

Ask an Expert – May Gardening Checklist

Julene Reese

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April showers bring May flowers – as well as a multitude of gardening tasks. The Utah State University Extension 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 overcrowded seedlings using a pair of scissors, and try not to disturb the young roots.

* Protect fruit blossoms and tender garden plants from late freezing temperatures. [Click here](#) for information on critical temperatures for 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 a 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 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 through early June.

* Monitor for damaging [turfgrass insects](#). In areas previously damaged, consider a preventative (systemic) insecticide.

* [Click here to subscribe](#) to the Utah Pests IPM Advisories for timely tips on controlling pests in your yard and garden.

* Consider taking an [online gardening course](#). Courses cover everything from container vegetable gardening and creating the perfect soil, to planting trees and controlling pests. Courses are geared to both beginning and professional gardeners. Use the code “**Grow5**” at checkout to get \$5 off.

* Explore more gardening tips on Extension’s newly designed [yard and garden website](#).