

THE EL DORADO NURSERY AND GARDEN NEWSLETTER

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www.eldoradonursery.com



Oct/Nov/Dec 2022



GARDEN CALENDAR



What to do in October

- Plan your orchard. Prebook bareroot fruit & nut trees. See our website for the list <https://www.eldoradonursery.com/bareroot-1>
- Shop for plants with fall color. See us for ideas
- Sow wildflower seeds for spring and summer bloom.
- Plant spring blooming bulbs. Fertilize with bulb food.
- Aerate, renovate, reseed and fertilize lawns before the weather gets too cold.
- Divide and plant hardy perennials.
- Apply iron to azaleas, rhododendrons, gardenias, camellias, citrus and conifers.
- Fertilize spring blooming shrubs, perennials, trees and bulbs with super phosphate, bone meal, fish bone meal, or other organic bloom “food” for more abundant spring flowers.
- Plant pansies, mums, spinach, lettuce, chard, root crops, cabbage, broccoli, Brussels sprouts and sugar peas.
- Take advantage of the cooler weather and rains by planting shrubs and trees this fall. The next couple of months are ideal for any transplanting needs, especially natives.
- Protect citrus from winter frost



What to do in November

- Closed Thanksgiving Day, and the day after. Happy Turkeying!
- Knock down basins around trees so rain will drain off.
- Plant spring blooming bulbs. Be sure to use bulb food, SureStart or bone meal and amend the soil.
- Transplant trees, shrubs, and perennials. Amend the soil before planting and add starter fertilizer or bone meal.
- Start indoor Amaryllis and Paperwhites (mid-month begin forcing bulbs to give as holiday gifts).
- Rake leaves and recycle to your compost pile. Plant garlic and onion sets. Use starter fertilizer or vegetable food.
- Flush drip-irrigation systems with water to clear sediment, then drain the lines to avoid winter freezing and breakage. Drain garden hoses and disconnect from faucet.
- After leaf drop, apply first dormant spray (dormant oil and copper).
- Purchase a living Christmas tree, keep outside until just before Christmas.



What to do in December

- Need gift ideas? We sell gift certificates.
- Apply second dormant spray on fruit trees.
- Hoe and pull winter weeds. Apply pre-emergents to prevent weeds.
- Remove foil from gift plants to prevent root rot.
- Move live Christmas trees indoors to decorate. Do not leave inside for more than 10 days.
- Rake up leaves to prevent spread of disease and over-wintering insects.
- Protect citrus from winter frost



- To save tender plants from sudden freeze, turn on sprinklers or mist them lightly before they thaw (cold water adds heat). Other methods include Cloud Cover spray, covering the plants with burlap, boxes, or row cover. Uncover during the day (row cover or Frost blanket can stay on). Try wrapping a small string of Christmas tree lights on the plant (the warm kind).
- Apply iron to yellowing Gardenias, Azaleas, other acid loving plants, and Citrus.
- Close early Christmas Eve. Closed Christmas Day. Merry Christmas!

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

Fall Around the Nursery:





This hundred-plus year-old oak is slated to be chopped down in November, due to Power Company planting their power pole next to it. Its shade will be *sorely* missed. Farewell majestic oak.



From the Sacramento Master Gardeners:

October



It's not too late to start your winter vegetable garden! Do you enjoy colorful salads, broccoli, cauliflower, chard and more? There are plenty of leafy greens and other cool-season vegetable plants at garden stores now. Lettuce and red mustard shown here grow fast in warm fall soil giving you plenty of salads before winter comes.

If you are new to food gardening, you'll find a winter garden has fewer pests, and rain does the irrigation. Try it! See the MG planting calendar (available in the seed section at the nursery) to see what to plant now that you'll love to eat from fall through spring.



Harvest pumpkins and winter squash

The pumpkins and winter squash that you planted around May are about ready to harvest and use for fall decorations or in recipes. Harvest after the vines have yellowed or dried and before the first frost. Pick fruits when they are full-sized and well formed, and the outer skin color has evenly changed to its mature color. Give the fruit a "thump" with your fingers - ripe fruit will sound hollow. The stems should be dry and brown, and you cannot easily indent the skin with a fingernail. Use a sharp knife to cut stems, leaving at least 1 inch of stem attached to each fruit. Do not carry fruit by its stem or the stem may break off and the fruit can rot.

