

South Florida Gardening Calendar¹

Sydney Park Brown²

January

What to Plant

Annuals/Bedding plants: Plants that can be added to the garden during the coolest months include begonia, browallia, lobelia, dianthus, dusty miller, and nicotiana. **See** *Annuals*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_annual_landscape_plants

Bulbs: Winter is a great time to plant bulbs that will bloom in the spring. Some examples include Clivia lily, crinum, and agapanthus. **See** *Bulbs for Florida*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_bulbous_flowers

Herbs: Many herbs will thrive now that temperatures are cooler, including tarragon, thyme, dill, fennel, and any of the mints. **See** *Herbs*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_herbs

Vegetables: Many vegetables can be planted this time of year. This is the last month to plant Irish potatoes, beets, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, collards, kale, mustard, and turnips. **See** *Vegetable Gardening in Florida*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_vegetable_gardening

What to Do

Landscape: It is a good time to plant woody shrubs. Remember Right Plant/Right Place and match the mature size with the location. Water frequently to get new plantings off to a good start. **See** *The Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Guide to Plant Selection and Landscape Design*: https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/FYN_Plant_Selection_Guide_2015.pdf and *Shrubs*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_shrubs

Trees: Prepare for hurricane season now by checking trees for damaged or weak branches and pruning if needed. Hire an ISA-certified arborist. See International Society of Arboriculture: <http://isa-arbor.com/> and *Pruning Landscape Trees and Shrubs*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_tree_pruning

Irrigation: Water plants if temperatures remain higher than normal and rainfall is scarce. **See** *Landscape Irrigation*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_landscape_irrigation

Shrubs and trees: Prune non-spring flowering shrubs and trees this month to improve form. **See** *Pruning Landscape Trees and Shrubs*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_tree_pruning

Arbor Day: Celebrate Florida Arbor Day (the third Friday of January) by planting a tree in your yard or community. **See** *Arbor Day in Florida*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_arbor_day

Crapemyrtle: Remove seed pods, crossing branches, and small twiggy growth to improve the appearance and form of the plant, if desired. Hard pruning is not required. **See** *Crapemyrtle*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_crapemyrtle

Cold protection: Bring sensitive plants like orchids inside if a frost or freeze is predicted. Thoroughly water and cover sensitive plants in the landscape 12–24 hours before a freeze. **See** *Cold Protection and Chilling Damage of Landscape Plants*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_landscapes_and_cold

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Pests: Apply horticultural oil to citrus, shrubs, and deciduous fruit trees while plants are dormant to control scale. Apply copper spray to mangoes after bloom. See *Landscape Pest Management*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_landscape_pests



Figure 1. Cattleya orchid.
Credits: UF/IFAS Photo by Thomas Wright

February

What to Plant

Annuals/Bedding plants: Good performers in south Florida's mild winter include impatiens, verbena, dianthus, strawflower, and lobelia. See *Annuals*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_annual_landscape_plants

Bulbs: Many bulbs can be planted now. Divide large, crowded clumps. Provide adequate water for establishment. Some examples include Amazon lily, crinum, and agapanthus. See *Bulbs for Florida*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_bulbous_flowers

Groundcovers: Consider replacing areas of grass with drought-tolerant, low-maintenance groundcovers. See *The Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Guide to Plant Selection and Landscape Design*: https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/FYN_Plant_Selection_Guide_2015.pdf and *Ground Covers*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_ground_covers

Vegetables: Winter vegetable gardening is in full swing. Last month to plant cantaloupes, cucumbers, eggplant, lettuce, peppers, spinach, and tomatoes for a late spring harvest. Protect crops in the unlikely event of a frost or freeze. See *Vegetable Gardening in Florida*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_vegetable_gardening



