

Landscape Committee September Plant Hints

LANDSCAPE:

September is a great month with cooler weather and a time to enjoy chrysanthemums, asters, autumn clematis and autumn crocuses. It is also a time to plant spring flowering bulbs. Mix some bulb fertilizer at the bottom of the hole where you are planting your bulbs. Never put fertilizer directly on the bulb.

When buying daffodil bulbs (deer, chipmunks, rabbits and squirrels don't like to eat them) look for those listed as "DN" in the description. This stands for double –nose and tells how many bulbs are attached. A "DN11" has two flower-sized bulbs which will quickly grow into clumps of flowers. Daylilies and hostas that have grown in the same spot for five years should be dug up and divided and then replanted into fresh soil. When digging and planting look out for ants. They become nasty biters when disturbed. A good idea is to wear long pants and tuck your sock over your pant legs. If you are unable to or need help in dividing your perennials or planting bulbs, fill out a Landscape Maintenance Request form. When rainfall is limited, water perennials, shrubs, trees and container plants so that the soil gets 1 inch of water a week. It is best to water early in the morning, and give plants a good, slow soaking rather than sprinkling plants daily.

Do not fertilize outdoor roses until next spring. Clean up dropped leaves, flower petals and prune damaged stems on perennials and roses. Continue to weed flower beds and tree circles. September is a good month to plant a new tree. Check the varieties listed on the Approved Plant List (found in the Lodge book), and fill out a Landscape Request form for approval before purchasing any plant.

Chipmunks are entertaining and voracious eaters of bird seeds, fruit, vegetables, seedlings, flower bulbs (crocuses and tulips are favorites), and flowers. One chipmunk can store up to 30 cups of food for the winter. To keep them out of your yard, plant bulbs deep. Chipmunks avoid daffodils. To keep chipmunks and also rabbits away from your plants, sprinkle plants with cayenne pepper. You'll have to re-apply it after a rain.

Garden Hints

By September you want fruit formation to halt on tomato plants by cutting off the tops of the plants. This will allow each plant to concentrate its energy to the already formed tomatoes, which may still ripen on the plant. Clean out corn, pepper, and eggplant stems that have finished producing. New broccoli and cabbage plants planted in August may need some mulch. Parsnip and carrots can be left in the ground until after the first frost and will taste sweeter after a frost. Brussels sprouts taste the sweetest after a stiff frost. To increase the size of the sprouts, pinch off the tops of the plants to encourage them to go into

sprout production. Kale and collard greens also taste better after having gone through a frost. There is still time to plant spinach, lettuce and radishes – all are cool weather crops. A late season crop of bush peas will still mature if planted in September. Lettuce and onions will continue to grow into November, past the first frost. Plant garlic for next year. Be sure to add some sand to the soil where garlic is planted. We've had Blossom-end Rot occur on our early tomatoes. This disease is due to irregular watering or the lack of calcium available to the plant. Lime will prevent the calcium problem. To prevent future problems, rotate tomato plantings within the plot area.

If you had an over abundance of hot peppers, Wayne V. uses the following recipe:

Preserving Hot Peppers

Remove stems from 1 bushel of hot peppers

Cut peppers to desired size, Wayne uses a food processor; put into a big colander Sprinkle ½ box of salt over peppers; let them stand overnight

In the morning mix the peppers to make sure all the salt is dissolved

Squeeze all the water from the peppers while wearing gloves

Add oregano, garlic powder, olive oil and salad oil as desired to the peppers; mix together

Cold pack the peppers into warm canning jars

Use a canning funnel to keep the rim of the jars from getting oil on them

Fill the jars with oil to within ½ inch from the top

Do not over pack the peppers too tight

Seal the jars and boil in water for approximately 20 minutes

This will produce about 10 quarts of peppers

Any left over oil from the pepper jar can be used to season salads

Information taken from Crockett's Victory Garden; Month-By-Month Gardening in Ohio; www.gardengatenotes.com