



December



Gardening Activities

Prepare:

- Prepare for frost in areas where it is expected by sheltering tropical plants and annuals.
- Force budded cymbidiums into bloom, and prepare amaryllis to bloom.
- Lift out dahlias and store for the winter.
- Tie-up permanent vines so they don't get knocked down by rain or wind.
- Harvest winter vegetables as soon as they mature.
- Keep an eye on potted bulbs; remove covers when they reach the right height.

Fertilize & Water:

- Stop fertilizing potted poinsettias and roses.
- Side-dress vegetable rows according to individual needs of plants.
- Continue to feed cineraria (for growth), cymbidiums (until flowering), and cool-season flowers.
- Feed shade plants for bloom; give adequate light.
- Drench surrounding soil of brunfelsia 'Royal Purple' with Terr-o-Vite double strength.
- Water if it is hot, dry, & windy; include Ca native plants as this is their growing season.
- Keep cymbidiums and bulbs damp, but not soggy.
- Don't water roses or succulents growing in the ground.

Planting:

- Continue to plant winter vegetables and cool-season flowers (coastal zones).
- Plant bare-root roses, trees, vines, berries, and vegetables.
- Plant sasanqua camellias, azaleas, and finish planting spring-flowering bulbs by December 25th.
- Plant tulips, hyacinth, and crocus between Christmas Day and New Year's Day.
- Purchase poinsettias and permanent plants that are colorful in winter.
- Plant bedding, indoor, succulent, herb, and blooming plants in baskets.

Pest and Weed Control:

- Control slugs and snails, especially on celery, lettuce, mesclun, and cymbidiums.
- Control rust on dwarf snapdragons.
- Control aphids with insecticidal soap and beneficial insects.
- Use dormant spray on deciduous fruit trees and other woody plants that drop leaves.
- Spray peach, apricot, and nectarine trees for peach leaf curl, if you haven't done so.