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**Overwintering ornamental sweet potatoes**

Store plants until warmer weather in the spring, K-State horticulture expert says

*By Maddy Rohr, K-State Research and Extension news service*

MANHATTAN, Kan. — Valued for their foliage draping over containers and around planters, ornamental sweet potatoes are edible says Kansas State University horticulture expert Cynthia Domenghini.

“They are grown for their aesthetic value,” Domenghini said. “Consequently, the flavor quality of ornamental varieties is often lacking. In the case of ornamental sweet potatoes, the tuberous roots are much more bitter than the edible counterpart.”

Domenghini said ornamental sweet potatoes can be kept over colder months in preparation for a lush spring garden.

“Ornamental sweet potatoes can be overwintered by digging them just before the first frost and storing until it’s safe to plant in the spring,” Domenghini said.

She suggests removing the above ground growth and keeping the roots in moist peat moss in a cool, dark room. Another option includes moving the entire plant indoors and keeping as a houseplant during the winter.

“Check the plant first for signs of disease or pests,” Domenghini recommends. “Cut the vines back to about one-foot and carefully transplant into the desired container. Keep the plant in a space with plenty of natural light until warmer weather returns in the spring.”

Domenghini and her colleagues in K-State’s Department of Horticulture and Natural Resources produce a weekly [Horticulture Newsletter](http://horticulture.k-state.edu/) with tips for maintaining home landscapes and gardens. The newsletter is available to view online or can be delivered by email each week.

Interested persons can also send their garden and yard-related questions to Domenghini at [cdom@ksu.edu](mailto:cdom@ksu.edu), or contact your local K-State Research and Extension office.
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K-State Research and Extension local offices, https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/about/statewide-locations.html

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