

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

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05/01/2020



April showers bring May flowers – as well as a wide array 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. Try to avoid disturbing the young roots.
- Protect fruit blossoms and tender garden plants from late freezing temperatures. [Click here](#) for information on critical temperatures and 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 to 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.

For all things gardening, visit [garden.usu.edu](http://garden.usu.edu). Here you will find videos, checklists, downloadable information, information on our demonstration gardens, and sign-up links for our online gardening courses.