

From The Bedford Extension Master Gardener HELP DESK

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PRUNING ADVICE FOR LAVENDER DON'T PRUNE NOW!

QUESTION

A client came into the office in mid-November, stating she wanted to prune her lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*) and asked for information on how to do that.

LOG SHEET RECOMMENDATION

“This is not the time to prune lavender. It appears that the worst time to prune is in the fall and winter & if you must prune in the fall it must be done before a hard freeze. Late spring or summer is the best time to prune after the first year of growth. (I think you would be able to pinch back to keep its shape during that first year.) Only prune once per year and prune 1/3 of the new growth each time. Do not cut all the new growth down to the stems. Never prune old wood unless it is dead.”



Lavandula angustifolia plants.ces.ncsu.edu

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Most websites recommend waiting until the first blooms in spring begin to appear before pruning the lavender plant. Waiting until spring allows the woody stalks to overwinter and should provide added protection to the roots against cyclical freezing and thawing. In Autumn, if your plants are too tall or the plant has had a second blooming, a light pruning to about two to three inches above the woody stalk should alleviate potential snow weight and damage to the plant. Also, if your plants are field grown, “A thick layer of mulch is recommended after the first frost.” [1].

On the other hand, “if you have a mild or wet winter be sure to check the lavender plants to make sure the tops are not holding excess water, which can cause the crowns to rot.” [2]

RESOURCE LINKS

[1] https://www.ces.ncsu.edu/fletcher/programs/herbs/crops/culinary/lavender_mccoy.html

[2] <http://gardening.about.com/od/maintenance/ss/Pruning-Lavender.htm>

<http://everything-lavender.com/when-to-prune-your-lavender-plant.html>

<http://treesandshrubs.about.com/od/pruning/a/how-to-prune-lavender.htm>

<http://treesandshrubs.about.com/od/pruning/a/lavender-types-pruning.htm>

<http://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/herbs/lavender/pruning-lavender.htm>

<http://homeguides.sfgate.com/cut-back-lavender-flowers-bloomed-69904.html>

All resource links accessed October 24, 2016.

Answers provided herein were based on specific situations and growing conditions.

These recommendations may or may not be appropriate for all circumstances.

For specific recommendations for your particular situation please contact your local Cooperative Extension Office.

MASTER GARDENER HELP DESK

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