
Ventura County Master Gardener Monthly Checklist

March 2026

Check out (<https://ucanr.edu/site/uc-master-gardeners-ventura-county>) for FREE classes
Enjoy an extra hour in your garden starting later this month!

CALIFORNIA NATIVES

- ✓ Read up on natives at <https://www.calscape.org/why-native-plants>
- ✓ Good time to plant native trees. What better way to celebrate Arbor Day!

GROWING FOOD

- ✓ Perfect time to harvest your Meyer lemons, oranges, and grapefruit (if you haven't already). Dry those peels for dried zest for tea or flavored salt, or infused oil (olive or avocado).
- ✓ Harvest your onions and leeks but leave a few in the ground for summer blooms and keep unwanted pests at bay (aphids, slugs, cabbage worms, mosquitos, grubs, and nematodes.)
- ✓ Continue to plant asparagus, beans (bush or pole), beets, broccoli, Brussel sprouts, carrots, cabbage family, chives, collards, kale, lettuce, mustard, parsley, peas, potatoes, radish, rutabaga, spinach, summer squash, winter squash, strawberries, sunflowers, swiss chard, tomatoes, and turnips.
- ✓ By the end of the month, you can plant early tomatoes.
- ✓ Sow seeds of lettuce, peas, radishes, and spinach.
- ✓ Plant starter plants of chives, parsley, rosemary, sage, savory, tarragon and thyme.
- ✓ Herbs to plant: bay leaf, borage, chives, parsley, rosemary, and French thyme.
- ✓ Time to plant deciduous fruit trees <https://ucanr.edu/site/uc-master-gardener-program-alameda-county/selecting-fruit-trees-your-garden>

PLANTS AND FLOWERS

- ✓ Start seeds for summer blooms, sunflowers, bird's eye gilia, and baby blue-eyes. These will self-sow if allowed to go to seed.
- ✓ Other self-sowing recommendations are CA poppy, Clarkia, and globe gilia.
- ✓ When planting flowers (and other plants) ask yourself: Did I leave enough room between plants? Do the plants have same water needs? [WUCOLS Plant Search Database](#) Choose drought tolerant plants. Are the plants for sun or shade? Do their colors go together? Can they be easily watered?
- ✓ Basic rules for planting flowers for a good show: never plant fewer than 3 to 5 of anything. Choose a dominate theme color. Plant different heights. Plant a variety that flower at different times.
- ✓ Succulents are easy to grow and easy to propagate. Consider agave, yucca, and aloe.
- ✓ To attract beneficial insects, try aster, chamomile, coreopsis, cosmos, feverfew, marigold, scabiosa, and yarrow. Bees like floral consistency so plant in patches of 3' square.
<https://www.sunset.com/home-garden/garden-basics/pests-garden-expert>
- ✓ Alyssum is a host plant for the beneficial hoverfly. Planting it near citrus may help in controlling the insect that vectors the deadly HLB disease.

TREES & SHRUBS

- ✓ Research ways to celebrate Arbor Day! Highly recommend adding a native tree to your yard. They need regular water in the beginning to become established, up to three years to 5 years.
- ✓ CA has 20 native oak species. There are many opinions about “best” time to plant oaks. Arbor day can be a “good” day to plant.
- ✓ Other tree planting options, California maple, western sycamore, or red-flowering current. Be careful to pay attention the mature size of the tree and how it will affect roof, plumbing, powerlines or other structures.
- ✓ There are dwarf tree options that can grow in pots, such as, vine maple, wax myrtle, or desert willow.
- ✓ Prune ceanothus (if the month is dry) and coffeeberry for future leaf growth. Ceanothus should only be pruned during dry part of the year as they are susceptible to disease if pruned in wet weather
- ✓ Plant citrus trees.
- ✓ Plant bareroot stone fruit to add fruit to your landscape, such as cherry, apricot and peach.
<https://ucanr.edu/search/all?keys=fruit+tree+selection>

TOOL & IRRIGATION CARE

- ✓ Check drip lines before spring arrives.
- ✓ Turn down or turn off irrigation if rain is forecast.
- ✓ Clean and sanitize tools, all metal parts (sharpen or replace blades)
- ✓ Rub wooden handles with linseed oil. Store in dry place.

PESTS & WEEDS

- ✓ Check out <https://www.sunset.com/home-garden/garden-basics/pests-garden-expert>
- ✓ Weed this month while weeds are young. Be sure to get the roots. But don't walk on wet soils. Wait until things dry out a bit so you don't compact your soil.
- ✓ Consider adding a bat house to your garden. They eat 6,000 to 8,000 insects per night. Be sure to read the article below before buying or installing. Avoid all together if you have children or pets at home.
https://ipm.ucanr.edu/home-and-landscape/bats/?src=302-www&fr=3771&tpl=HLS01\Templates\HLS_302Redirect_1_2021.cfm - BAT_339_1
- ✓ Visit www.CaliforniaCitrusThreat.org for information on HLB and the ACP pest
- ✓ For all pest advice - Visit www.ipm.ucanr.edu

WATER, AIR, SOIL, & FIRE

- ✓ Add mulch where it has thinned out.
- ✓ Turn off your sprinklers before the rains arrive.
- ✓ Familiarize yourself with what kind of soil you have and what it might need for your spring planting.
<https://casoilresource.lawr.ucdavis.edu/gmap/>