

## September

### Annuals:

- Begin cleaning out annuals that are on the decline, and replace them with ornamental kale, mums, and pansies.
- Be prepared to cover any plants you want to keep blooming for another few weeks.
- Check the soil to make sure you are not over watering. Only water when the top two inches of soil is dry.
- Move hibiscus and other tropical plants indoors in a south facing window for the winter.

### Bulbs:

- Dig up tender bulbs (Caladium, Calla, Canna, Dahlia, and Gladiola) and store them for the winter. Place them in peat moss and store them in a cool dark place for winter.
- Prepare the beds for planting spring blooming bulbs.

### Fruit:

- Continue to harvest ripe fruit. Apples, pears, plums, grapes, and fall bearing raspberries will all be ripe this month.
- Continue to monitor for water needs.
- Avoid treating for pests while harvesting. Prune out fireblight bacterial disease attacks in apples and pears.

### Herbs and Vegetables:

- Harvest egg plant when the fruits are 6-8" long and glossy. Pick muskmelons when the fruit stem starts to separate from the fruit. Harvest watermelons when the fruits are full sized, dull colored, and the portion touching the ground changes from white to cream. Pick sweet corn when the color is bright. Pick pumpkins when they are full size. Continue to harvest peppers and tomatoes. Continue to harvest herbs.
- Make one fall harvest of rhubarb before the first killing frost. Cut back foliage once it is killed by frost.
- Continue to water as needed.
- No need to fertilize at this point in the season.
- Remove all plant debris in fall. A thorough cleanup is a great way to prevent insects and diseases the following season.

### Lawns:

- Early to mid September is the best time to plant grass seed. Stop planting seed after September 20<sup>th</sup>, however, because the seeds will not have enough time to get established and will probably be killed during the winter. There is still time to sod.
- Now is time to have your lawn aerated and/or dethatched.
- Continue watering as necessary.
- Fertilizing this month will help the lawn recover from the hot summer. Use 1 pound of actual nitrogen per 1000 square feet. This equals 10 pounds of a 10 percent nitrogen fertilizer.
- Now is also the time to start controlling perennial weed problems. You can safely use herbicides again.
- Complete all grub treatments by September 15<sup>th</sup>.

### Perennials, Ornamental Grasses, and ground covers:

- September is a great time to plant. The soil is still warm, but the cooler air is perfect for establishing new plants.
- Finish transplanting iris early in the month.
- Transplant peonies now until after the tops are killed by frost.
- Add mums to the garden.
- Finish digging and dividing perennials as soon as you can.
- Check the soil before watering – if the top few inches are dry, give the garden a drink.

### Roses:

- Shrub roses can still be planted and transplanted. Wait until spring to transplant tea roses.
- Water only when needed.
- Do not fertilize.
- Stop deadheading to allow rose hips to form. Limit pruning to dead, diseased, and damaged canes.

### Shrubs:

- Continue planting. Start transplanting when the leaves begin to drop and the plants go dormant.
- Continue to water as needed. If top 6" of soil is dry, water shrubs thoroughly.

### Trees:

- This is a great time to plant and transplant trees.
- Continue to monitor water needs.
- Begin raking leaves as they fall. Shredded leaves can be added to gardens to improve soil, and also as mulch for tender plants to help them overwinter better.