

Flowers, Fruits and Vegetables

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Horticulture News



Dear Producer:

Gardening tips for May

April showers bring May flowers, and we sure hope the rain continues into the summer. Planting with heat and drought in mind, may be the key to success in our gardens. Our winter annuals are finally giving up and this is an excellent time to begin planting summer annuals. Heat tolerant plants include angelonia, sweet potato vine, penta, lantanas, melampodium and periwinkle. Check out the new Jams and jellies varieties of periwinkle with a dark purple and a bright red variety. New coleus plants are always coming out, and some will thrive in the sun, while others love the shade. Wasabi is an outstanding bright yellow/green foliaged form that is a terrific performer in full sun. Sedona is a nice soft orange for the shade. Lobularia (the new sweet alyssum varieties) will grow and bloom all summer. Annuals should be planted in a big block to make the best statement.

Early spring blooming shrubs have finished their display and now is the best time to prune them. Try to get all spring bloomers pruned as soon after flowering as possible, but not any later than mid June. The later you prune, the slower they are to recover. Once it begins to heat up and get drier, our plants slow down in their growth. Most shrubs benefit from one application of fertilizer per year. After bloom is best for spring bloomers, and as growth truly begins for summer bloomers is best. If you haven't fertilized yet, do so now. Make sure your gardens have a healthy layer of mulch; two to three inches should suffice. Mulch is very beneficial in the summer garden helping to conserve moisture and cool the soil temperatures. It also helps with weed control.

Vegetable gardening continues to get more popular each season. If you planted the early garden, you are in the midst of harvest. Make sure that as one plant finishes its life cycle, you pull it and replant with something else. Utilize all the space to get the most benefit. We still have plenty of time to plant tomatoes, peppers, eggplant and squash. This is really the first month to start planting sweet potatoes, okra, southern peas and pumpkins. They like warm soil and really won't kick in and grow if planted too early. With more heat, comes more diseases and insects, so walk your garden daily and scout for problems. Keep the weeds out, as they compete for water and

and nutrients.

Now is the time to begin planting summer bulbs. Many of our spring bulbs are done, and have bloomed and completed their 6 weeks of green growth, so the foliage can be cut. Start planting caladiums, elephant ears, dahlias, and pineapple lilies. Just like perennials and flowering shrubs, adding a combination of plants expands the color palette. Many of these bulbs are now winter hardy in central Arkansas, but some will need to be lifted and stored for winter protection, or you have to buy new bulbs every year.

Strawberries are an easy perennial fruit for the home garden, but do need annual maintenance. Once you have finished the spring harvest, they need to be thinned out. If you skip this step, the plants become dense mats of foliage which results in more fruit rots, smaller fruits and less quality. Mulch, fertilize and keep them watered for best production. Blueberry plants are also easy shrubs in the home garden. With at least six hours of sunlight a day they can give you pretty white flowers in the summer, blue edible fruits and outstanding red fall foliage. Most blueberries need two different varieties for cross pollination, but new container series of small fruits are also self-fruitful. Thornless blackberries are also an easy care plant with abundant fruit.

We had a lot of weeds in our winter and early spring lawns, but some have now died out since they were winter weeds. It doesn't mean they are permanently dead, but they are simply dormant for the warm months. Don't fret, they will be back to see you again next fall. Now we have the summer weeds to contend with. Nutgrass and crabgrass are the most common, but there are others as well. Moss is also a common complaint from lawn lovers. Be aware, that to get rid of moss you have to figure out why you have it—too much shade, compacted soil or wet conditions. If you have shade, moss is an excellent ground cover and a lot less maintenance than grass. Grass does not do well in the shade, and shade can be a very good thing in Arkansas summers.

If you need some heat tolerant plants that can be edible and ornamental, consider herbs. From rosemary and thyme which thrive in hot, dry soils, to sage and oregano that are low growing herbs are easy and carefree. Some are annuals such as basil and dill, but bronze fennel is perennial and feathery in texture. More people are experimenting with cooking with fresh herbs, so why not grow your own. They do well in containers or in the ground and can serve double duty.

Containers add another dimension to our gardens. Tropical flowers are an easy way to add loads of color while tolerating the intense heat and humidity of our climate. From sun lovers to shade lovers there are many choices and new plants are arriving daily at local nurseries. From hibiscus to mandevilla, bougainvillea and tibouchina, try your favorite tried and true, but try something new. They are heavy feeders, so keep up with regular fertility, don't forget to water and then stand back and enjoy.

