

Farmer Fred - NOVEMBER GARDEN CHORES FOR THE CENTRAL VALLEY, FOOTHILLS & BAY AREA



Freezing temperatures in our area can happen as early as the first week of November. Get ready for the rain and cold ahead:



If the predicted low temperature is 32 or below: disconnect, straighten out and drain any water from your garden hoses to prevent cracking.



Protect your plants near the house from becoming waterlogged by extending your home's rain gutters with flexible pipe.



Fix any dripping outdoor faucets and then wrap the exposed portion of the water pipes. Insulation that becomes saturated from a leaky faucet is of little protective value during freezes.



Turn off and drain sprinkler systems by removing the head from the sprinkler at the lowest point of your lawn; or, install a sprinkler end drain.



Drip irrigation systems should be turned off if a freezing morning is forecast; remove the end plug for drainage.



Snails are lurking in the shade. Look for them during the day beneath piles of lumber and under the canopy of big-leaf plants, such as hostas and hydrangeas.



Spruce up the garden with plants that produce colorful red berries during the winter. Cotoneaster, toyon and pyracantha do well in our area.



Add leaves and small twigs to the compost pile. Using a chipper/shredder on fall garden debris will speed up the composting process.




Plant blueberry vines in acidic soil, preferably on the east side of a building. They will succeed wherever you have azaleas that are doing well.




Plan on spraying your deciduous fruit trees this month for peach leaf curl. Your local nurseryperson can direct you to the right shelf for your particular fruit tree variety.





November is an excellent month to plant trees. Among the trees with colorful fall foliage that do well here are Chinese pistache, zelkova, ginkgo and the red oak.


 Plant new trees and shrubs "high" to avoid stem rot. The top of the root ball should be about an inch above the soil line to allow for settling.


 For cut flowers in late winter, plant freesia corms now.


 In bloom right now: sasanqua camellias, a great shrub for our area. They can take more sun than the japonica camellias, which bloom in winter.

 The sun is lower in the horizon. Move your houseplants so they're closer to the light source.

 Onion sets are still available at area nurseries. Plant now for a Memorial Day harvest.

 November is the best time to plant garlic here in the valley.

 Bare root blackberries available now that do well in the valley include Olallie, Marion and Boysen.

 Feed your lawn now for the winter with a fertilizer that contains phosphorus and potassium as well as nitrogen.