HOUMA grown
a Division of TARC

January 2012

Perennials

Care

- The old and dead upper portions of dormant perennials need to be **cut back** and removed.
- Less hardy perennials (cigar plant, acanthus, salvias, ruellia, asparagus fern, and spider plant) need to be **mulched** over their crowns or roots for the coldest part of the winter.
- Only **water** evergreen perennials if the weather becomes mild and dry. Watering dormant perennials is **unnecessary**.
- DO NOT FERTILIZE perennials this month!!!

Pest Control

- There is little need to worry about insect pest during this time of the year.
- Cool-season **weeds** will be actively growing, and need to be dealt with promptly! **MULCH**!
- When the temperature rises to 65 degrees F or higher, it is safe to spray **glyphosate** (RoundUp) on the weeds. This is recommended more for the perennials that are dormant at this time and have very little foliage, so that it is less likely to damage the plant.

Planning & Planting

- Look through catalogs or online for the perennials you want to plant, while keeping our **hardiness zone 9** in mind.
- The Louisiana mild winters allow for planting **hardy perennials** any time during the cool season, so place your orders and have them delivered as soon as possible.
- If there are any perennials that you would prefer to be in a different location in the garden (due to looks or poor growth), now is a good time to **relocate** them.

Annuals

Care

- Keeping beds **mulched** well will suppress weed growth, conserve water, and retain soil warmth.
- When temperatures lower than **30 degrees F** are predicted, **nasturtiums** need to be protected.
- The **hardiest** annuals that survive temperatures **below 20 degrees F** are: Viola, ornamental kale and cabbage, pansies, snapdragons, and dianthus. **Sweet pea** plants should be protected when temperatures are in the **low 20s**.
- Annuals in the garden need little to **no watering** during this time, but do keep an eye on the weather and water if the earth dries out. **Potted** annuals still need to be **watered regularly**.
- You may **fertilize** your annuals during this time, but only if they are showing signs of **deficiency** (pale yellowing leaves).

Pest Control

- Mild weather brings in the **aphids**, and they need to be controlled with insecticidal soaps, UltraFine Oil, or Malathion. Other insect pests are minimal during this time.
- **Weeds** are the main pest of the winter months, and they should be removed from the garden before they take over.

Planning & Planting

- If you have not been keeping a journal of your garden in the past, start the New Year off with **garden journaling** as your goal. This will be a very reliable aid in planning your future gardens!
- It is not too early to look through those catalogs and start picking out the annuals you will want to plant when the cool-season annuals finish.
- **Fast-growing** cool-season annual seeds can still be planted this month (forget-me-not, nasturtium, annual phlox, alyssum, and calendula).
- Planting cool-season **transplants** during pleasant weather can be done this month.

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Vegetables

Care

- Protect any **newly germinated** vegetable seedlings in the garden when temperatures are expected to be lower than the **upper 20s**.
- Any broccoli, snow peas, cauliflower, or lettuce that is ready should be **harvested** before the temperatures get down to the **mid-20s**.
- **Little irrigation** is needed during this time, EXCEPT for newly planted transplants and seeded beds.
- The bulk of cool-season crops (such as collards, cabbage, cauliflower, and broccoli) are **heavy feeders** and need a constant supply of nutrients. **Sidedress** these plants about every 3-4 weeks during the growing season.

Pest Control

- Control **caterpillars** with **Bt** (organic) or **Sevin.**
- Control **aphids** with **insecticidal soap**, **Malathion**, or **UltraFine Oil**.
- Controls **slugs** with vegetable specific **baits** or **traps**.
- **Pull weeds** right away, and keep the garden mulched.

Planning & Planting

- It is never too early to start making plans for the **spring garden**. Look through any records kept from last year's garden and make your plans according to what worked and what didn't work.
- Pick out the varieties of tomatoes, peppers, and eggplants you will want to grow this springs and **purchase** the **seeds NOW**!
- **Tomato**, **pepper**, and **eggplant seeds** need to be planted during this month, in order to have **transplants** ready for the spring garden. These seeds need to be planted in **hotbeds** or a **greenhouse**. If you do not have either one of these options, then try an indoor lighting system.
- **Celery** can be planted this month only by using **transplants**.
- **Shallots**, **onions**, and **leeks** all need to be planted using **sets**.
- **Irish potatoes** should be planted using **seed pieces** (these are made by cutting the seed potatoes into golf ball-sized pieces, each containing at least one "eye," and allowing them to air-dry for a few days).

January Planting Vegetable Guide

Beets
Broccoli
Cabbage
Carrots
Cauliflower
Celery
Chinese Cabbage
Collards
Eggplant
English & Snow Peas
Irish Potatoes
Kale
Kohlrabi
Leeks
Lettuce
Mustard
Onions
Peppers
Radish
Rutabaga
Shallots
Spinach
Swiss Chard
Tomatoes
Turnips