

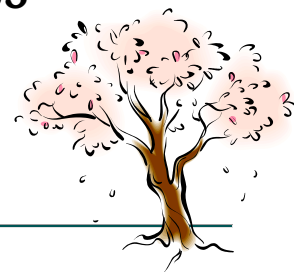
THE EL DORADO NURSERY AND GARDEN NEWSLETTER

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www.eldoradonursery.com



Jan/Feb/Mar 2022



GARDEN CALENDAR



What to do in January

- Shop for bareroot fruit and berries. See us for a complete list or find it on our website.
- Prune fruit trees as needed. After pruning, clean up old leaves and debris to prevent spread of disease. Do not prune spring blooming shrubs until after they bloom.
- Buy vegetable and flower seeds at the nursery for your spring garden. Sow indoors for an early start.
- Apply 2nd dormant spray to fruit trees.

What to do in Feb

- Apply third and final dormant spray on fruit trees (just before bud break) – this is the most important.
- Fertilize annuals and perennials with a low nitrogen starter fertilizer or rose & flower food.
- Prune roses and fruit trees as needed.
- Apply iron to yellowing Gardenias, Azaleas, other acid-loving plants, and Citrus.
- Spread wood ashes lightly around lilacs to benefit growth and aid blooming.
- Sow seeds indoors for spring planting later on.
- Start roses on a fungus prevention spray schedule.



What to do in March

- Put yellow jacket traps out early to trap the Queen.
- Plant cool season vegetables. Sow warm season veggies indoors.
- Rototill vegetable gardens and add organic matter. Do a soil test to see what nutrients you need to add. We have soil test kits available.
- Plant Potatoes around St. Patrick's Day.
- Fertilize roses, evergreens, fruit trees, and berries.
- Prepare new lawn beds 6" deep.
- Shop for summer blooming bulbs and spring blooming shrubs.
- Spray roses with fungicide to prevent black spot and powdery mildew. Try kelp spray to boost the plant disease resistance.
- Hoe or pick spring weeds. Apply a pre-emergent herbicide to prevent weeds.

More like this: [Full year in the garden](#)

GARDEN TIP OF THE MONTH

Did you know our G&B Soil Building Conditioner also makes a good mulch? It has slightly larger particles than the other soil amendments which help it to stay put when you use it as a mulch. When you are finished pruning and cleaning up under fruit trees and shrubs, add a fresh inch or so of this to protect the soil from erosion and save water. It also adds back organic matter and nutrients as it decomposes.

Around the Nursery:



SPRING GUIDE

Dormant Sprays

Still time to get in your Liqui-Cop copper spray for Peach leaf curl. Even if you haven't done one yet, the most important one is right before bud break, around Valentine's day. Other plants that may benefit from a dormant copper spray include grapes and roses. You can spray apples, cherries, plums, pluots and pears with Dormant (Horticultural or Neem) oil now to prevent aphid and scale infestations. Best when used on a day that will be around 50 for 24 hours.

Getting Irrigation ready for Spring

Soon it will be warm again and spring is on its way. Remember though the last frost date for Placerville area is about the 15th of April. For those of you that are a higher elevation you'll have to wait a little longer.

Drip Irrigation

For those of us with drip irrigation, this time of year is when you should check each line for leaks and breaks. The easiest way to do this is to turn the water on and watch for geysers. This will indicate where your problem areas are. Once they are located, repair them so that you can make sure water is going to your plant and not everywhere else. Of course you also need to walk the lines and see which ones are NOT working, as this will kill plants before you know it.

Automatic Timers

I am a huge fan of automatic timers. Not only do they save you time, but the peace of mind is well worth it in the long run. With a few routine check ups throughout the year you can keep your garden in tip top watering shape. During the winter months it is normally a good idea to turn your timer off. This not only gives it a break but avoids accidentally watering your lawn when it is raining. Now is a good time to turn it back on. Go through and make sure the set date and times are accurate. Then run each station manually to make sure your valves and systems are running fine.

Valves

There are two types of valves: automatic and manual. I will be covering the automatic valves since the manual valve just needs a simple turn of the lever to make sure its working. For your automatic valves, you want to remove the protective winter covering. Take a look at each valve, especially around the solenoid. Look for corrosion or any sort of damage. After this inspection, go to your timer and run each valve manually to make sure that the timer and the valve are working together. Once this is done and all of the potential breaks are repaired you are set and ready to go. You can sit back and wait for spring. Happy watering!

Fert Schedules

Citrus – apply G&B Citrus and Fruit Tree or MaxSea all purpose in April , May and June. Avoid later applications as it may affect the fruit.

Other fruits - such as apples, cherries, pears etc should be fertilized twice – March, May and again after harvest.

Blueberries - fertilize in Spring and Late spring with an Acidic product such as G&B Camellia, Azalea Rhodo, or Cottonseed meal.

Other bush fruits - such as grapes, blackberries, strawberries should be “fed”* with G&B Citrus and Fruit Tree in early spring.

Roses - start on a fert schedule with G&B Flower or Alfalfa meal when spring growth is about 6”, and continue once a month for the rest of the blooming season (around October).

