

Garden Club Horticultural Hints March 2022 Get set to start gardening!

Last call to order seeds and clean garden tools. You will already find seed houses out of some varieties. Tools that haven't been cleaned, sharpened and repaired will make your work in the garden harder when you begin cleaning up from winter and prepare for spring planting. Lawn mowers and rototillers should be sent out now for a tune-up before the warm weather creates a rush at the repair shop.

Tools that haven't been sharpened will make your spring garden clean-up that much harder



When the lawn has dried enough to allow you to walk on it without creating impressions in the soil, rake it to remove dead and matted grass. Thin or bare spots in the lawn can be 'frost seeded' by simply spreading seed over the area. The freeze and thaw cycle, or even a late snow, will ensure that the seed is worked into the lawn. Spring is not a good season for a complete lawn makeover. Weed seeds that are present will more quickly take advantage of the conditions you create for the grass.

Wait to remove dead and matted grass until your lawn has dried sufficiently that walking on it doesn't leave impressions in the soil.



Pruning time, but keep your pruners away from spring blooming plants. Go into the yard and remove any damaged branches on your trees and shrubs, prune late bloomers and those that don't bloom for shape or size while the ground remains frozen. Prune most fruit trees and shrubs, blueberries and raspberries, now.

Prune back any broken branches such as rose canes and vines that were left in place last fall. They need to go so the new growth can emerge.





In the vegetable garden. Do not start working soil before the winter moisture has dried or you will ruin the soil structure. Soil is ready to be worked when it crumbles when lightly squeezed in your hand.

Think of chocolate cake when you assess whether your soil is ready to be worked.

Do not be too hasty in removing protective mulches or covers from roses, perennials, bulb beds and so forth. Winter storms and snow can still make a re-appearance.



Tomato seedlings require up to a two month's head start before they're ready to be transplanted into your garden

While the ground is still too cold to plant most things, it's a good time to start seeds for this year's garden. Under grow lights you can start onions, leeks, broccoli, and cauliflower now. For your flower garden, sow seeds of geraniums, petunias, snap dragons, begonia and coleus.



Planting summer flowers and bulbs. Get as head start on tender bulbs such as begonias, cannas, colacassia (elephant's ear), dahlia and ranunculus. Started indoors in pots. they will be larger and bloom sooner after you put them outdoors once the weather has warmed sufficiently. Check the details for individual bulbs or corms, but most can be potted now in a lightweight, well drained potting mix. When the shoots appear, move them to a site where they get several hours of sunlight a day. As the temperatures rise, increase their sunlight exposure. Once the danger of frost is past, you will have plants on their way for your summer gardens or containers.

Written and created by Betty Sanders. For more horticultural suggestions for March and throughout the year, please visit www.BettyOnGardening.com