

APRIL CHECK LIST

VEGETABLE GARDEN

- Plant potatoes if not done earlier.
- Till the garden when soil is like brown sugar, not mud ball wet or powdery dry.
- Add soil amendments such as commercial or organic fertilizers, gypsum, compost, sand, etc. Don't apply fresh manures in spring.
- General garden fertilizer recommendations: 10 lbs. of 15-30-15 per 1,000 square feet, or 30 lbs. of 5-10-5 per 1,000 square feet. This application will last about one month and then you will then need to follow up with side dressing or a foliage applied water soluble fertilizer.
- If you have problems with your garden soil, have a soil test done.
- If insects were a problem, incorporate DIAZINON insecticide to eliminate overwintering insects.
- Start vegetable transplants: April 1 - tomato, pepper and eggplant, if not done previously. Mid-April - cucumber, muskmelon, squash and watermelon. April 24 - hardened or conditioned cool-season transplants, and seeds of very hardy vegetables. If you don't know these, request "Planting Dates" from the Extension Office.
- Cover newly seeded root crop rows with gunny sacks to speed up germination.
- Sweet onions. Good for the north zone - sweet Spanish and sweet sandwich.
- If you buy transplants from a garden center, take two weeks in the cold frame to condition them to the outdoors before planting, unless they are outdoors at the store.
- Rotate vegetables to different areas of the garden to keep pests down.
- If severe cold weather returns be prepared to protect plants from killing frosts.
- Plant asparagus and rhubarb plants.
- Harvest asparagus spears when they get 9" tall, which keeps beds 50% more

ORCHARD AND FRUITS

- Plant new raspberries, prune old ones.
- Plant fruit trees and strawberries.
- Prune out fire blight in apples and pears.
- Spray apples and pears with streptomycin when blooms first open, repeat every 4-5 days till $\frac{3}{4}$ of petals drop.
- Apply dormant oil to fruit trees if not done last month, but prior to bud swelling.

TREES AND SHRUBS

- In early April, apply dormant oil spray to evergreens when freezing temperatures are not expected for 24 - 48 hours.
- Apply dormant oil to deciduous trees if not done last month.
- Remove tree wraps.
- Before lush growth appears, you can see where new trees or shrubs may be desirable.
- As soon as ground thaws, plant or transplant trees and shrubs.
- ARBOR DAY, the last Friday of April. Start a great tradition...plant a tree.
- If trees need fertilizer, apply as soon as possible, so it reaches the root system by the time the leaves break buds.
- Finish up heavy tree and shrub pruning by the end of April. Pruning is simpler before trees and shrubs leaf out.

LAWN

- Mid April apply pre-emergent weed control for annual grass weeds such as crabgrass.
- You can fertilize the lawn the first part of April if you want to. General lawn fertilizer recommendations: 6-7 lbs. of 24-4-4 per 1,000 square feet of lawn. Extension Horticulture Specialist Bob Gough, recommends fertilizing around these holidays: Memorial Day, Labor Day and Columbus Day.
- If power raking is needed, do before grass greens up a lot, to prevent excessive damage. Consider aerating if too green.
- Reseed bare patches, or seed a new lawn.
- Make certain your mower is serviced and ready to go, with sharp blades that cut cleanly rather than tearing tender new growth.

FLOWER GARDEN

- In late April plant tender summer bulbs outdoors, such as Dahlia, Gladiolus, Canna, Tuberous Begonia, Tender Anemone and Ranunculus.
- To kill overwintering thrips on glad bulbs, soak in 1 Tab. Lysol to 2 qts water ½ hour before planting.
- Pansies make an excellent ground cover for bulb beds.
- Remove mulch or other winter protection. If you've mounded soil over rose crowns, remove before new buds grow too much. They are easily knocked off.
- Cut back dead canes on T-roses.
- Start annual flower transplants: April 1 - sow impatiens seed, but don't cover with soil, as the seeds need light to germinate. Cover with plastic till germinated. April 1 - petunia, pansy, salvia, snapdragon and moss rose. April 15 - ageratum, larkspur, annual phlox, alyssum, marigold, stocks and zinnia.
- Ideal time to plant, divide, or transplant perennial flowers.

HOUSEPLANTS

- After your Easter Lily is finished blooming, plant it in the flower garden. Often these plants will bloom again in August.
- During April, let the soil of your poinsettia become drier than normal. Your plant will lose some of its leaves, but not enough that the stems wither.