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FOR THE WEEK OF September 12, 2005

SPIDERS

A number of people are finding large spiders in their yard or garden at this time of year. Some are wolf spiders and some are garden spiders. Wolf spiders are some of the largest spiders found around the home. Most are brown and about 1 inch long, although with the legs spread out they may cover the size of a silver dollar. They hunt during the day and at night and are known for their quick movements. They are not harmful to humans, but they are predators, and feed only on living prey. Most of them harvest insects and are beneficial. What is the large black and yellow spider in your garden? Some of the most common spiders in gardens are the *Argiope* spiders. They are also commonly called garden spiders. There are many species, but most have distinctive yellow and black abdomens and silver on the front part of the body with the head and legs. Garden spiders build large webs that they use to capture insect prey. Garden spiders are not poisonous and can be left alone when found in your garden.

Spring-Flowering Bulbs

October is the ideal time to plant tulips, daffodils, and other spring-flowering bulbs. Bulbs planted in October have sufficient time to develop good root systems before the ground freezes in winter. If the weather permits, bulbs can be planted as late as mid- to late November. Plant bulbs in-groups or clusters to achieve maximum visual impact. When planting tulips and daffodils, plant 10 or more of the same variety in an area. Smaller growing plants, such as crocuses, should be planted in clusters of 25 or more bulbs. Plant bulbs at a depth equal to 3 to 4 times their maximum bulb diameter. To encourage good root development, periodically water the newly planted bulbs in October and November if the weather is dry.

Ag Decision-maker is on line

Welcome to Ag Decision-Maker now on line and easy to access and use. The information and analysis provided at this web site can help you find solutions for many of the business, economic, and financial decisions facing farmers and agribusinesses. www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm.

Winter Rye Cover Crop

According to Brian Lang ISU Crop Field Staff **Winter Rye Cover Crop**

Winter rye can be planted now through late October, and it will survive the winter. As a cover crop for soil erosion, seeding 0.75 to 1 bushel per acre should be plenty, but planting should be done soon to get sufficient growth for winter cover. For winter rye as a forage for spring harvest, seeding 1.5 bushel usually provides for a "full" stand (about 90 lbs of seed per acre). If seeding technique is a little questionable, then up the seeding rate a little.

4-H Foundation

Did you know that there is a foundation in Iowa that was designed to give people the opportunity to support the future of 4-H? It is true, it is call the 4-H foundation and you can learn more about it by going to our web page www.extension.iastate.edu and click on the 4-H youth development section. The great part about this foundation is that you can designate your donation to go into the general 4-H fund or you can earmark it to the Howard County 4-H Foundation. Donations designated to the Howard County 4-H foundation will go to help fund future 4-H programming here in our county.