

**Seeding,
Weeding
and mulch
more**

For the avid gardener

Summertime is flower time and it's also prime time for annuals. Annual flowers are easy to grow in all areas of Pennsylvania and there are varieties suited to almost every growing condition. The most popular are marigolds, petunias, geraniums, ageratums and zinnias, but there are many others to choose from, depending on your landscape needs, according to C. R. Bryan, Jr. Delaware County cooperative extension service director.

If you can get to it right away, there still may be time to start annuals from seed — sow them directly into your garden where you want them to bloom. You can also buy started plants from garden centers and greenhouses.

Many of these have already begun to bloom so you can select the colors you want. One of the nice things about annuals is that if you make the wrong decision about color, form, or height you can always change your mind and

plant something else next year. Here are some general guidelines to help you have color from now to frost:

- Start with vigorous, healthy plants or seeds. Either buy quality plants or sow fresh seed — this is not the time to look for weak and spindly bargains.



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- Prepare soil in flower beds thoroughly and spade it deeply.

- Set out plants or sow seeds according to packet recommendations or advice from the garden center. Young plants set out too early may be killed by late frost and seed sown into cold soil may rot.

- Allow enough space between maturing plants so they can develop to their full potential. Selecting annuals requires a little thought. Before your buy, decide what will do best in a specific landscape area. Too many flowers used at random can destroy your garden theme, while well chosen colors, textures and sizes can complement your permanent shrubs and trees.

Used in mass, annuals can brighten the dark foliage of background shrubs and are attractive as filler between small plants in a planting area. Annuals are also good to overplant in beds of spring bulbs that have flowered and faded. As you make your choices, consider height at maturity so that you place tall annuals behind low bedding varieties.

Sow seeds directly if you want to cover large areas with annuals or if you have a tight budget. For best results use fresh seed.

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Tree hunters

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The state with the largest number of national champions is Florida, followed by Michigan, Texas, California, and Oregon. The biggest trees of all, the sequoias, and the tallest, the redwoods, are in California.

Once it is champion of a species, a tree stays on the National Register until it dies, is destroyed, or as in most cases, is dethroned by a bigger tree. Only six trees on the original list, published in 1945, have never been toppled from their positions.

One of them is the biggest tree of all, the granddaddy giant sequoia known as the General Sherman. More than 3,500 years old, the California tree stands 275 feet tall and is more than 83 feet around.

In the East, Maryland's 400-year-old Wye Oak on the Eastern Shore of the Chesapeake Bay has never lost its original title as largest white oak. With branches spreading out 158 feet, it is wider than it is tall.

Another original, the largest California nutmeg—141 feet tall—was chopped down by vandals in

1982. There's no way the National Register can guarantee protection for its champions, says Frances A. Hunt, director of the Forestry Association's Big Tree Program. But calling attention to their size may help save them.

Affinity for Champions

One of the champion hunters of champion trees, Richard Salzer, an Annandale, Va. home-improvement contractor, has found about a dozen of the current national champions, including the largest fringetree, growing on George Washington's Mount Vernon estate.

"I'm always out in the woods," Salzer said. "I'm just a tree lover from a way back. I don't know why, but I seem to be attracted to big trees. I'll be walking through the woods, sit down under a tree to eat, look up, and usually find that it's some kind of champion."

There have been thousands of trees in his life, Salzer estimates. And to him "nothing is more beautiful. Trees are just like humans, they live and breathe. I've been told I'll be a tree in the next life. If that's true, I would want to be an oak." A champion, of course.

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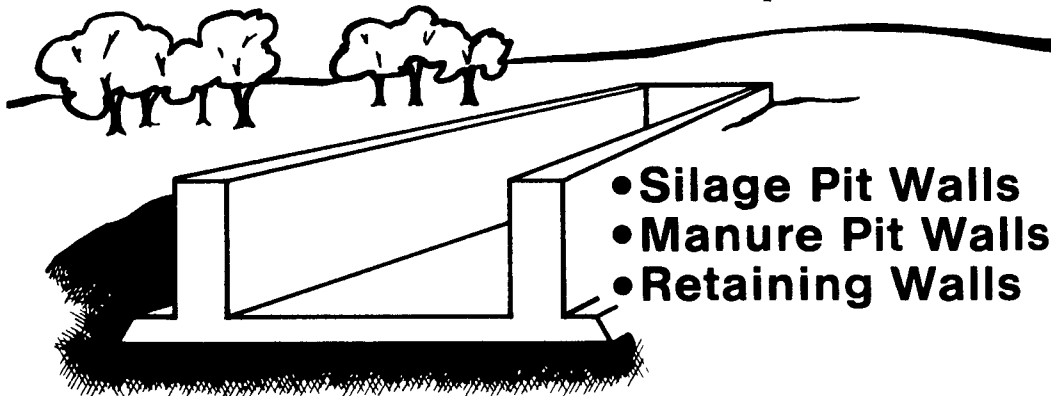
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