Figure 2. Eggplant.
Credits: Tyler Jones, UF/IFAS

What to Do

Lawns: Fertilize lawn grasses to improve color or coverage. Choose a fertilizer (not a “weed and feed”) with 0% or very little phosphorus unless a soil test indicates the need for it. A fertilizer with controlled-release nitrogen provides longer-lasting results. See *Lawn Fertilizer*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_lawn_fertilization

Roses: Prune roses this month to remove damaged canes and improve the overall form. After pruning, fertilize and apply a fresh layer of mulch. Blooming will begin 8–9 weeks after pruning. See *Roses*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_rose

Shrubs and palms: Fertilize shrubs and palms by spreading fertilizer evenly over the soil surface and watering it in. Follow with a fresh layer of mulch to conserve moisture and reduce weeds. Delay pruning any cold-damaged branches until new growth starts. See *Palm Nutrition and Fertilization*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_palm_nutrition and *Landscape Fertilization*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_landscape_fertilization

Lawns: Apply a preemergence weed killer (not a “weed and feed”) to lawns late this month to prevent germination of warm-season weed seeds. Apply when temperatures rise to 65°F for 4–5 days. Timing is important for good control. See *Lawn Weeds*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_lawn_weeds

Avocados and mangoes: Disease-susceptible varieties of avocado and mango may require applications of copper fungicide. See *Avocado*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_avocado and *Mango*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_mango

Citrus: Fertilize now if not done in January. Frequency and amount of fertilization depend on the age of the tree. See *Home Citrus Culture*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_citrus_home_citrus_culture

Trees: Don't wait until hurricane season to check your trees. Hire an ISA-certified arborist to do an inspection. See International Society of Arboriculture: <http://isa-arbor.com/> and *Pruning Landscape Trees and Shrubs*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_tree_pruning

March

What to Plant

Annuals/Bedding Plants: Plant heat-tolerant annuals, such as crossandra, gazania, melampodium, and zinnia that will last into fall. See *Annuals*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_annual_landscape_plants

Bulbs: Plant gladiola corms 6 inches apart and 4 inches deep; stake as they grow. Plant caladium for a showy tropical display all summer. See *Bulbs for Florida*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_bulbous_flowers

Herbs: In addition to their culinary value, many herbs are ornamental and attract butterflies to the garden. See *Herbs*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_herbs

Vegetables: This is the last month to plant arugula, beans, cantaloupe, carrots, celery, sweet corn, endive, okra, radish, squashes, Swiss chard, and watermelon. See *Vegetable Gardening in Florida*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_vegetable_gardening

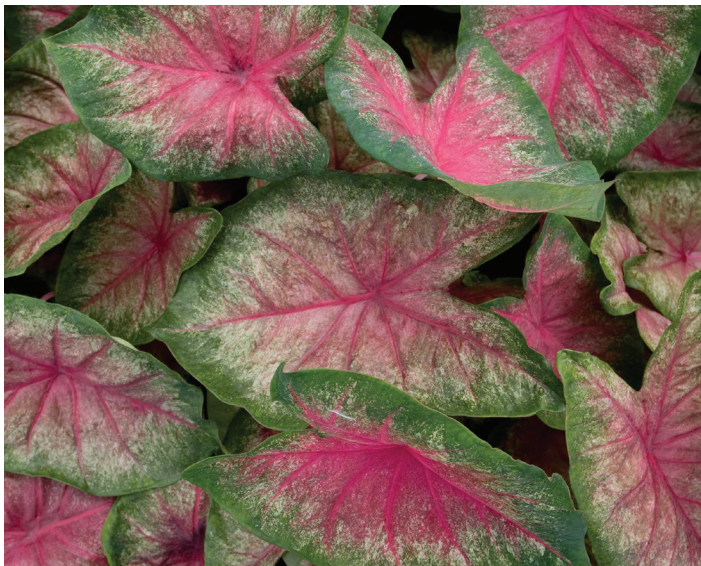


Figure 3. Caladium.
Credits: Tyler Jones, UF/IFAS

What to Do

Shrubs and trees: Prune when new growth begins after the end of the dormant season. To guard next season's blooms, begin pruning after the last flowers fade but before the new

buds set. See *Pruning Landscape Trees and Shrubs*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_tree_pruning

