Gardener's Almanac Provides Monthly Checklist

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Ask an Expert: USU Extension Gardener's Almanac Provides Monthly Checklist

April showers bring May flowers – as well as a plethora of gardening tasks. Utah State University Extension’s Gardener’s Almanac provides a checklist for each month as well as links for tips and further information. The May checklist follows.

- Plant warm-season vegetables and annual flowers once the threat of the last frost has passed. Click here for a listing of the average last and first frost dates.
- By planting tomatoes deeper, they are able to form more roots along the stem, creating a more vigorous plant.
- Consider planting sweet corn in the garden every other week (until early July) to extend the harvest.
- Consider the various types of fertilizers. Click here for information on traditional fertilizer options. Click here for information on organic fertilizers.
- Thin out overcrowded seedlings using a pair of scissors, trying to avoid disturbing the young roots.
- Protect fruit blossoms and tender garden plants from late freezing temperatures. Click here for information on critical temperatures in fruit.
- Plant summer-blooming bulbs including gladiola, begonia, dahlia and canna.
- Divide warm-season ornamental grasses when new growth begins to emerge.
- It’s already time to take notice of weeds. Click here for information.
- Allow the foliage of spring blooming bulbs (tulips, daffodils and crocus) to die down before cutting the leaves off.
- Click here for information on planting a lawn.
- Turfgrass needs minimal irrigation each week. Click here to learn about irrigation needs in your area.
- In compacted sites, aerate with hollow core aerator when turfgrass is actively growing (April – June).
- Control broadleaf weeds in the lawn when temperatures are between 60 and 80 F. Follow the label and stop use of broadleaf herbicides once the temperature is above 85 F.
- Apply a slow-release lawn fertilizer to provide a long-lasting effect throughout the summer months.

Pests and Problems:

- Monitor newly planted vegetables for cutworm and flea beetle damage.
- Monitor for cankerworm damage on scrub oak and Box Elder trees along the foothills.
- Monitor for aphids on lush new spring growth on a variety of plants. Treat for aphids by using “softer” solutions such as spraying them with a hard stream of water or by using an insecticidal soap.
- Monitor for slugs and snails. These pests thrive in moist, cool areas of the garden and landscape, feeding on a variety of plant hosts.
- Protect Ash trees from the lilac-ash borer around the first of May.
- Control codling moth in apples and pears to reduce wormy fruit. For specific timing, see the Utah Pests Advisories.
- Treat for powdery mildew on apples beginning when leaves are emerging (at ½-inch green) until June.
- Watch for insect pests in raspberries from mid-May thru early June.
- Watch for cutworm damage in turfgrass and new vegetable starts.
- Monitor for damaging turfgrass insects. In areas previously damaged, consider a preventative (systemic) insecticide.

The Gardener’s Almanac provides monthly tips delivered to your inbox year-round. Click here to subscribe.