



## Digger Dan's Monthly Garden Tips

### January 2010

After the run-up to Christmas many people like to relax on their own property, gardening and re-thinking their own landscape.

#### The Veggie Garden after the Christmas Break

If you think you left it too late to grow your own in the edible garden, you didn't:

- Planting now: Some summer veggies only do their thing when the heat goes on in summer – you can plant good crops of basil, corn and chillies (and check your local garden centres for half price tomato plants – but only choose the better quality plants).
- Leeks are best planted in summer, but there's a trick to getting nice fat stems: make slim holes (with a pencil or sushi chopstick) down to 15cm and with a width of 2 to 3 cm. Drop young leek plants into the holes and regular watering will fill in the soil as they grow. But make sure you dig through plenty of *Living Earth Compost* to the garden before you plant.
- Beans are a crop that does brilliantly in summer heat, but experienced bean growers will tell you that daily watering will give you the bumper crops.
- The success of your veggie garden is hugely dependent on the moisture content of your soil. In summer many plants suffer dehydration and it inhibits their ability to grow and produce crops. This doesn't mean you need to irrigate twice daily, but when you water it needs to be deep and meaningful. Some veggie gardens require only a 2/3 times a week water, but if your plants are new and the area's baking hot, then water last thing at night or early in the morning, for 15 to 20 minutes.
- An excellent way to cut down on the need to water so often is to spread a bale of pea straw (available at most CLS yards this summer) around the vegetable plants, after you've given them a deep watering.

***If you're just starting out on your own Veggie Garden, drop into our friendly yards and we'll show you how it's done – and you'll find us open all Auckland Anniversary Weekend including the Monday!***

#### The Rest of the Garden

At this time of the year much of what you do is damage containment from pests and plant management through the hotter months:

- Evergreen viburnums, azaleas and rhododendrons get a nasty silvery look to the leaves in late autumn if they've been attacked by thrips.

- Spray those susceptible plants now, while the little beasts are active with Yates' **Confidor**.
- Munch Munch Munch is all one notices on the full size and dwarf versions of our NZ kowhai, resulting in virtually no foliage over January. Well the young plants need some leaves to photosynthesize, so the options are: dust with **Derris Dust**, spray with Yates' **Success** or use digital (finger squashing) control.
- Temper your need to do the big 'slash and burn' tidy-up these holidays. It's good to make cut-backs, but when you remove over-hanging foliage, some plants beneath show signs of burning after being exposed to sunlight.
- Continue to feed summer's performers with *Living Earth Liquid Compost* – this includes veggies, summer flowering annuals, roses and perennials.
- Rambling Roses that have finished their yearly display, out of control bougainvilleas and wisterias can all be 'summer pruned' now.

## The Lawn

Deep, less frequent, watering will not only assist in maintaining a beautiful green lawn but will also reduce invasion from shallow rooting grass weeds.

## The DIY Holiday Project

During visits to different areas of the country during the holidays, you often notice the different tones of stones or rock from that area. Our **CLS** yards have a great range of decorative pebbles and chips that can help you bring that look to your garden, on a path, or a seating area. Remember it's a good idea to compact the ground and lay a basecourse, before adding a layer of your favourite shade of stone. Our **HOKEY POKEY** Mix is proving to be a big seller.

And don't forget the "easy to assemble" **Keystone Retaining Walls** if you're making a raised bed or garden edging.

## Holiday Hours

Our yards are observing the following opening hours for January 2010:  
**CLOSED 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> January 2010 but open ALL Anniversary Weekend**  
 Check our website for exact hours ([www.centrallandscapes.co.nz](http://www.centrallandscapes.co.nz))

***Wishing you all a Happy New Year from the Team  
 at Central Landscape & Garden Supplies***

***Garden Thought of the Month: "All the flowers of  
 tomorrow are in the seeds of today."***

**0800 TOPSOIL - [www.centrallandscapes.co.nz](http://www.centrallandscapes.co.nz)**