Ask an Expert – How Does Your Garden Grow? Tips for July

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It can be a challenge to keep gardens growing well as summer heats up, so Utah State University Extension provides a Gardener’s Almanac to help. The almanac provides a checklist of tasks with tips, links and further information.

July Checklist

· Start enjoying the **tomato** harvest.

· Side dress (fertilize) **potatoes in the garden** with nitrogen in early July.

· Harvest **summer squash** and zucchini when they are still small and tender.

· **Deep water** established trees and shrubs about once per month during the heat of summer.

· Deadhead (cut off) spent blossoms of perennial and annual flowers.

· Divide crowded iris or daylilies once they have finished blooming.

· Remove water sprouts (vertical shoots in the canopy) of **fruit trees** to discourage regrowth and reduce shading.

· Renovate **perennial strawberry** beds by tearing out old crowns (mother plants) and applying fertilizer to stimulate new runners.

Pests and Problems

· If tomatoes are not producing, it could be due to hot weather (95°F and above), which causes flower abortion.

· **Blossom end rot** (black sunken areas on the end of tomatoes) is common and is caused by uneven watering.

· Check under leaves of pumpkins, melons and squash plants for **squash bugs**.

· Treat corn for **corn earworm**.

· **Spider mites** prefer dry, hot weather and affect many plants. Treat for spider mites by using “softer” solutions such as spraying them with a hard stream of water or by using an insecticidal soap. Spider mites can be easily identified. Shake leaves over a white piece of paper, and if the small specs move, you have mites.

· Control **codling moth** in apples and pears to reduce wormy fruit. For specific timing, see our **Utah Pests Advisories**.

· Historically, control of the **greater peach tree borer** in peaches, nectarines and apricots occurs the first of July. However, for specific timing, see our **Utah Pests Advisories**.

· Click here for instructions on how to submit a sample to the Utah Plant Pest Diagnostic Lab.

· Watch for symptoms of **turfgrass diseases**.

· Monitor for damaging **turfgrass insects**.

· For drought information, click here. For information from the Center for Water-Efficient Landscaping, click here.

To see a video of the July Gardener’s Almanac tips, click here. To learn more gardening tips and tricks, click here.

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