



### Cool-Season Vegetable Hardiness

Don't be fooled by the term "cool-season". Not all cool-season crops will tolerate the winter in Kansas without protection. Semi-hardy crops such as Chinese cabbage, collard, mustard and radishes, can survive light frosts. However, when temperatures drop into the 20s, they will start to show signs of damage. Cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, carrots and other hardy vegetables will survive temperatures into the low 20s before showing damage. Row covers can be used to protect your cool-season garden. Learn more about season extension from the Kansas Garden Guide.

### Perennial Garden Clean-Up

If you're feeling the urge to tidy up the perennial garden keep a few things in mind. Ornamental grasses and some herbaceous perennials can be left intact to provide seasonal interest. Dried foliage brings texture and color to the otherwise barren landscape while also insulating the plant crown. Wildlife can benefit from seed heads left to develop on the plant. If your plants had disease/pest issues during the growing season that plant material should be removed and disposed of to prevent spreading. Dried ornamental grasses near structures can present a fire hazard so removing the above ground growth is recommended in this scenario.



### Caring for Plants Indoors

If you moved sensitive plants indoors recently you may be wondering, now what??? Hopefully you were able to transition your plants to the indoors, but if not, they may go through a period of shock. Symptoms may include: yellowing leaves, dieback and wilt. Some plants won't survive the shock if it is extreme. Others will recover over time and with proper care. Here are some tips for providing the best conditions possible to get your houseplants through the winter.

- \* Whether indoors or out, the amount of light decreases into fall and winter resulting in slower plant growth. This means the fertilizer and water needs will decrease. Only provide water when the soil is dry about one-inch deep. Fertilizer can be applied at  $\frac{1}{4}$  the recommended rate in November and again in February. Plants in smaller containers often require water more frequently but less fertilizer because they have less soil. This varies based on species so do your homework and research individual plant needs.
- \* Temperature is another important factor for growing plants indoors. If the temperature drops below 50 degrees F, leaves of more sensitive plants may begin to yellow. Keep this in mind if you adjust the thermostat during times when nobody is home such as vacations. Avoid placing plants near heat vents where the temperature is inconsistent.
- \* Relative humidity is the amount of moisture in the air. When the humidity is lower, plants release more water from the leaves. Many common indoor plants prefer high relative humidity. To increase the relative humidity, you can create a microclimate by grouping plants closer together. Another option is to place a shallow container below each plant and fill it with water. Elevate the container by placing some gravel in the saucer so the plant isn't soaking directly in the water. Misting plant leaves is often recommended, but is not a practical strategy to effectively increase humidity.
- \* Indoor plants should receive bright, indirect light either from a window or grow lights. Avoid placing plants too close to windows that are drafty. Some indicators that your plants are not receiving enough light include elongated internodes (space between leaf/stem unions), pale color on new leaves, and dieback of older leaves.