

BELL COUNTY MASTER GARDENER

Tip of the Week

By Beverly Wickersham

“Vegetables and Herbs for the Fall Garden”

Despite the extreme heat and the lack of rainfall, planning for and planting the Fall Garden begins in July and August. Supplying adequate soil moisture and mulch is a must for any successful garden, but in the fall garden maintaining an even soil moisture will help seeds germinate in the hot soil. The mulch (leaves, dried grass clippings, old hay) cools the soil and prevents a take-over by weeds that thrive in the summer heat. Prepare the garden bed by mixing in a 2 to 3-inch layer of compost to give an added boost to the seeds or transplants. Add a fertilizer that is recommended for your garden plot. We use a 4/2/1 ratio based on a soil test of our garden area.*

Transplants for the Fall Garden: (Plant in soil that has been lightly fertilized and thoroughly watered. Mulch well after planting.)

The following transplants can be planted immediately: Tomatoes, Eggplant, Peppers, and culinary herbs such as Chives, Dill, Parsley, and Oregano.

Plant Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cauliflower transplants on September 1 or a bit later.

Seeds for the Fall Garden: (Note the earliest planting dates according to the *Texas Gardener Magazine's* Fall Planting Guidelines.)

Pumpkin (August 1), Southern Peas (August 1), Winter Squash (August 10), Sweet Corn (August 20), Bean, Snap Bush (September 1), Summer Squash (September 10), Swiss Chard ((October 1), Leaf Lettuce (October 10), Collards (October 10), Turnip (November 1), Mustard (November 1), Spinach (November 15), Radish (November 25).

With prices so high now, it may be that time for you to try a garden. You will reap the benefits in more ways than one!

*Soil sample bags and information sheets are available from your County Extension agent's office: Mr. Dirk Aaron, 1605 N. Main, Belton, Texas 76513. Phone 254-933-5305. Fax 254-933-5312.

Have Questions? ask.bcmga@gmail.com

