



Garden Tips for September 2016

by Thea Fiskin, UC Master Gardener

Hopefully, it will soon cool off and we can start working on garden projects we have been putting off. September and October are great months for planting in your garden. Fall planting gives the-roots time to grow and anchor while the soil is warm. Then when spring arrives, the plant will flourish.

WATER WISELY: Check your irrigation timer and sprinkler heads to make sure there are no problems. Continue to deep water trees until we get rain. Mature trees are worth saving as they are expensive to remove and take a long time to replace. I use soaker hoses on my trees to ensure they are getting enough water with no run-off.

PLANT: Trees, shrubs, winter annuals, perennials, and especially CA native plants can be planted now. Citrus, subtropical plants, heat loving plants (such as basil), and bare root plants (not available until January) should not be-planted now.

Winter bedding plants will usually become available in the nurseries and garden centers by mid-month, but don't plant if temperatures are still above 90 degrees. My annual favorites are calendula, delphinium, foxgloves, Iceland poppies, pansies snapdragons, and stock. This is also time to sow seeds of alyssum, bachelor buttons, California poppies, and larkspur.

There are many more choices, so check out the nurseries for plants and seed racks. Make sure your choices are cold tolerant.

If you have an unused lawn area or yours has died due to water restrictions, consider drought tolerant plants such as Artemisia, California fuchsia, ceanothus, gallardia, lavender, penstemon, rockrose, rosemary, salvias and yarrow.

Herbs that can be planted are catnip, chamomile, chives, cilantro, dill, Echinacea, fennel, lavender, mint (in a container only), parsley, rosemary, tarragon and thyme. Sorry no basil, it hates the cold!



VEGETABLES: It's time to change the vegetable garden to winter veggies but don't pull out those tomatoes yet. If we have mild weather, they may last until Thanksgiving. Winter veggies that can be planted from seed are beets, carrots, lettuce, radishes, and sugar snap peas. Transplant seedlings of artichokes, broccoli, Brussel sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, Chinese cabbage, kale, lettuce and strawberries. It's also time to plant garlic. Break apart garlic bulbs into individual cloves, leaving on the paper husks, and making sure the pointed end is up when planting.

BULBS: Time to start choosing bulbs for the garden and forcing indoors. Shop early for the best selection, but don't plant yet as its too warm. Store in a cool, dry, dark location until planting begins in November. When

choosing bulbs, the rule is "generally the larger the bulb, the larger the flower." Don't buy any bulbs that are mushy or moldy. Tulip and Hyacinth bulbs need to be cooled in the refrigerator for six to eight weeks before planting, and must be kept away from apples to keep bulbs from sprouting prematurely.

MAINTANCE: Divide crowded herbaceous perennials: agapanthus, coreopsis, ornamental grasses, society garlic, etc. Dig up clumps with a spading fork or shovel, discarding any old dead parts, then dividing into sections, and replanting in a bed. Make sure the bed has been amended with compost and a little fertilizer, mulch and water.

WEEDS: Now is the time to spread a preemergent herbicide to prevent annual blue grass and other winter weed seeds from germinating.

Remember not to use a preemergent where you have spread seed for annual flowers or vegetables.

Most important get out and enjoy your garden, it's good for your body and spirit.

August 27, 2016

