**Q’s & A’s**

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Q: What is the plant that I see growing along fence rows that has horizontal branching and grows to 7 feet tall? The berries that grow along the stems are spectacular.

A: It sounds like you are describing possumhaw holly. It is a deciduous holly of the same species as yaupon holly. It is available in area nurseries. Grow it in full sun. The berries will be eaten by the birds by mid-winter in most areas.

Q: What does it take to make a compost pile “work”? Mine never seems to make compost. It is basically a pile of leaves.

A: To “work” a compost pile needs at least one half green materials as a nitrogen source. It also needs moisture and air. If you don’t have available green material or manure, you can add lawn fertilizer. Add a bucket of fertilizer mixed into the pile when you turn it over and wet it down. This should begin the process. A compost pile that is “working” should be providing heat.

Q: We are planning our garden for next spring. Which tomatoes won the “Best Tomato” contest at Milberger’s Nursery this year? We figure we will have four plants of four different varieties.

A: Tycoon was Top Tomato in the spring and BHN 602 was the selection in the fall. Cherokee purple won for the largest fruit in the fall and tycoon won last spring, I believe, the Rodeo Surprise (BHN 968) is the best cherry selection.

If I was going to limit myself to four varieties, I would use Tycoon, 602, Cherry Surprise and Celebrity. Celebrity is a consistent producer year in and year out.

Q: What are some flowers that deer do not eat?

A: With deer, nothing is absolute, but in my neighborhood, they do not eat salvias, larkspur, lantana, snapdragon, esperanza, iris, daffodil, and 4 o’clocks.

Q: When should we fertilize to encourage quick lawn green-up in the spring?

A: The fertilizer that you apply in October contributes the most to green-up in the spring. Weather, however, is the main cause of early green-up. Do not fertilize the lawn now until about May 1. Our hot weather grasses cannot utilize fertilizer applied early in spring.