

# FIELDS AND FLOWERS

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Howdy,  
We are Lexi & Jeanette, your local  
Agriculture & Horticulture Extension Agents.



## What's new in Agriculture...

Have you noticed wilting in cotton before defoliant is applied? You are likely looking at Bacterial Blight. It is a combination of disease and physiological conditions that are common this time of year. Yield-damaging outbreaks in susceptible varieties occur if weather conditions during the season are favorable for disease development, specifically, early-season rain that spreads the pathogen throughout the field, followed by heavy, wind-driven rains that occur after canopy formation, with periods of high humidity and temperature.

## Horticulture question of the week

Now is a perfect time to add a new tree or a grouping of shrubs to the landscape. Or perhaps you have an area in the landscape that needs 'remodeling' or rejuvenating. The fall may be the best season to plant, surpassing even the spring. Many people prefer January through March for planting, but the fall months of September through December have distinct advantages. Fall planting follows the heat of summer, before a cool winter season, and trees and shrubs planted in the fall use this to good advantage.

Although symptoms can occur during the seedling stage, the definitive foliar symptoms of angular leaf spots, with water soaking are seen later. These lesions are restricted by veins.

Additionally, small, circular brown lesions can occur with the angular leaf spots. Less-common foliar symptoms include white, dried bacteria associated with lesions and chlorotic halos surrounding lesions.

Fungicides are not effective against this disease. Current-season management approaches include maintaining adequate nitrogen fertility and adjusting furrow or sprinkler irrigation, to minimize leaf wetness and high humidity within the canopy. Since the pathogen can persist to the next season on crop residue and infect seedlings as they contact the residue, the field should be rotated out of cotton for at least one season. The pathogen is not known to infect other plant species, including weeds. Crop residue should be plowed into the soil to hasten its decomposition. The bacterium can't survive in soil. Resistant varieties can be used, but the development of new races of the pathogen remains a possibility.

Plant roots grow anytime the soil temperature is 40 degrees or higher, which may occur all winter in Texas.

During the winter months, the root systems of the fall-planted specimens develop and become established. When spring arrives, this expanded root system can support and take advantage of the full surge of spring growth.

Fall is the optimum time to plant balled and burlapped trees and shrubs. Balled and burlapped plants have ample time to recover from transplanting and proliferate roots before spring growth begins.

Remember, however, all bare root plants, including roses and pecan and fruit trees, should be planted in late winter when they are completely dormant.

All plants have growing requirements. Think about the plant's needs before you invest. Is it adapted to your area's soil? Will it grow in sun or shade? Does it need a wet or dry location? Is it cold hardy? Some nurseries have this type of information on tags beside the plant. If not, ask a nursery professional or the county Extension agent.

'Plan before you plant' is always a good rule of thumb. Whether you are planting a single plant or an entire landscape, plan first, then plant. Good planning is a worthwhile investment of time that will pay off in greater enjoyment of attractive and useful home grounds, and in increasing the value of your home. It's much easier to move plants on paper than to dig them after planting in the wrong place. A plan saves many planting mistakes.

