

Gardening Tips

By Wendy L. Wilber

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Vegetables

Vegetables that can be planted include beans (snap, shell, pole and limas), cantaloupes, collards, mustard, turnips, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, okra, southern peas, peppers (hot and sweet), pumpkin, summer squash, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, and watermelons. Use transplants when available.

Avid vegetable gardeners may want to try growing some unusual crops like amaranth, yard-long beans, white eggplant, garbanzo bean, ginger, ornamental gourds, bottle gourds, malanga, pigeon pea, sorrel, soybeans, Malabar spinach, chayote, or spaghetti squash. For more information on gardening, call the Extension Office to obtain the NEWLY REVISED **Vegetable Gardening Guide (SP103)** and **Organic Vegetable Gardening (CIR375)**. For information on growing unusual crops, purchase the **Manual of Minor Vegetables (SP40)** from the IFAS Extension Bookstore (352-392-1764).

Fertilize the garden with a complete fertilizer like 6-6-6 or



Consider adding a rainbarrel to your landscape to save water and prevent run off.

10-0-10. Broadcast the fertilizer over the entire garden plot 1-2 weeks prior to planting (use 2-4 lb/100 square feet) and add micro nutrients if pH is above 6.3. At planting, apply 1 oz. per 10 feet of row in 1 or 2 bands 2-3 times during the growing season. Side dress just beyond, not on, the outside leaves. Rake the fertilizer into the soil and water.

If you are growing organically, spread 25 to 100 lbs. of compost

or manure on the garden at least 1 month before planting. Composted organics can be applied at planting time. Side dress with 5 lbs. of cow, horse, or hog manure or up to 3 lbs. of poultry or sheep manure per 100 square feet of row. Scatter a band down each side of the rows and work lightly into the soil surface.



For more information, contact the Alachua County Extension Office at 2800 NE 39th Avenue, Gainesville, FL 32609 (352) 955-2402 or TDD/TYY (352) 955-2406

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Ornamental peppers spice up any container. They are great for full sun conditions.

Herbs

Herbs are plants grown for their special flavor and aroma. Their ornamental attributes also make them an asset to the vegetable garden.

Recommended herbs to plant now include anise, basil, borage, catnip, cardamom, chervil, chives, comfrey, cumin, ginger, ginseng, horehound, hyssop, lemon balm, lemon verbena, lovage, marjoram, mint, oregano, rosemary, sage, summer savory, tarragon and thyme.

Lawns

If you didn't fertilize in March, do it now. The best type to use is a high nitrogen fertilizer like 16-2-8. For newly established lawns use 6-0-6 or 15-0-15. Calibrate your fertilizer spreader. Apply fertilizer at a rate of 0.05 -1 lb of actual nitrogen per 1000 sq. ft. Slow release fertilizer is highly recommended because it lasts for several months. Be sure to rake the lawn well before fertilizing. Irrigate with ¼ inch of water after fertilizing.

Mow lawns frequently so that you never cut more than 1/3 of the leaf blade. Keep the mower blade

sharp. Let the clippings remain on the lawn unless the amount of clippings is excessive or blades are diseased. Each bag of clippings you throw away contains up to ¼ of a pound of organic nitrogen.

April through July is also the best time to plant lawngrass from seed, sod or plugs. Bahiagrass and centipedegrass seed is available, but St. Augustinegrass seed is not available. Water seeded areas frequently to keep

soil continuously moist until germination and do the same for sod or plugs until new roots grow. For everything you want to know about lawns, purchase **The Florida Lawn Handbook**. It is available from the IFAS Extension Bookstore (352-392-1764).

Trees and Shrubs

Now is a great time to plant trees and shrubs, and its good for the environment. You can reduce large areas of high maintenance

CURRENT EVENTS

Florida Friendly Landscaping

April 14th 6:30-7:30pm at the Newberry Branch Public Library.

Learn techniques for making your landscape Florida friendly and what plants thrive in the North Central Florida landscape. Please call (352) 955-2402 to register for this free class.

Getting to Green-Florida Friendly Landscaping

April 17th 3:00-4:30pm at the Alachua County Extension Office.

Want to create a landscape that conserves water, is friendly to the environment and looks great? Come to this class to learn how. Please call (352) 955-2402 to register for this free class.

Raised Bed Vegetable Gardening

April 16th 6:30-7:30pm at the Alachua County Extension Office.

Learn an innovative way to grow vegetables. We will cover the vegetable gardening basics and teach raised bed construction and layout. Please call (352) 955-2402 to register for this free class.

