

# What to do in the spring garden

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**Q:** This time of year we get many questions about what folks should be doing in the garden and when they should be planting.

**A:** Here is a list of what to do in the early spring garden.

- Prune grapes vines as soon as you see any buds sprouting on the ends of the canes. This will prevent the vines from leafing out too early and getting damaged by late frosts.
- For your peach trees, remove curled leaves and destroy them and any fallen leaves to reduce peach leaf curl.
- Once they are done blooming, cut back early spring flowering shrubs that bloom on new wood (Forsythia and Quince, for instance).
- Mulch cane berries, cut out all old canes and reset new canes in twine.
- Get weeds under control- Cultivate, mow or pull now!
- If weather permits, prepare beds for planting by spading in compost and other soil amendments.
- Check irrigation systems for leaks or other problems and perform maintenance as needed.
- Divide and replant herbs and other perennial plants.
- To prevent sunburn and borer problems, paint young tree trunks with water based interior white latex paint 1:1 with water.
- If you know you'll be using shade cloth to prevent sunburn on peppers or frost protection cloth to protect delicate seedlings, erect frames for it now.
- If you use organic fertilizers such as alfalfa meal, fish bone meal or green manure, dig them into your beds now. Soil organisms need time to break these down and deliver nutrients to your plants.
- Now is the time to fertilize cane berries and strawberries.
- Fertilize all deciduous fruit and young shade trees at first sign of leaves also any young conifers and roses.

- Start fertilizing Citrus trees this month. Citrus trees are heavy nitrogen feeders. Mature trees need 1 ½ lbs. N per year. Divide this amount by 4 and apply each quarter one month apart for next 4 months.
- This is also a good time to fertilize Daphne and camellia with NPK bloom.
- Check roses for black spot, mildew and rust and spray or dust with sulfur only if needed.
- Watch for early signs of powdery mildew on grapes, roses and ornamentals such as lilac. Treat at 2-4” of growth if needed. Apply sulfur or potassium bicarbonate once per week when temperature is below 90 degrees.
- Check roses for aphids; you should be able to control with a strong spray of water or insecticidal soap.
- Make sure critter-proofing fences and wire are intact, and repair them as needed.
- This is a great time to seed and renovate lawns if needed.
- Aerate and fertilize your lawn, starting this month.

For the Redding area mid-April is the best time to plant most summer vegetables and summer blooming annuals and perennials. Be sure to visit the various spring plant sales coming up. Shasta College and the McConnell Arboretum have big ones. These plant sales have many plants selected for the local growing climate. The Shasta College Horticulture Club Plant Sale is April 6th-8th and McConnell Arboretum Sale is April 8<sup>th</sup> this year.