Cure pumpkins and winter squash for 2 to 3 weeks in a well-ventilated place out of direct sunlight. This will heal any wounds and toughen up the rinds for better storage. First clean the fruits to reduce surface contaminants (1 part bleach to 9 parts water). After curing the fruits, store them in a cool, dry place. Check them periodically and discard any that show signs of decay.

November

Prepare for winter

If cool-season crops are not going to be grown in your garden, and you have harvested all of your summer vegetables, it is time to get your garden ready for winter. Remove all plant material and

dispose of it either in your compost bin or in your green recycle container. Do not put diseased, insect-infested plant materials, or weeds that have gone to seed in your compost, as all disease-producing organisms or weed seeds may not be killed during the composting process.



Now that the leaves are changing colors and falling to the ground, be sure to rake them up and put them in your compost pile (discard any diseased leaves). If you have more leaves than room in your compost pile, place a layer (shredded if possible – run your lawn mower over them) onto your vegetable beds, planted or not.

Leaves are great organic mulch that will help keep the soil from eroding and crusting, and the leaves will break down over time, release nutrients, and help improve the structure of the soil. And red worms love them! If you still have too many leaves, you can stockpile them in large garbage cans or lawn/leaf bags for use during the next year. Be sure to keep them out of the rain.

December



Keep a journal

Now that vegetable gardening activities have slowed down, this might be a good time to jot down how your summer garden did. It is helpful to record what vegetable varieties were planted and their location so crop rotation will be easy...you may think you will remember what was planted where, but it is easy to forget unless it is written down. Also make notations of crops and varieties that did well or performed poorly. Record specific garden pest problems and when they occurred. Keeping a garden journal is definitely a great idea.

This is also a good time to clean and oil your tools so they will be ready for next year. Be sure to store them in a dry location to keep them from rusting.

Common Questions (with answers 😊)

Question: *When is a good time to prune my roses and fruit trees?*

Answer: Up until recently it was common practice to prune roses and orchards in early winter, close to leaf drop. Now the trend is to wait until February, towards the end of the rainy season. A good rule of thumb is to wait until the forsythias are blooming to prune your yard.

Avoid pruning now because this leaves open wounds for pathogens to enter over a longer period of time.

Question: *Winter is so drab. Are there any flowers I can plant that won't freeze?*

Answer: Oh Ya! For annuals try Dianthus, Pansies, Stock, Snapdragons and Primrose. Try adding a few ornamental kale and cabbage for interest. My favorite for winter bloom is the sun Camellias (*Camellia sasanqua*). There are many choice varieties flowering from November through January - just in time for *Camellia japonica* to begin blooming.

Question: *I bought some fall bulbs which I haven't planted yet. Do I still have time to put them in the ground?*



Answer: Yes, if the bulbs are still good. If they have already sprouted, there is still time. Sort through them and throw away any mushy or rotting bulbs. Be sure to add bone meal, bulb food, or even starter fertilizer to the bottom of the hole. Chances are good that your bulbs will still come up.

Question: *Should I fertilize my plants this time of year?*

Answer: It depends on the weather. Once the soil temperature drops below 55 degrees, plant roots cease to absorb nutrients from the soil until it warms up again. House plants should also be given a rest from fertilizing during the winter months. The exception would be new plants. Use a starter fertilizer when doing any new planting.

Question: *When do I spray my fruit trees?*

Answer: Try to get your first dormant spray as close to leaf drop as possible. The 2nd application should be around New Year's Day and the 3rd around Valentine's Day. LiquiCop is the choice for controlling fungal and bacterial problems, such as peach leaf curl. Add Dormant Oil to the spray to suffocate overwintering insects and their eggs. See web for more details - <https://www.eldoradonursery.com>



Planting Bareroot Fruits

and Trees

Bareroot season is upon us. Blueberries and other small potted fruits should be arriving starting in November, and full on bareroot trees will be here late December, early January. See our website for a list of varieties we will be getting: [BAREROOTLIST](#)

Digging the Planting Hole

Dig a hole that is twice the diameter of the root spread. If possible, leave a cone of undisturbed soil in the center of the hole. The hole should be deep enough to accommodate the roots without crowding or bending. Adjust the height of the cone so that the crown (where the trunk meets the roots) will sit at or slightly above soil level with the roots spreading downward.

