



CENTRAL

LANDSCAPE & GARDEN SUPPLIES

Digger Dan's Monthly Garden Tips October 2009

The Veggie Bed

- Have you seen our amazing vegetable beds in our yards? Plenty of lettuces, spring vegetables and new season's tomatoes are planted in our *Living Earth* Garden Mix and shooting away in this weather! If you'd like the same at home just talk to our friendly staff and we can have the garden bed and garden mix at your place in no time at all.
- Central Landscape & Garden Supplies is getting right behind this upsurge in gardening and giving you the chance to win a garden bed installed at your home, or better still, a garden makeover worth \$15,000.00. Just go back to our home page for details to enter.
- The patient gardeners amongst us have waited 'til now to plant out our tomatoes. Just make sure your overnight temperatures are lifting – there have been too many late frosts in parts of Auckland and the upper half of the North Island recently. Rules for tomatoes: work *Living Earth* Compost into the soil, or use *Living Earth* Garden Mix, stake plants with a 1.8m stake at planting and use a tomato specific fertiliser from flowering onwards. Tomatoes need potassium-rich fertiliser to produce bumper crops. General garden fertilisers, especially liquid, are often too high in nitrogen, meaning the tomatoes will grow lots of leaves, but less fruit.

Phone: 0800 TOPSOIL; www.centrallandscapes.co.nz

- Have a go at vegetable crops for the summer table such as mixed lettuce varieties, capsicum, sweet-corn, courgettes and, if you're a rhubarb nut, plant it now, keeping the crown above the soil and piling up the *Living Earth* Compost around it.
- Herbs to plant now include parsley, coriander, dill and French Tarragon (Russian Tarragon is **not** the same and has nothing like the subtle flavour of French).

The Rest of the Garden

- School holidays again.... Butterflies: Swan plants have a chance to get big enough to feed a colony of monarch butterflies if you plant them now. Scarecrow: Save old clothes and bits of string and ribbon – firmly lash 2 strong stakes into a tall cross. Top with stuffed sacking ball for a head. Draw a face on the sacking, discard last summer's unravelling straw sunhat on the head and dress your scarecrow in the old clothes. Use old straw or shredded plastic for stuffing. Anchor firmly into the garden amongst your prized crops!
- Shade Gardens; Deciduous trees come back into leaf from now on and cast shade in areas previously open to the sun. Good shrubs and perennials for dry shady areas include *Agave attenuata* and our Cape Reinga lily: *Arthropodium* 'Matapouri Bay'. Hydrangeas and clivias love moist damp soil and grow well together. In deep shade try a fernery of New Zealand's best, such as the tree fern *Dicksonia squarrosa*, our hen and chicken fern *Asplenium bulbiferum* and our ground fern *Blechnum penna marina*. As you do with plants such as hostas and astilbes, the soil needs to be regularly watered.
- Bulbs for summer: Dahlias, Keith Hammett has come up with some new ones, focussing on dark foliage and interesting striped flowers. Other bulbs available now include: peonies (only in cold winter climates), tuberoses, gladioli, begonias and no, it's not too late to plant lilies – check bulbs are firm and sprouted, Great bulbs available at www.nzbulbs.co.nz
- Roses: It's vitally important you feed them this month and water them regularly. Check for aphids and either squash or spray with *Yates' Confidor*. (This doesn't kill other good insects, but don't spray when bees are visiting the garden). Also be mindful that the foliage can develop black spot, which can be treated with *Yates' Fungus Gun* or with a homemade spray of 1 teaspoon of Baking Soda dissolved in 1 litre of water.
- Fruit Trees: Everyone's planting a fruit tree! To feed, add plenty of well-rotted compost around the tree and specific fruit tree fertiliser such as *Burnetts' Gold Fruit & Citrus Food*. Fungal leaf spots can occur in changeable spring weather, so note if your tree has finished flowering, or set fruit, then ask which fungicide at your local garden centre.

Phone: 0800 TOPSOIL; www.centrallandscapes.co.nz

The Garden Project

- This great spring weather has got us all going on outdoor projects! If you're putting in steps to access a new part of the garden or just anchoring uprights for new garden beds or retaining walls, we've got a great ready-mix concrete for the holes - Cemix Multicrete or Fastcrete (posthole application and sets in minutes) comes in bags and mixes easily. There is also a high strength concrete for structural applications which we can order for you.
- And don't forget, if you need a veggie bed this weekend, ours come with *Living Earth* Garden Mix and ready to plant. (That's home-grown salads just six weeks later....)

The Lawn

- Spring is now fully upon us with a constant mixture of sun, rain and wind. This is a vital time for the health of your lawn. You may find that your lawn has broadleaf or flat weeds starting to germinate and grow, so it is very important to spray these out before they take a strangle hold of your lawn.
- First fertilise with Turfmaster Gold or Garden Supreme to ensure your desirable grasses are growing actively. Once the fertiliser has taken effect make sure you mow the lawn a few days prior to applying your weed spray.
- Use a SELECTIVE broadleaf herbicide such as Turfix, Banvine or Triumph Gold. Ensure even application over the whole lawn and don't be tempted to give some areas a "little extra" as this may damage your grass.
- Never use grass clippings for compost or mulch after applying a broadleaf spray as some sprays can have long residual activity and can damage desirable plants even months later. Always apply chemicals responsibly and follow the label instructions.
- Once your weeds have died you may have some bare areas, seed these with the relevant GTi Prolawn seed blend. If you find yourself with minimal grass left follow the lawn renovation tips from September's Garden Tips.

All of the above products are available from your local *Central Landscape & Garden Supplies* yard – bulk and bags, pickup or delivery as well as free loan trailers

"DOWN TO EARTH SERVICE"

Phone: 0800 TOPSOIL; www.centrallandscapes.co.nz