

September Gardening

Sally Scalera

With the hot weather continuing through September it is still a good idea to do your yard work in the early morning or evening hours (if it's not raining!) Here are some ideas of things to do around the yard this month.

- * Fertilize your lawn using a complete fertilizer, like 16-4-8, with micronutrients. Only apply 1 pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet of a complete fertilizer (one that has N-P-K) that has 30-50% of the nitrogen as water insoluble nitrogen. Just divide the first number in the analysis (the percentage of nitrogen) into 100 to get the number of pounds to spread on 1,000 square feet. As an example, you would apply about 6.25 pounds of a 16-4-8 fertilizer per 1000 square feet.
- * Sod or plugs can still be laid to establish a new St. Augustine lawn.
- * Finish seeding bahiagrass in early September. Remember to buy scarified seed so that you have a higher germination rate.
- * Stop throwing your coffee grounds and tea bags in the garbage and instead, start scattering them around the base of your landscape plants (or even your vegetable garden!)
- * Fertilize shrubs and perennials if their leaves are yellowish-green (needs nitrogen) or bright yellow around the margins with deep green in the center (minor elements.)
- * Some flowers that can be planted this month are begonias, coleus, cosmos, gaillardia, impatiens, marigold, vinca, sunflower, salvia and zinnia.
- * Move your poinsettia cuttings to a location that receives full sun. After mid month, pinch off the very tip of each shoot to encourage branching.
- * Give poinsettias in the landscape or containers their final pruning in the first week of September.
- * Herbs that can be planted in September include; sweet basil, chives, garlic chives, sage, sweet marjoram, thyme, mint, and rosemary.
- * Bulbs to plant in September include; African lily (*Morea* sp.), amaryllis, crinum lily, society garlic, Aztec lily, calla lily, narcissus, shell ginger (*Alpinia zerumbet*), gladiolus, spider lily (*Hymenocallis*), and rain lily.

* Vegetables that can be planted this month include; lima, shell, pole and snap beans; sweet corn; cucumbers; eggplant; peppers; English & southern peas; summer squash; tomatoes; broccoli; cabbage; celery; collards; endive/escarole; lettuce; mustard; onions - bulbing, bunching or multipliers; and sow radish seeds.

* Prepare planting areas for strawberries by adding organic matter and then plant. Strawberries are only planted in Central Florida during September and October so, don't delay!

* Water your citrus trees (1 inch of water each time,) every 7-10 days, during dry periods, to help prevent the fruit from splitting.

* Vegetable seeds that can be sown in September for transplanting in October include; beets, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, collards, Chinese cabbage, lettuce, English peas, and kohlrabi.