The Water Wise Landscape

April 23rd 6:30-8pm at the Alachua County Extension Office.

This class covers efficient irrigation, micro-irrigation and drought tolerant plants for your landscape. You will learn how to conserve water and still have an attractive yard. Please call (352) 955-2402 to register for this free class

Save the date for:

MASTER GARDENER PLANT SALE

Saturday May 16th from 8:00am - 12:30pm at Alachua County Extension Office, 2800 NE 39th Ave.

Many interesting plants at amazing prices – from a Master Gardener's backyard to yours.





Coral Honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*) is a native vine that attracts hummingbirds and butterflies.

lawn and replace with mulched beds containing trees, shrubs and/or ground covers. Mulched beds reduce water needs.

Obtain ***Drought Tolerant Plants for North and Central Florida (CIR807)***, ***North Florida Landscape Plants for Shaded Sites (ENH67)***, and ***North Florida Plants for Wet Areas (ENH66)*** from the Extension office to help you.

Monitor landscape plants to detect pests before they become monumental problems. Prune out severely damaged diseased plant parts. Whenever possible, use biorational, environmentally safe chemicals like insecticidal soaps, horticultural oils, or Dipel. Thorough coverage of the undersides of leaves is important. As always, read and follow label directions.

Mushroom root rot is a soil fungus disease. It is probably the most common cause of sudden death in trees and shrubs. If your plant has wilted and the dead leaves turn brown and hang on, it may be mushroom root rot. Check the bark of the plant at soil level for

flaking or peeling and a creamy white layer just under the bark. Unfortunately, there is no cure for mushroom root rot. Remove infected plant and as much of the surrounding soil and roots as possible. Replace with sterilized soil and avoid replanting this area if possible.

Flowers

Annuals to plant include alysum, African daisy, Ageratum, Amaranthus, asters, baby's breath, balsam, Begonia, Browallia, Calendula, celosia, Coleus, Cosmos, China aster, Cleome, Nierembergia, Dahlberg daisy, dusty miller, Gazania, geranium, Gaillardia, Exacum, globe amaranth, godetia, heliotrope, impatiens, New Guinea impatiens, Kalanchoe, Lisianthus, Lobelia, marigold, Marguerite daisy, Melampodium, nicotiana, ornamental pepper, Phlox, Portulaca, periwinkle, Salvia, silk flower, statice, stock, strawflower, Streptocarpus, sunflower, Torenia, and Zinnia.

Perennials include African iris, blackberry, lily, blue-eyed

grass, blue sage, butterfly weed, Chrysanthemum, cigar flower, coneflower, Coreopsis, bush daisy, day flower, daylily, blue daze, false dragon head, fire spike, Mexican daisy, blanket flower, Gaura, gerbera daisy, goldenrod, hollyhock, lion's ear, mallow, Mexican heather, Pentas, Philippine violet, creeping Phlox, garden Phlox, Plumbago, Rudbeckia, Russian sage, Stokes aster, swamp sunflower, Verbena, Veronica and yarrow.

Bulbs to plant include Amaryllis, Canna, caladium, Aztec lily, butterfly lily, Crinum, Gladiolus, gloriosa lily, kaffir lily, Lilium species Marcia, Morea, spider lily, Tritonia, Achemines, Allium, Alstroemeria, tiger flower and of course your Easter lilies.

For more information call and obtain ***Annual Flowers for Florida (CIR569)***, ***Bulbs for Florida (CIR552)***, or ***Flowering Perennials for Florida (ENH68)*** from your local Extension Office.

Fruits

Monitor plants to catch problems before they become serious. If

WILDLIFE HAPPENINGS

- Bobwhite quail now through September
- Migrant warblers concentrate on coasts after cold front.
- Watch for hummingbirds feeding on blooms of columbine, buckeye, and others.
- Plant extra parsley for black swallowtail butterfly larvae.
- Most Florida snakes begin mating rituals.



new growth on apple and pear appears blackened, prune out these branches and destroy. This is a bacterial disease called fire-blight. Make sure to sterilize pruning tools between cuts. Other diseases on fruit trees can be controlled with sprays of Dithane, Manzate or Captan every two weeks. Watch out for powdery mildew on apples and spray Bayleton.

Each individual fruit crop has specific needs: pruning, fertilization and pest control. Refer to publications available for individual fruit plants from your local Extension office for more specific care.

If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically, please e-mail Wendy at wilbewl@ufl.edu.

About This Newsletter

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