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## Earl May Closes Stores

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In late August, we heard word that Earl May Garden Centers was in the process of closing seven of its 28 stores, which are located in Iowa, Nebraska, Missouri and Kansas. In early September, the garden center's website had a note on each of the listings for the locations slated for closure (except for one, which had already been removed). Here's one example:

"We have shared with our team that, after careful consideration, we have made the difficult decision to permanently close our Marshalltown Earl May Garden Center," it read on the Marshalltown, Iowa, listing. Each one included a final day of business. "As operating costs have continued to rise and market conditions have changed, we must make thoughtful business decisions that position Earl May to remain strong for the future while continuing to serve our customers for generations to come."

At least one store, the Cedar Falls, Iowa, location, had already closed as of press time, and the St. Joseph, Missouri, store was expected to close in late September. The aforementioned Marshalltown store, as well as Newton and Ottumwa—all in Iowa—are expected to close this month. Shawnee, Kansas and Columbus, Nebraska, are scheduled to close in December.

The Missouri store was the only one in that state and dated back to the 1930s, according to a local media report. One of the store employees told the outlet she knew of 80-year-old customers who'd been shopping there their whole lives. While it's sad any of the stores are closing, we're glad to see the retailer carrying on operations with the other locations. We also found a pretty cool history of the company on the website at [earlmay.com](http://earlmay.com) if you scroll down and click on The Earl May Story button. **GP**