Gardening Events Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact</u>
May 16 to 18	State Master Gardener Conference	Embassy Suites Convention Center, Rogers, AR.	
May 18	"Everything You Wanted to Know About Herbs But Were Afraid to Ask" . The Herbal Adventurers, Sheila Deal and Meghan Hassler. Free and open to the public. Social time begins at 9:30 a.m. with the program starting around 10:00 a.m.	Student Center of Northwest Arkansas Technical Institute, Ford Av. and Old Missouri Rd., Springdale, AR.	Contact: Gail Pianalto 479-361-2198 or Joyce Mendenhall 479-466-7265 Laurin Wheeler Program Series - Flower, Garden and Nature Society of NWAR.
May 30	Garvan Gardens Perennial Workshop ,	Hot Springs, AR.	
May 30	Horticulture Field Day U of A Division of Agriculture Experiment Station	Hope, AR	Cost \$20 per person Registration Deadline May 22
June 1	Deadline to submit photos for the 2014 Gardening Calendar		Send photos to arkansasgardenvoice@gmail.com
June 1	"Through the Garden Gate" garden tour at selected Northwest Arkansas gardens. View 6-7 private gardens Flower, Garden and Nature Society of NWAR .		Contact: Gail Pianalto 479-361-2198 or Joyce Mendenhall 479-466-7265 .
June 14	A Day with Janet Carson	ASU Newport Student/Community Center , Newport, AR	must pre-register and your \$15 be received by June 10 Call the Jackson County CES 870 523 7450 or email wbarker@uaex.edu for more information.

June 21 & 22	Logan County Master Gardeners Plant Sale 8 am - 3 pm both days Mount Magazine Butterfly Festival will be going on at this time as well.		Mount Magazine State Park, near the Greenfield Pavilion, 16878 State Highway 309, 18 miles south of Paris
July 20	"Iris: Rainbows in the Garden" . Lynn Rogers, Washington County Master Gardener, Free and open to the public. Social time begins at 9:30 a.m. with the program starting around 10:00 a.m. Laurin Wheeler Program Series - Flower, Garden and Nature Society of NWAR.		Meet in Student Center of Northwest Arkansas Technical Institute, Ford Av. and Old Missouri Rd., Springdale, AR.
July 23	County 76 General Membership Meeting , 10 am to 2 pm, auditorium,		State Extension Office, Little Rock, AR.
August 17	"Calling All Birds" Mary Bess and Kelly Mulhollan, Free and open to the public. Social time begins at 9:30 a.m. with the program starting around 10:00 a.m. Laurin Wheeler Program Series - Flower, Garden and Nature Society of NWAR.		Student Center of Northwest Arkansas Technical Institute, Ford Av. and Old Missouri Rd., Springdale, AR
September 7 to 14	International Master Gardener Conference, Alaska.		
September 21	"At Home in the Ozarks" Susan Young, Outreach Coordinator, Shiloh Museum and Washington County Master Gardener, Free and open to the public. Social time begins at 9:30 a.m. with the program starting around 10:00 a.m. Laurin Wheeler Program Series - Flower, Garden and Nature Society of NWAR.		Student Center of Northwest Arkansas Technical Institute, Ford Av. and Old Missouri Rd. Springdale, AR.
September 23 to 24	Master Gardener Leadership Training	Hot Springs, AR.	
September 24	Master Gardener Day at Garvan Woodland Gardens,	Hot Springs, AR.	
October 14 - 25	Anniversary of Arkansas Master Gardener Program Celebration.		More information to come.

