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GARDENING TIPS FOR SEPTEMBER

PLANTING:

Annual seeds: Plant baby blue-eyes, bachelor buttons, candytuft, forget-me-nots, larkspur, scarlet flax, stock, sweet alyssum in the garden. Be sure to keep them watered. They'll bloom earlier next spring. Many of these also self-seed in the fall if the soil around your plants is not cultivated.

Perennial seeds: Transplant those you started in spring to permanent locations.

Bulbs: Spring flowering bulbs can be planted now through November. Plant your bulbs with 1 tablespoon of bone meal each.

Berries: New rows can be started from runners of strawberries and suckers from raspberries. Do not plant starts from diseased plants. Keep them watered if we have a dry fall.

Blueberries: Plant 2-3 varieties, 4-5 feet apart. They prefer acidic soil. Give them lots of water and mulch with 6-8 inches of compost.

Flowering Evergreens: You can transplant your flowering evergreens when the new growth has hardened. New buds are developed enough so they shouldn't fall off from transplant shock. Prepare a large hole with plenty of organic material worked in the bottom. Dig up your shrub with as much root ball intact as possible. Move your plant quickly to its new home. Water well and continue to water until the rains take over. Don't plant deeper than it was before.

Daylilies: The crown should be an inch below the soil after the ground has settled. Cut the leaves 4-5" above the ground. Water well.

Trees: If planted and watered now, they establish before winter. Our climate is well-suited to fall planting. Soak with water or transplant solution, then plant in a large hole. Be sure to mix bone meal in with good soil in the bottom of the hole.



PRUNING:

Heather: Shear back dead flowers if they're the summer blooming variety. This encourages bushier growth.

Lavender: Prune after they bloom. Cut the flowers at the base. Don't prune again until spring - it induces fall growth which is susceptible to freezing.

Cane berries: Prune the canes which have had fruit on them this year, to the ground.

PEST AND DISEASES:

Holly: Spray for leaf and twig blight.

Peaches: Spray them, if needed, for *Coryneum* blight.

Camellias: Control cottony camellia scale if needed. It looks like sooty smudge on the leaves.

Pests in the Veggie Garden: These can be controlled by pulling up plants that have finished bearing in your garden. This helps reduce the number of eggs that are laid in the soil.

HINTS:

Flower Drying: Pick baby's breath when the flowers are well formed; gaillardia when in full color before petals begin to dry; larkspur when the plant forms a spike, strawflowers when the buds begin to open (you can try some at different stages); zinnia when in full color, but before the petals dry. You can remove whole plants; hang them upside down in a dark airy place to dry. Many flowers will continue to swell if dried in the light.

Apples: If yours have pale spots, this is caused by the lack of sun where the leaves have shaded the fruit. Apple scab is identified by dark, fuzzy spots. It does not hurt humans, so the apples are still edible. The fungus winters in dead leaves, so rake your leaves and dispose of them.

Bean seeds: Harvest for making your own bean soup. Allow the pods to mature and get brittle and dry before shelling. If you allow the seeds to mature, the plants gradually stop producing. If damp weather comes before plants are completely dry, pull up the plants and dry them under cover. Freeze seeds several days to kill any insects and then store them where they will stay thoroughly dry. Check the jars for any droplets of moisture. If there is moisture, dry the seeds longer.

Onions, garlic and shallots: Air dry for best eating and storing after the bulbs have matured. You can put them in nylon mesh bags or trim the stems 12-16". Tie the bulbs in bunches of 10 or so on a length of twine. When the chain reaches 3-4 feet long, tie each end of the twine under the eaves of your porch. Most will store for at least 6 months this way.

Gourds: Let them ripen on the vine; if they are picked before they mature, they will rot. Gourds are ripe when the stem turns light brown and the vines begin to wither. Don't pull gourds from the vine; cut them off with a sharp knife or scissors. Only perfect gourds will cure well, so be careful about bruising or breaking the skin. Wash in a solution of $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of borax to a gallon of water, dry them gently and then spread them to air dry in a cool room out of direct sunlight. After two weeks, dip them in liquid wax and polish them with a soft cloth or spray with varnish.

Potatoes: To store potatoes, you need a cool, even temperature, darkness and a fairly humid environment. One method is to pack them in sawdust in a large can about 32 gal. One can will hold about 2 bushels. Don't let the potatoes touch each other or they may rot. They can last up to 6 months this way. Before storing them, let them cure in the shade for 3-4 days. The ideal storage temperature is 40 degrees F with 90% humidity.