Come in for recommendations on all your fertilization needs.

See full year-round schedules here:

<https://www.eldoradonursery.com/s/fertilizer-schedule.pdf>

*We aren't really “feeding” them as plants make their own food through photosynthesis. We are giving basic nutrients to the Plant, and to the soil which allows microbes to flourish that are required to allow the plants to be healthy.

Compost Happens

By Shilo Nielsen

As gardeners, we already know that we need to “feed” our plants in order for them to grow bigger, give us nice flowers, fruit, shade, etc. What we think of as feeding our plants with fertilizers, is actually supplying nutrients that the plants need to make their own food, or energy. This is important because when you are “feeding” your plants, what you really want to do is to feed the soil. If the soil and its associated microbes are alive and well, plants will thrive (with less chemicals and pesticides too). This is why synthetic fertilizers are like drugs to the plant. It gives them a quick shot of some critical nutrients, mainly nitrogen, which causes the plants to bolt up quickly. The side affect is that it tends to destroy the soil microbes. No soil microbes, no further nutrients available from the soil, until the next application of the chemical. It becomes a vicious cycle. (Incidentally, this lush growth from synthetic nitrogen is also attractive to pests such as aphids).



So how do we feed the soil? With lots of organic matter! And one of the best ways to do this is with compost. Compost can be purchased of course (in small quantities or in bulk at the Nursery) and most of us will have to supplement with an outside supply at some point. But as long as we have kitchen scraps and yard waste, why not take some burden off the landfills and use it as nature intended!

Recipe – what’s in it? **Ratio of 1 part Nitrogen (greens) to 3 parts Carbon (browns), layered.**

Moisture: damp but not soaking. Needs oxygen or it will be stinky.

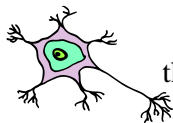
• **(N)itrogen (one part) component** can consist of: Stable scraps like horse, rabbit, pig, goat, and chicken manure; Blood meal; Cottonseed meal; Legumes such as alfalfa and pea clover; Green garden waste like weeds (try to avoid seed heads); Algae and seaweed; Coffee grounds and filters; Hair; Kitchen vegetable scraps; Grass clippings without chemical fertilizers from the first two or three weeks of spring when they are lush and tender (at this time they are high in nitrogen but afterward they go into the carbon category).

• **(C)arbon (three parts) components** consist of: Straw, dried leaves, sawdust in small amounts (as long as it hasn’t been treated with chemicals), untreated wood chips in small amounts, shredded newspaper, ashes (use in moderation), cardboard, dryer lint, corn stalks and corn cobs, shredded brown paper grocery bags, pine needles and pine cones, oak leaves (or most other leaves, preferably shredded), egg shells.



Don’t Use: Ashes from coal or charcoal, cat litter or droppings, dog waste, fish scraps, ashes from treated wood, meat, fat, grease, oils, bones, milk, cheese, yogurt, potatoes, sawdust and wood shavings from chemically treated wood, and most of all, your worst weeds! (for example: Bermuda grass, you will have it growing in your pile).

What’s going on – microbes in Stirring replenishes food and oxygen for ingredients. Heat helps the ingredients peak. Moreover, at 131° most disease causing pathogens die as well as pests, seeds, and weeds.



action:

the microorganisms that are hard at work breaking down the quickly decompose and keeps the pile operating at its

Fast - To speed the composting process, layer the ingredients, moisten, and turn often. Don’t add additional material to the active pile, use another pile. A 3x3 pile is as big as you would want to handle. In this manner, compost will happen in 1 to 2 months. It can be further aged with no problem. If it is raining, be sure to cover the piles so water soluble nutrients (such as nitrogen) don’t leach out.

Slow – a pile you just throw whatever on, whenever you have it. Try to keep the 1 to 3 ratio going as best you can. This method can take up to a year to make compost happen.

You don’t have to use a bin, but it does make it easier, especially for the Fast method. You can build your own out of wire or wood, or buy one of the easy-up plastic ones (available at the Nursery). Tumblers work as well, but are more expensive. We also have compost thermometers so you can see how hot your pile is getting.

If you don’t have space for a full pile, worm bins can make use of your kitchen scraps as well. Plans to build your own can be found at the “Links” section of our website. Come in and let us help you get started making Compost Happen!



Spring Bulbs



March and April are the months to get spring bulbs going that will bloom this summer. This season we have some new fun varieties to try.

Great bulbs available for a cutting garden are Lilies, especially the fragrant Oriental varieties such as Lotus Queen. Gladiolas are also a fabulous cut flower, and not just for funerals

Of course, don't forget the Dahlias. We have new multi-toned varieties that will make your neighbors jealous!

This year we are adding Bletilla, or Chinese Ground Orchid. A hardy plant with strappy leaves and striking orchid flowers that last almost as long as the tropical orchids.

Last but not least, the shade garden – begonias are the stars of low light. Picotee begonias are known for their two-toned frilly edges. Also available will be hanging begonias and the ever-popular rose-formed begonias in various colors.

Plant some this spring and enjoy beautiful flowers this summer!

