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OCTOBER 2008



Invest in Daffodils

By Kathy LaLiberte

Like many gardeners, I'm feeling a pinch in my pocketbook, and it has me thinking twice about how much I spend on my garden. At this time of year, it's tulips, hyacinths, alliums, lilies and other fall-planted bulbs that tempt me. If you find yourself feeling the need to justify this year's investment in bulbs, I have a suggestion: daffodils!

Daffodils deliver—by far—more flowers for a longer time with less care than any other bulbs you can plant. They'll thrive just about anywhere, and they come back year after year in ever greater numbers. Over time, even a small planting of 20 bulbs will gradually become a swath of color with a hundred or more blooms. [▶ Continue ...](#)

Over the years, a small clump of daffodils will become a substantial drift.



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Composting kitchen scraps in a worm bin is easy and rewarding. Even if you already have an outdoor compost bin, having a worm bin makes good sense. Worms can convert most kitchen scraps to finished compost in less than two weeks. Plus, the worms work hard all winter long. You can keep a bin in your basement, garage or pantry (above 55 degrees and below 80 degrees F) and your worms will produce a steady supply of rich castings that are perfect for top-dressing houseplants or outdoor plantings. [▶ Continue ...](#)



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As the threat of frost looms near, what can be done with heat-loving, tropical plants, such as cannas, agapanthus, bougainvillea and brugmansia? The easiest solution is to bid a sad adieu, let the frost claim its victims, and send the blackened plants to the compost pile. But most gardeners are too tender-hearted—and thrifty—to let a good plant go to waste. If you grew a few tropical plants in your garden this summer and want to try your hand at keeping them alive indoors until next spring, you have several options. [▶ Continue ...](#)

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Grateful Shred

One of the little-known benefits of cocoa mulch is the way it improves the soil during the winter. The tiny pieces work their way into the soil, loosening and improving the texture. But after 20 years of buying cocoa mulch, I have found something even better: leaf mold. It has the same fine texture and dark brown color. It packs tightly when moist and improves the soil—probably even more so than the cocoa mulch. Best of all? It's free and locally produced. In fact, I make it in my backyard. How green is that? [▶ Continue ...](#)



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