

Gardening in September

Plant:

In the garden plant bush beans, beets, broccoli, carrots, cucumbers, kale, turnips, radish, and later in the month, garlic. Start leaf lettuce and spinach indoors for transplant outdoors. You might try soaking spinach seeds for 24 hours before planting in pots and keeping the soil cool in the house since spinach likes cooler temperatures.

Sow wildflower seeds in open sunny areas. Consider bluebonnets (you may want to purchase started seedlings), Indian paintbrush, coneflower, fire-wheel, black-eyed Susan and many others.

Fall is a great time to plant shrubs and trees. Plants have time to establish a strong root system before the summer's hot, dry weather. Turf grass can also still be planting through the middle of the month. Keep the soil consistently moist for the first few weeks. If you would like a green lawn all winter, plant "perennial" rye which has a finer texture and is more easily maintained than annual rye.

Prune:

Cut Autumn Sage back 1/3 early in the month. Remove weak, unproductive growth and old seed heads from crape myrtles and roses to stimulate new growth. Prune dead or diseased wood from trees and shrubs, but hold off on major pruning till mid-winter.

Fertilize:

Lawns, trees and shrubs. For clay soils apply all-nitrogen fertilizer. For sandy soils, apply fertilizer with a 4-1-2 ratio. Fertilize fall-flowering annuals with all nitrogen or high nitrogen fertilizer. Use a water soluble fertilizer for plants in containers

Garden Tips

Now is the time to apply pre-emergent to lawns to control crabgrass, henbit, spurge, chickweed, dandelion and more. Water after application. Avoid using weed and feed products. It's better to apply the pre-emergent to prevent weeds from sprouting in the first place and then let your turf get the full benefit of the fertilizer.

Check patio plants in containers that you plan to bring in for the winter for scale, mealybugs and spider mites. Control these pests before you have to bring them in for the winter. Submerge the pot in water for a few minutes to get rid of any fire ants that may have taken up residence in the pot.