Mulch: Add mulch to minimize weeds and conserve moisture during dry weather. See *Landscape Mulches*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_mulch

Lawns: Fertilize lawns this month if not done in February. See *Lawn Fertilizer*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_lawn_fertilization

Pests: Monitor landscape plants for insects, especially for the presence of aphids on tender new growth. Insects become more active during warm weather. See *Landscape Pest Management*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_landscape_pests

Fertilize: Fertilize palms and ornamental shrubs if not done last month. See *Palm Nutrition and Fertilization*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_palm_nutrition and *Landscape Fertilization*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_landscape_fertilization

Lawns: Identify damaging insects and spot treat early to prevent widespread damage. See *Turfgrass Pest Insects*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_turf_pest_insects

Tropical and subtropical fruits: Add variety and interest to the landscape and table with exotic fruits. See *Tropical Fruit for the Home Landscape*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_home_tropical_fruit

Citrus: Squiggly lines in the younger leaves of citrus trees indicate Citrus Leaf Miner (CLM) insects, but there is seldom a need to manage them. Natural enemies in Florida usually keep them in check. See https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_citrus_home_citrus_culture

April

What to Plant

Annuals/Bedding plants: Plant heat-tolerant annuals, such as coleus, vinca, and portulaca. See *Annuals*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_annual_landscape_plants

Bulbs: Cannas thrive in the heat of summer. New varieties have colorful leaves as well as flowers. See *Bulbs for Florida*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_bulbous_flowers

Herbs: Some to start now include basil, coriander, cumin, and mint. See *Herbs*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_herbs

Vegetables: Beans, Chinese cabbage, Southern peas, and sweet potatoes can still be planted. Mulch beds well and monitor irrigation if the weather is dry. **See** *Vegetable Gardening in Florida*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_vegetable_gardening



Figure 4. Lady beetle.
Credits: UF/IFAS

What to Do

Plant for Butterflies: Plant flowers of different colors, shapes, sizes, and blooming seasons to provide nectar for adult butterflies and provide host plants for their caterpillars. **See** *Butterfly Gardening*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_butterfly_gardening

Pests: Monitor insect activity and learn which bugs damage plants and which do not. **See** *Landscape Pest Management*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_landscape_pests

Beneficials: Identify and conserve beneficial insects. Some insects should be encouraged in your yard! **See** *Beneficial Insects*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_beneficial_insects

Tomatoes: Watch for pests, disease, and nutritional disorders on developing tomato plants. **See** *Home Tomato Gardening*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_tomato_gardening

Palms: Identify and treat environmental and nutritional disorders in palm trees. **See** *Palm Care*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_palm_care

Oleanders: Inspect chewed or ragged leaves for oleander caterpillars at work. **See** *Oleander Pest Management*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_oleander_ipm

Fruits: Propagate fruit crops by air layering and grafting. **See** *Propagating Fruits in Florida*: http://www.solutions-foryourlife.com/hot_topics/lawn_and_garden/propagating_fruits.shtml

Perennials and bulbs: Divide clumps of bulbs, ornamental grasses, or herbaceous perennials to expand or rejuvenate garden beds or to pass along to friends. **See** *Bulbs for Florida*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_bulbous_flowers and *Perennial Landscape Plants*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_perennials

Shrubs: Choose from a wide variety of shrubs to add to the landscape now. Remember Right Plant/Right Place and match the mature size with the location. **See** *The Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Guide to Plant Selection & Landscape Design*: https://fl.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/FYN_Plant_Selection_Guide_2015.pdf and *Shrubs*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_shrubs

May

What to Plant

Annuals/Bedding plants: Plants that can take summer heat include coleus, salvia, torenia, wax begonia, and ornamental pepper. **See** *Annuals*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_annual_landscape_plants

