

## September Lawn & Garden To-Do List

### Annuals and Perennials

- Divide and/or transplant perennials, feeding the roots with a good source of phosphorus.
- Don't disturb asters, chrysanthemums, Russian sage, ornamental grasses, or other plants that provide fall and winter interest.
- Plant or transplant peonies.
- Plant annuals such as ornamental cabbage, pansies, violas, and snapdragons.
- Dig up and store tender bulbs after first frost.

### Shrubs and Trees

- Plant container-grown trees and shrubs.
- Remove dead shrubs and trees.
- Transplant trees and shrubs after the leaves begin to turn.
- Clean up fallen fruit to deter pests and disease.
- Address diseases now. Remove and destroy (do not compost) unhealthy leaves and branches.
- Remove spent blooms, but don't do any heavy pruning.
- Hold off on fertilizing trees and shrubs to allow plants to harden off before winter.

### Vegetables

- Plant late-season vegetables like peas, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbages, kale, Brussels sprouts, leeks, lettuce, radishes, turnips, and onions.
- Once your vegetable garden is finished, plant clover, alfalfa, or legumes as a cover crop. These "green manures" can be plowed under in the spring for a natural fertilizer and soil conditioner.

### Houseplants

- Bring houseplants indoors before the nights get too cool.
- Give poinsettias and Christmas cactus 10 hours of light and 14 hours of darkness each day. Christmas cactus need temperatures of 50°- 60° F, while poinsettias need 65°- 72° F.
- Plant spring-flowering bulbs in pots to enjoy over the winter.
- If you intend to force early blooming for the holidays, put your bulbs in the refrigerator now.

### Lawn

- September is the best time for cool-season lawns.
- Start with core aeration and dethatching, leaving about ½" of thatch to decompose.
- Sow seed before mid-month, and let the new shoots grow through 2-3 mowings before applying fertilizer or a "weed and feed" product.
- Fertilize with a 3-1-2 fertilizer to encourage top growth and to encourage winter hardiness.

### Cleanup and Maintenance

- Clear out new planting beds and apply compost (or leaves and grass clippings) to be ready for spring.
- Attack those weeds! Commercial herbicides are particularly effective this time of year, as weeds are storing up nutrients in their roots.
- Check out our videos on safely targeting weeds and organic weed control using vinegar.
- Label perennials and bulbs before they die back to the ground.
- Put out extra bird feeders to support migrating birds.

### Pests

- Slugs are particularly active in September – apply slug bait, diatomaceous earth, or other slug-control products during this time.
- In the fall, slugs lay clusters of eggs about the size of a small BB. Look under stones, boards, and around the edge of your lawn for these colorless eggs and destroy any you find.

### Plan Ahead

- If you haven't already ordered your fall bulbs, do it now! Hold off on planting until after the first frost.
- Simplify leaf clean up by installing gutter guard, covering open drainpipes, and tuning up or repairing lawn equipment.
- Build a compost bin to collect falling leaves.