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GARDENING IN AUGUST

PLANTING:

Perennials and Seeds: Sow delphinium, columbine, daisies, snapdragons and pansies in a lightly shaded protected place. Sow deeper than usual, about 2x normal depth.

Vegetables: You can still plant carrots and radishes. Plant where they haven't been before; rotation of crops prevents root maggots.

Strawberries: Plant runners that you started in June. Keep them watered.

Iris: Divide old clumps if they are crowded. Dig the rhizomes in the morning. Cut the plants apart and throw away the woody center. Keep healthy, outside sections with leaves cut back to about 6". Lay cut, trimmed rhizomes in the shade for a few hours to callus them before planting. Plant with roots well spread and the tops of rhizomes just showing. Plant in full sun where the soil drains quickly. Water once now and then again in two weeks.

Marigolds: Planting marigolds around cabbage plants helps to keep insects and nematodes away. Till under plants in fall for added protection.

FERTILIZING:

Roses: Stop fertilizing at the end of this month; keep watering.

Raspberries: Keep watered to encourage new shoots for next year.

Trees: Stop fertilizing so new growth can harden.

PRUNING:

Hedges: Prune now if you haven't already done so. They'll grow new foliage now before winter and look less sheared. (The first hard frost may burn off new growth if they are pruned later.) Prune so bottom of hedge is slightly wider than the top.

Bloomed Perennials: Cut back so they'll develop new growth.

Hydrangeas: Cut only flowering shoots and weak canes as needed.

Grapes: Cut back the vine at the 2nd lead after the last bunch of fruit.

DISEASE AND INSECT CONTROL:

Lawn weeds: Apply weed killer, follow the package directions.

Peaches and Plums: Check for brown rot, use a suitable spray (ask a Tsugawa expert),

Filberts: Second spraying for worms may be needed this month. Check the trees for bacterial blight which girdles the trees, spray if needed.

Walnuts: Spray for walnut husk fly. Check for the date in your area with the county extension office.

Beetles: They can be trapped by placing wooden shingles beside squash plants. Collect and destroy the pest.

GARDENING HINTS:

Yellow Jackets: They are bad this month. Try trapping them in jars with a 1" hole in the lid. Fill the jars half-way with sugar water and some rotted fruit or beer. You can also buy traps that have already been prepared at Tsugawa's.

Watering: Water deeply to keep the roots growing downward. Some plants need to have the leaves sprinkled (hydrangeas, fuchsias, and tuberous begonias.) Decrease watering of evergreen shrubs so that new growth will begin to harden as it is most susceptible to frost. Don't let them wilt though. Water at ground level (soakers) to prevent leaf fungus. Cultivating after rains or watering kills many weed seedlings. Don't forget to put out water for the birds.

Corn: As soon as silk appears, corn will be ready in 17-20 days. The husk should fit tightly around the ear. To check, poke a kernel with your fingernail; if it's milky the corn is ready. If it's watery, wait a few days; if it is paste-like, the corn is over-ripe.

Onions and Garlic: Begin curing. As the tops begin to yellow, push the tops over. This is called Lodging; it forces the bulbs into their final maturing stage. About 3 weeks after bending the tops, dig up the onions or garlic. The stem near the bulb should be pencil thick and dry, or the bulb will rot. Lay them spread out for about 10 days in a dry and shaded place away from dew or rain. Then trim tops and roots off and store. They must stay dry and have lots of air circulation to prevent rotting.

Potatoes: If vines have died down, dig up tubers in one or two hills. Rub potato skin to see if they have hardened. If the skin comes off easily, wait a week or so before harvesting.

Summer Squash: Eat at the early stages. A soft, yielding touch means good eating. Winter squash needs a tough skin.

Tomatoes: Slow down on the watering to get them to ripen earlier.