Bulbs: Some lilies do better when their roots are crowded. Try planting Amazon, Aztec, and Clivia lilies in containers to increase blooming. **See** *Bulbs for Florida*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_bulbous_flowers

Herbs: Plant heat-loving herbs, including basil, Mexican tarragon, ginger, cumin, summer savory, and rosemary. **See** *Herbs*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_herbs

Vegetables: Sweet potatoes, boniato, hot peppers, and tropical “spinach” such as Sisso, Malabar, and New Zealand can be planted now. **See** *Vegetable Gardening in Florida*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_vegetable_gardening

What to Do

Pests: Watch for thrips, scale, and mites on ornamental plants because they become more active in warm weather. **See** *Landscape Pest Management*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_landscape_pests

Gardenias and ixora: Distinguish between the normal yellowing of older leaves and the yellowing of new growth, which usually indicates a micronutrient deficiency. **See** *Nutrient Deficiency (Landscape Plants)*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_nutrient_deficiencies_landscape_plants and *Gardenias at a Glance*: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep338>



Figure 5. Canna.
Credits: UF/IFAS

Oleanders: Inspect chewed or ragged leaves for oleander caterpillars at work. **See *Oleander Pest Management*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_oleander_ipm

Lawns: Mow at the recommended height; mowing too short encourages weeds. Watch for damage from chinch bugs in St. Augustinegrass and begin scouting for newly hatched mole crickets in bahiagrass lawns. **See *Turfgrass Pest Insects*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_turf_pest_insects

Tomatoes: Watch for pests, disease, and nutritional disorders on tomato plants. **See *Home Tomato Gardening*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_tomato_gardening

Trees: Prepare for hurricane season by checking trees for damaged or weak branches and prune if needed. Hire an ISA-certified arborist. **See *International Society of Arboriculture*:** <http://isa-arbor.com/> and ***Pruning Landscape Trees and Shrubs*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_tree_pruning

Lawns: Prevent or minimize disease by following proper cultural practices when caring for lawns. **See *Turf Diseases*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_turf_diseases

June

What to Plant

Annuals/Bedding Plants: Flowering plants that can take full sun during the increasingly hot summer months include celosia, portulaca, vinca, pentas, and

some coleus. **See *Annuals*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_annual_landscape_plants

Palms: Summer's warm, rainy months are the perfect time to plant palms. Make sure not to cover the trunk with soil. **See *Palms*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_palms

Herbs: Plant heat-loving herbs, including basil, ginger, summer savory, cumin, Mexican tarragon, and rosemary. **See *Herbs*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_herbs

Vegetables: Plant tropical vegetables, such as boniato, calabaza, and chayote this month. **See *South Florida Tropicals*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_series_south_florida_tropicals and ***Chayote*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_chayote



Figure 6. Vinca.
Credits: Tyler Jones, UF/IFAS

What to Do

Pests: Monitor the landscape and garden weekly for harmful insects. Knowing which insects attack a plant can aid in identification and treatment. **See *Landscape Pest Management*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_landscape_pests

Irrigation: Watch for drought stress and water as needed if rainfall has been spotty. Focus on new plantings and follow watering restrictions. When rains begin, shut down the irrigation system. **See *Landscape Irrigation*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_landscape_irrigation

Propagation: Produce more plants by air layering, grafting, division, or cuttings. **See *Seeds and Propagation (Lawn and Garden)*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_garden_propagation

Palms and cycads: June kicks off Florida's hurricane season, but so-called "hurricane" or "pineapple" pruning is not recommended. For information on the correct way to prune palms (and to fertilize them). **See *Palm Care*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_palm_care

Pruning: Lightly prune summer-flowering shrubs, like hibiscus, oleander, and ixora, during the warmer months to increase blooming. See *Pruning Landscape Trees and Shrubs*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_tree_pruning

Fertilizer Bans: Numerous municipalities in south Florida prohibit the application of fertilizer to lawns and/or landscape plants during the summer rainy season (June–September). See if such an ordinance exists in your area.

