water deeply before ground freezes.
5. After leaf fall, take hardwood cuttings.
6. Reseed the lawn until the soil cools.
7. Mark late-to-emerge perennials.
8. Rake up or pull out annuals once they’re killed by frost.
9. Clean up your perennial beds.
10. Continue planting hardy spring-flowering bulbs.
11. Direct-seed lettuce, endive, and escarole.
12. Take cuttings of your favorite herbs to grow indoors over winter.
13. Dig, sever, and replant rooted suckers of raspberries.
14. Remove stakes and other garden equipment from the vegetable garden.
15. After a killing frost, clean up the vegetable garden. Squash vine borers winter over in plant debris.
16. Check houseplants for insect pests that may hitch a ride inside at summer’s end.
17. Plant amaryllis bulbs for holiday bloom.
18. Dig and store summer-flowering tender bulbs after first frost.
19. Make a to-do list for next year’s garden while you still remember what happened this year!!!!!

Remember tidying up the garden will ensure the healthy and vigorous development of next year’s flowers, foods, lawns, and ornamental plants. Also, don’t forget to protect those young trees from rutting deer. If the trunk is 1 to 4 inches in diameter, you can use a piece of 4-inch plastic drain tile. Split/cut it down one side and slide it on the tree. Be sure to take it off the first of March. We have put snow fence around our Bald Cypress tree again this year since it was planted directly beside the well-traveled deer path across our property. I know, what were we thinking? We chose the planting site because of the view, not thinking of the deer.

Were you one of the gardeners that complained about the hot and humid weather? It’s time to get out your hat and jackets now!