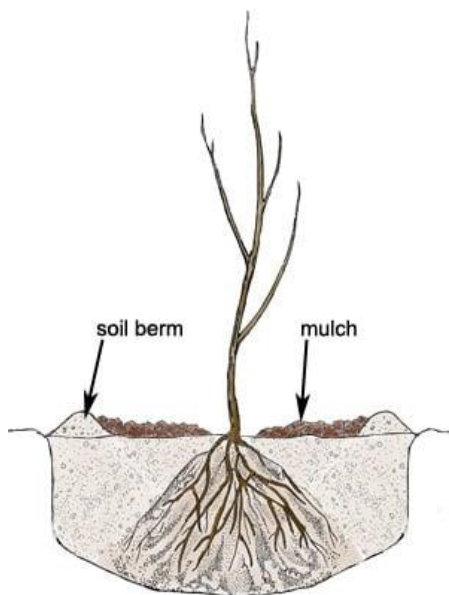
Backfill

The thinking on backfill has changed in recent years. Although it was once common to modify the backfill soil with amendments — such as compost, peat moss, aged manure and other ingredients — it is now considered best practice to leave the backfill unaltered or to add minimal amendments. This encourages roots to spread out into the native soil, rather than staying within the confines of the planting hole.

We do recommend adding mycorrhizal fungi and bone meal to the backfill. Mycorrhizal fungi form associations with plant roots and help them extract and absorb minerals and water from the soil. Trees and shrubs with mycorrhizal-enhanced root systems adapt better and are more tolerant of stressful environments. Bone meal provides essential minerals that promote sturdy root systems and stimulate plant growth. We recommend *EB Stone SureStart* for this (sold in bags at the nursery)

A Note on Grafted Plants

Most fruit trees and roses are grafted, meaning that each plant consists of two sections. The top is called the *scion*, and the bottom is called the *rootstock*. Set grafted plants so the graft union (a swollen area near the base of the trunk or main stem) sits a few inches above soil grade.



Planting and Watering

To plant, spread the roots over the soil cone, adjusting as necessary so the crown sits at the natural soil level. If the soil cone is made of

loose soil, plant the crown slightly higher (1/2" to 3/4") to allow for settling after planting. Planting the crown too deep is a common cause of plant failure.

While holding the plant upright, begin backfilling the hole, pressing soil around and between the roots. Use your hands to firm the soil and eliminate air pockets. Continue adding backfill and packing it down until you've filled the hole.

Construct a 3-4" high ridge of soil around the outer edge of the planting hole. This berm will create a basin to hold irrigation water and concentrate it over the roots. Use a hose to fill the basin, and then allow the water to soak in, repeating several times. Or, let the water run at a trickle for 15 to 30 minutes to ensure that the entire root zone is moist. The goal is to ensure even watering so the soil is drenched and any large air pockets are eliminated. Remove any plant tags or labels from the tree.

Mulching

Apply bark mulch or pine straw to a depth of 2-3" over the entire planting hole. Mulching helps conserve water and prevent weeds. Taper the mulch toward the base of the plant.

Staking

Staking at planting time is not always necessary. Consider the stability of the plant and direction and strength of prevailing winds when determining whether or not to stake. If in doubt, ask a nursery professional.

Fertilizing

We do not recommend fertilizing (other than the initial SureStart) newly planted trees and shrubs during their first year of growth.

Watering

Proper moisture is critical to the survival of your young tree or shrub. The roots should never dry out completely, nor should they be waterlogged. The best way to check soil moisture? Use your finger. Dig down 2-4" just outside the root mass of the plant and water if the soil feels dry. Newly planted shrubs and trees should be checked and watered every other day for the first two weeks. After the first two weeks, limit watering to once a week if less than 1" of rain falls during the week. Thorough soakings that moisten the soil to the entire depth of the root mass are better than frequent light waterings.



Dave Wilson Nursery