



# Freeze Proofing Your Yard

Brittany A. Council-Morton

Urban Horticulture Extension Agent/Master Gardener Volunteer Program Coordinator

UF/IFAS Extension Volusia County

## • Types of Freezes:

- *Radiational Freezes*
  - Occur when heat radiates from the surfaces of plants and other objects causing these items to become colder due to rapid heat loss. When air moisture is present, a radiant freeze creates deposits of ice or frost on surfaces causing freeze damage.
- *Advective Freezes*
  - Occur when cold fronts come in rapidly causing a sudden drop in temperature. Windy conditions during advective freezes can make plant protection during advective freezes is more difficult.
- Central Florida typically temperatures will drop between late October to early February as we embark on our cool season.
- Freezes occur when temperatures will drop below 70 degrees consistently however, some plants will show signs of cold damage when temperatures drop below 50 degrees.

## How can Freezes Affect Plants?

- Cold temps damage the xylem, phloem, and cambium by *restricting* the movement of water and nutrients through the cells. Significantly cold temperatures can ultimately kill plants by *damaging* the way they transport nutrients and water.

## Tips for Freeze Proofing Your Yard:

- Water plants before and after a freeze to generate heat by solar radiation.
- *Never* wrap plants with plastic. Plastic can transport heat away from the plant and increase cold damage if it touches plant material. When using plastic covers, they need to be supported by frames or hoops and are not directly on the plants.
- Lay or wrap lightweight fabrics, completely to the ground and anchor with pavers or bricks. Make sure to anchor with heavy items to prevent cold air from entering the base area.
- Place mulches around perennials to protect the roots and trap soil heat.
- Find the microclimates in your landscape that are typically warmer areas to house plants if they are moveable.



**Cold Tolerant Plants:**

Delphinium  
Geraniums  
Pansies  
Petunias  
Snapdragons  
Sweet Alyssum

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**Additional Resources:**

<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/MG/MG025/MG025-Dy9xo0omkb.pdf>

<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/MG/MG318/MG318-Dpimlt2g6h.pdf>

<https://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/care/weather/treating-cold-damage.html>

<https://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/ornamentals/winter-annuals.html>