



Digger Dan's Monthly Garden Tips

July 2010

The Fruit & Veggie Garden

This month is more about harvesting, rather than what you can plant. It's an ideal time though for some preparation for future planting:

Weeding – It is surprising how the desirable plants slow in growth, yet the weeds seem undaunted by the cold. Try not to stand on the wet, cold soil, but pull out all the weeds now.

Composting – Layering on **Living Earth Compost** (available from us by home delivery, or borrow a courtesy trailer) is a good move now as this will enrich the texture of your existing soil and encourage earthworms. You'll need to fork it in 6 to 8 weeks time as it warms up.

Fertilising: Clearly it's not time to use fertilisers when the plants don't need them, but there are a few exceptions: you can add lime to 'sweeten' our naturally acidic soils in preparation for new vegetable planting. If you're getting ready to buy potato tubers for sprouting, you can mix Potato Fertiliser through the soil that they are to be planted into. Mixing Strawberry Food into new strawberry beds is a good idea, but you will want to top this up in early spring.

Planting: If you haven't done so, it's time to get garlic and shallots in the ground. If you've a warm elevated site for your edible garden then you can sow peas, broad beans, brassicas, spinach and silver beet.

The Fruit Trees

Most pip and stone fruit trees can be pruned now. This information, posted by New Plymouth City, is most useful. Follow this Link:

<http://www.newplymouthnz.com/VisitingNewPlymouth/Attractions/ParksAndReserves/GardeningTips/PruningFruitTrees.htm>

The Rest of the Garden:

- Sprinkle Dried Blood around polyanthus and primulas for prolonged flowering and healthy foliage.
- Give roses a few more weeks of cold before pruning. (Instructions in Digger Dan August). But layer around plenty of our **Living Earth Compost** beneath the bushes.
- New dahlia tubers are coming into stores now. (And watch for some bargains on lily bulbs that can still be planted at this time).
- Prune deciduous shrubs and trees now. (But not viburnums, witchhazel and *Azalea mollis* that are all budded ready to flower from now to the end of spring).

- Lacking a bit of winter colour? The following climbers are winter flowering and give a bit of 'vertical brightness' in the otherwise dull dormant garden:
Clematis armandii -very late winter almond scented flowers
Clematis cirrhosa 'Lansdowne Gem'- nodding deep pink to red flowers resembling hellebores (winter roses) or *C. cirr.* 'Wisley Cream'
Gelsemium sempervirens – the 'Carolina Jasmine' bright yellow jasmine-like flowers
Pyrostegia venusta – the 'Flame Vine' - orange trumpet shaped flowers

The Lawn

With growth at a bare minimum there is not a lot required for your lawn at this time. If your lawn is wet and soggy try to keep off it as much as possible so as to reduce wear and tear. Fertilise with Garden Supreme if required and enjoy not having to mow your lawn as often as usual.

Planning a Revamp? Now is a fantastic time to undertake changes – raised beds, new paths or a whole new garden! It's easier to see the structure whilst the foliage has disappeared for winter....

If you're planning that project, visit our website or one of our yards for advice and a great range of topsoil, lawn and garden mixes, mulches, decorative pebbles & stones, metal and drainage, plus a whole lot more

Product of the Month

Premium Mulch:

This is Central's own blend of black mulch and Living Earth compost. It is 100% weed free. Not only does it suppress weeds and save water but with the compost content it also feeds the soil and plants. On top of all that it LOOKS great!

Garden Thought of the Month: "Show me your garden and I shall tell you what you are." Alfred Austin

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