

Now is the time to clean up all your flower and vegetable beds. Remove dead or matured plants. Get mulch ready for perennials. Mulch right after hard frost. Cut back canes and vines that may be damaged by the winter winds.

After your vegetable garden has been cleaned up, till it and then plant a cover crop of winter rye. This not only reduces erosion, but greatly enriches the soil by becoming a green manure. Sown in the fall, it will make winter growth, then in the spring should be plowed under to decay in the soil. This has successfully enriched our poor soil and greatly increased our garden's productivity. This procedure can also be used in all annual flower beds.

Begin a new compost pile for next year's garden. Layer your compost area with all your dead zinnia stalks, then cover it with the last of the grass cuttings and mulched dead leaves. Continue to add all your fruit and vegetable wastes, egg shells, and bread scraps. Soil and manure can be added and turned. Keep moist and periodically turn to hasten decomposition.