October 17, 2013	Advanced Master Gardener Class - Fragrant Garden Carroll County MGs hosting	Eureka Springs, AR	Registration deadline - September 17, 2013 \$60.00 registration fee For more information call 870-423-2958
October 19	" Indians of the Ozarks" George Sabo, University of Arkansas Professor of Anthropology and Author of several books on Native American History including Paths of Our Children: Historic Indians of Arkansas . Free and open to the public. Laurin Wheeler Program Series - Flower, Garden and Nature Society of NWAR. Social time begins at 9:30 a.m. with the program starting around 10:00 a.m.	Student Center of Northwest Arkansas Technical Institute, Ford Av. and Old Missouri Rd., Springdale, AR.	Contact: Gail Pianalto 479-361-2198 or Joyce Mendenhall 479-466-7265 .
November 16	- "The Effects of Native and Invasive Plants on Insect Life" Dr. Don Steinkraus, University of Arkansas Professor of Entomology. Free and open to the public. Social time begins at 9:30 a.m. with the program starting around 10:00 a.m. Laurin Wheeler Program Series - Flower, Garden and Nature Society of NWAR.	Student Center of NWAR Technical Institute, Ford Av. and Old Missouri Rd., Springdale, AR.	Contact: Gail Pianalto 479-361-2198 or Joyce Mendenhall 479-466-7265 .

Planting Guide for May

Vegetable	Days to maturity	Seed per 100 ft of row	Distance between rows Hand cultivation	Distance between plants in row	Depth to plant seed	Time to plant outside *	Lbs. yield per 100 ft row
Radish	25	1/4 oz.	12-18 in.	1 in.	1/4 in.	Feb - May	40
Beans (pole lima)	80	1 lb.	3 ft.	6-10 in.	1-2 in.	Apr - Aug	60
Collards	75	1/8 oz.	2-4 ft.	6-12 in.	1/4 in.	Feb - July	150
Corn (sweet)	80	2 oz	24-30 in.	8-12 in.	1 to 1 1/2 in.	Mar - Aug	6-8 dz. ears
Snap beans	50	1 lb.	18-24 in.	2-3 in.	1-2 in.	Mar - Aug	50
Swiss chard	60	1/2 oz	15-18 in.	4 in.	1 in.	Feb - May	75
Beans (bush lima)	75	1 lb.	18-24 in.	2-3 in.	1-2 in.	Apr - Aug	40

Planting Guide for May- continued

Beans (pole)	65	1 lb.	3 ft.	4-6 in.	1-2 in.	Mar - Aug	80
Cantaloupe	95	1 oz.	3-4 ft.	24-36 in.	1 in.	Apr - May	100
Chinese cabbage (fall crop only)	75	1/8 oz.	18-24 in.	12 - 15 in.	1/2 in.	July - Sept	75-85
Cucumber (pickling)	55	1 oz.	3-4 ft.	6 -12 in.	1-1 1/2 in.	Apr - May	100
Cucumber (slicing)	65	1 oz.	3-4 ft.	12-18 in.	1-1 1/2 in.	Apr - May	100
Eggplant	85	60 plants	24-30 in.	18-24 in.		Apr - May	100
Okra	55	2 oz.	30-36 in.	10 in.	1 in.	Apr - May	70
Peppers	75	60 plants	24-30 in.	15-24 in.		Apr - May	50
Popcorn	100	2 oz.	24-30 in.	8-12 in.	2 in.	Apr - June	30-40
Potatoes (sweet)	4.5 mo.	80 plants	3 ft.	12-16 in.		Apr - June	150
Pumpkin	110	1 oz.	3-4 ft.	2-3 ft.	1 in.	Apr - May	200
Southern peas	75	1/2 lb.	30 in.	2 - 3 in.	1 in.	May	50-60
Squash (summer)	55	1 oz.	3-4 ft.	2-3 ft.	1 in.	Apr - May	100
Squash (winter)	90	1 oz.	3-4 ft.	2-3 ft.	1 in.	May - July	150
Tomato	80	70 plants	2-3 ft.	18-24 in.		Mar - May	250
Watermelon	85	1 oz.	3-4 ft.	6-8 ft.	1-1 1/2 in.	Apr - May	300
Asparagus	2 yrs.	50 crowns	beds	2 ft.		Mar - Apr	30-40

An Advanced Master Gardener Class entitled Blackberries A to Z will be held at the Fruit Research Station, Clarksville, AR on June 13, 2013. The class will be hosted by the Johnson County MG's. Registration deadline is June 6, 2013 and the registration fee is \$65.00. If interested, please contact the county Extension office for a registration form.

If you have any questions regarding any of the above information, please contact me at the Monroe County Extension office, 870-747-3397 or e-mail vbanks@uaex.edu.

Happy Gardening,

Van Banks
 County Extension Agent -
 Staff Chair

VB:bdc