April 2013 Hilltop Garden Tips

- Inspect your pear and apple trees for fireblight. If you had problems with fireblight last year, you will need to spray 3 times during bloom with Agrimycin. Apply product as soon as 1/3 of flowers are open, and again at full bloom, and the last application is made at the first signs of flower petal drop. The best defense to fireblight is select varieties which are fireblight tolerant or resistant.
- Yes, you can plant your Easter lilies outdoors. Fertilize with a soluble houseplant fertilizer when the flowers fade and then transplant them into your garden. They will bloom in June next year and thereafter.
- Because of a later spring, you can still dig, divide, and transplant summer and fall blooming perennials.
- When selecting summer annuals, look for short, bushy plants with green leaves, well-developed root systems and more buds than flowers. Wait until after danger of frost (approximately April 15) before planting summer annuals in the garden.
- Deadhead the blooms of spring blooming bulbs, but wait to clean up the foliage until after it has turned brown. Don’t cut the green leaves since these provide food for next year’s blooms. Fertilize with bone meal after the bulbs have finished blooming.
- This is a great time to add a layer of compost or cow manure to the area around your plants to promote better plant health.
- Last call to plant potatoes, onion sets, kale, leaf lettuce, radishes, sugar snaps, broccoli and similar members of the cabbage family. These vegetables can withstand a light frost without damage. Vary your planting dates of radishes, lettuce, spinach, and broccoli by a week or two with the last planting made the end of this month. This will ensure that you will have a harvest season of these vegetables over a longer period of time.
- You can direct seed sweet corn, pole beans, lima and snap beans, cantaloupe, cucumbers, summer squash and watermelons after April 15. Wait until the end of April to early May to set out peppers and eggplant transplants.
- Watch for cutworms and aphids in the garden. Cutworms seem to find transplants within 24 hours of planting. Aphids population can explode fast when we have a dry warm spring.