



Spring: Garden planning, Pruning and Soil preparation:

April 15th is the last frost date in our area; planting prior to that date is problematic. In our area late winter and early spring is the best time to prepare your landscape for spring planting. Walk your garden and make plans for any spring plantings and general refurbishments and do any research beforehand. Planning ahead of time will not only prepare you but it will also help you to avoid any future problems and over purchasing.

1-Spring Pruning: Some plant species will need spring pruning. Research your plant's needs and do spring pruning now on the ones that need it.

2-Soil prep: Getting your soil ready now is key. The time you spend now prepping and amending means that you'll be able to plant immediately once the threat of frost has passed (usually around April 15th in our local area). No till is considered the best option based on recent worldwide Climate Change information. Placing amendments, such as compost and steer or chicken manures, in your garden now will give them a chance to "mellow" and break down, so that the soil is ready for transplants and/or seeds.

3-Weed removal and management: Removing weeds and controlling them now before they set seed will mean less work as the weather gets warmer.

4-Reusing existing planters/pots: If you want to reuse any pots and containers remember to clean and sanitize them first with one-part bleach to nine parts water. Submerge each in this solution and soak for at least 10 minutes. This sterilizes them, removing any insects or diseases from the previous plant in the pot.

5-Planning for spring planting: Walk your landscape and imagine what you'll want where and make a note of that info for your reference. Taking the time to observe the existing plantings and the positioning for any new plants will give them the best chance to grow and thrive. Understanding your available space, containers, empty beds, water, sunlight coverage and the condition of these various areas will help mitigate any future problems and expenses.

6-Consider sun vs shade in the proposed planting areas. If you aren't sure, here is an interesting way to find out that information. Observe your garden at midnight during a full moon. Where you see the moonlight falling is where, in 6 months time, the sunlight will be falling.

7-Right plant right place: Become informed on what types of plants grow best in our area and the mature size of those plants so that you will only purchase the plant varieties and amounts you will need.

8-Seeds and/or transplants: Decide whether or not you wish to devote the time to starting any of your seeds indoors or in a greenhouse, plant the seeds directly in the garden beds, or if transplants are the way you wish to go.

9-Vegetable garden considerations: If you are thinking of planting spring veggies, consider what kinds you and your family will actually eat. If the kids detest string beans, then planting a huge area full of them is probably not a good use of your available space, time, or money. However, if zucchini, a big producer, is something your family enjoys, then two mounds might be the way to go.

10-Prepare yourself too: Remember to take care of yourself. Think of all the holes you will need to dig, compost piles to turn, plant containers to move, and all the weeds you will be pulling. So, considering all these physical possibilities, take time to prepare your body for all this by taking walks and doing general loosening up exercises.

Information links:

Regeneration International.org-no till

<https://regenerationinternational.org/2018/06/24/no-till-farming/>

UC The California Garden Web

<https://ucanr.edu/sites/gardenweb/Vegetables/>

UCMG Sonoma County-Right plant right place

https://sonomamg.ucanr.edu/Sustainable_Home_Gardening/Right_Plant_Right_Place/#:~:text=We%20live%20in%20a%20summer.plants%20that%20attract%20beneficial%20insects.

UCMG Stanislaus County

<https://ucanr.edu/blogs/blogcore/postdetail.cfm?postnum=45572>

UCMG Placer County

<https://ucanr.edu/sites/ucmgplacer/files/171551.pdf>

<https://ucanr.edu/sites/ucmgplacer/files/171552.pdf>

UC IPM weed management

<http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/r540700111.html>

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