

Zone 8 - Monthly Garden Calendar

Chores and Planting Guide

March

- The longer days and shorter nights will stimulate your houseplants to start growing again. Now is a good time to repot them if needed and give them a good feeding.
- Add organic matter to soil to improve soil tilth and drainage.
- Start transplants indoors of tomatoes, peppers, and eggplant- try to get this done by the 15th. By the end of March, you should be safe to start the process of hardening off for transplant outside of your onions, parsley, and any other cool season crops that are at least 5 weeks old. Select smaller rather than larger plants of the cole crops (broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, Brussels sprouts) since overly mature plants exposed to low temperatures early in the season tend to bolt into flower too early.
- Cover Brassica crops with floating row cover to protect from cabbage moth and flea beetle damage if these little critters have been a problem in the past.
- Continue to direct sow carrots, Swiss chard, peas, collards, kale, kohlrabi, leaf lettuce, onions, parsley, parsnips, beets, leaf lettuce, radishes, salsify and spinach as soil and weather conditions permit.
- Plant seed potatoes with lots of organic matter.
- Be careful working your garden soil! Working soil when it is still too wet creates compacted clots. Wait for dry spells.
- Clean up any leftover dried debris from garden beds.
- April Buy a notebook and use it to keep all your gardening information. List what you plant in the garden. Include the name of seed companies, plant name, variety, planting date, and harvest date. During the growing season keep notes on how well the plant does. If the variety is susceptible to disease, record what was used to treat any problems. All this information will be helpful in planning future gardens.

- Place birdhouses built this winter outdoors this month. Birds will begin looking for nesting sites soon.
- Plan new landscaping projects on paper first. Do not over plant. Be sure you know the mature size of each plant and allow for growth.
- Plant new beds of bare-root asparagus and strawberries.
- Pull back mulch from strawberry and asparagus beds so they can push through easily.
- Side-dress your asparagus with a gentle, natural, nitrogen fertilizer.
- Fertilize grapes, raspberries, and blueberries before growth resumes. Raspberry canes that will produce this year's crop should be pruned back by 1/4 before growth resumes. Last year's fruiting canes should have been cut down to the ground after harvest last year but if not, do it now.