



NWS Buffalo

Serving western and north central New York

National Weather Service Buffalo's

Frost/Freeze Program

The NWS Frost/Freeze program is designed to alert gardeners and growers that actions may be needed to protect tender vegetation from potentially harmful cold temperatures.

The “**Growing Season**” is defined as the period between the average (median) date of the last Spring Freeze and the average date of the first Fall Freeze. When a Frost or Freeze is expected during the “Growing Season”, the NWS will issue a **Frost Advisory** or **Freeze Warning** respectively. Actions in the spring can help protect young vegetation that is just in its early stages, and actions in the fall can possibly help prolong the season.

In 2025, NWS Buffalo will continue an experiment to cancel the issuance of Frost/Freeze headlines by date. This year the date will be the 75th percentile for a Fall Freeze, which is 10 days beyond the median date.



Forecast Zones			Fall Frost/Freeze Program Ends
Jefferson	Lewis	Cattaraugus Allegany	October 11
Chautauqua Southern Erie	Wyoming Livingston	Ontario Oswego	October 21
Niagara Northern Erie	Orleans Genesee	Monroe Wayne Northern Cayuga	October 31

After the above dates, the NWS will **not** issue any Frost or Freeze headlines until the resumption of the program in the spring. We strongly urge you to follow local forecasts of temperatures and take protective actions if needed.

Some terminology and guidance that may help you protect your vegetation:

Frost can occur when the temperatures fall to the mid 30s, especially in rural areas. It is a localized phenomena and frost occurrence can vary greatly across a small area.

Frost becomes more widespread when the temperature falls below 32°F with a **freeze** possible.

A **hard freeze** is possible when temperatures are $\leq 28^{\circ}\text{F}$.

Some protective measures may include;

- Bring plants inside or under some sort of cover.
- Covering your plants with a light weight fabric.
- Water the soil BEFORE as wet soils retain heat better.
- Heaters, smudge pots or wind machines – to mix the air so the average temperature near the ground is raised.

