

Food Growing Forum
July 25, 2020
“What to Do in the Garden, late July-August”

July is the hottest month of the year in our county, with the longest days, and August isn't far behind. Keep this in mind as you care for your garden

WATER: For many plants, this may be the month when the **greatest amount of supplemental irrigation** is needed. **Check soil moisture depth** and plant requirements and water accordingly, especially on days of 100-degree heat or hot dry winds.

Monitor irrigation system. Check for uneven water distribution and clogged emitters.

Give fruit and nut trees a deep soaking to 18-24 inches once per month.

SHADE: Fruits like tomatoes can get **sunscald**, leaving leathery patches on the exposed fruit. Leave enough leaf canopy to protect fruit from too much afternoon sun, or add shade by using shade cloth, umbrellas, or other plants.

FERTILIZE: **Give citrus one feeding** between March and September feedings, now if not already done last month.

PRUNING: Best to **avoid pruning this month** unless necessary. Plants can suffer sunburn if pruned in such a way that tender bark is suddenly exposed to the sun. Paint exposed bark of citrus and other fruit trees with white latex paint diluted 1:1 with water.

Cut out dead canes of June-bearing berries that produced fruit this year to encourage the growth of new green canes for next year's crop.

HARVEST: Pick **berries** before the birds get them all: if you haven't covered with bird netting or row cover, consider doing so.

Pick **green beans** every other day while beans are young and tender and to keep plants producing. Pinch herbs to harvest tender tips and to encourage fresh growth and plant shape.

Harvest spring parsnips, turnips, rutabagas, beets, chard, eggplants, potatoes, corn, lima and snap beans, endive, lettuce, peas, parsley.

Begin harvesting summer crops: Summer squash, cucumbers, tomatoes, eggplant, peppers, carrots, beets, shallots, chard, potatoes, corn, snap beans, lima beans, melons, endive, lettuce, peas.

Check for ripe fruit on figs, peaches, nectarine, apple, pear, plum, and early prunes.

PLANT: Set out starts of broccoli and kohlrabi.

SOW SEEDS: Beans, corn, fava, kohlrabi, lettuce, peas, radishes, carrots, chard, mustard, root vegetables.

START SEEDS INDOORS: Celery, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower.

PLAN FALL/WINTER GARDEN:

Cool Season Vegetables:

Order preferred seeds and bulbs for winter garden, so you are ready to sow or start

MAINTENANCE:

Pick and crush tomato horn worms unless already parasitized (PHOTO)

Clean up fallen fruit and debris and compost them. Cut or crush large pieces to speed decomposition.

Weed: Stay on top of them before seed heads form and generate next season's weed crop.

Solarize in July and August if necessary to clear soil of weed seeds and soil-borne diseases.

MULCH: Remulch where getting thin to cool soil, control weeds, conserve water.

COMPOST: Add dry leaves, shredded paper, and other “dry/browns” to balance the abundance of fruit and vegetable scraps. Turn the compost often to aerate, speeding the process of decomposition so that compost will be ready for use in fall planting.

References

http://homeorchard.ucanr.edu/The_Big_Picture/Irrigation/

<http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/GARDEN/ENVIRON/sunburn.html>

<http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/GARDEN/ENVIRON/whitewashing.html>

<http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn74145.html>

<https://ucanr.edu/sites/Solarization/>

Month-by-Month Planting Guide for Annual Vegetables in Napa County:

<https://ucanr.edu/sites/ucmgnapa/files/218030.pdf>

Seasonal Planting and Harvesting Guide for Napa County:

<https://ucanr.edu/sites/ucmgnapa/files/153875.pdf>

<https://ucanr.edu/sites/scmg/files/30787.pdf>