Lawns: Check frequently for damaged areas and keep insects in check with early treatment. Determine whether yellow and brown lawn patches are caused by chinch bugs, disease, or lack of water. Take time to determine the cause so your remedy is effective. Rejuvenate areas where grass does not grow well by replacing it with versatile ground-covers. See *Garden Pest Insects*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_garden_pest_insects, *The Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Guide to Plant Selection & Landscape Design*: https://fsl.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/FYN_Plant_Selection_Guide_2015.pdf, and *Ground Covers*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_ground_covers. See *Lawn Fertilizer*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_lawn_fertilization

Soil solarization: Clean up your vegetable garden and solarize the soil for 4–6 weeks to kill pests and disease. See *Soil Solarization*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_soil_solarization

Lightning safety: Be safe outdoors during storm season.

July

What to Plant

Annuals/Bedding plants: Summer annuals to plant now include celosia, coleus, torenia, and ornamental pepper. See *Annuals*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_annual_landscape_plants

Bulbs: Butterfly lily and gladiolus are bulbs that can be planted during the middle of summer. See *Bulbs for Florida*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_bulbous_flowers

Herbs: While summer is too hot to start herbs from seeds, many, such as oregano and mint, do well if started from small plants. See *Herbs*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_herbs

Vegetables: Plant tropical vegetables, such as boniato, calabaza, and chayote this month. See *South Florida Tropicals*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_series_south_florida_tropicals and *Chayote*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_chayote

Palms: Continue planting palms while the rainy season is in full swing. Support large palms with braces for 6–8 months after planting. Do not drive nails directly into a palm trunk. See *Palms*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_palms



Figure 7. Oranges.

Credits: UF/IFAS Photo by Thomas Wright

What to Do

Trees: Hurricane season is upon us, but don't "hurricane" or "pineapple" prune palms. For all tree and palm pruning, hire an ISA-certified arborist. See *International Society of Arboriculture*: <http://isa-arbor.com/> and *Pruning Landscape Trees and Shrubs*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_tree_pruning

Lawns: Determine the cause of any lawn problems before taking action. If an insect is the culprit, treat only the affected area. Rule out disease or sprinkler malfunction. See *Turfgrass Pest Insects*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_turf_pest_insects

Fertilizer Bans: Numerous municipalities in Florida prohibit the application of fertilizer to lawns and/or landscape plants during the summer rainy season (June–September). Does such an ordinance exist in your area? See <https://fsl.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/FloridaFertilizerOrdinances.pdf?v=20190606>

Vegetable garden: Use summer heat to solarize the soil for fall vegetable planting. It takes 4–6 weeks to kill weeds, disease, and nematodes, so start now. See *Soil Solarization*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_soil_solarization

Irrigation: Summer rains typically provide ample water for plants. Over-irrigating can lead to root rot and wastes water and money. Install an inexpensive rain shutoff device which conserves water by overriding an irrigation system when it rains. If one is already installed, check that it is operating

properly. See *Landscape Irrigation*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_landscape_irrigation

Pests on ornamental plants: Inspect the leaves of ornamental plants for small white dots that may indicate lace bugs at work. Spray forcefully with water to help control this pest. See *Landscape Pest Management*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_landscape_pests and *Landscape Lace Bug Pests*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_landscape_lace_bug_pests

Tropical fruit trees: Check for damage to fruit or leaves and take action to minimize the effect of insects and/or disease on developing fruit or the overall health of the tree. See *Tropical Fruit*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_tropical_fruit

August

What to Plant

Annuals/Bedding plants: The hottest days of summer limit planting to heat-tolerant vinca, coleus, pentus, salvia, and celosia. See *Annuals*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_annual_landscape_plants

Bulbs: Aztec lily, butterfly lily, walking iris, and spider lily can be planted any time of the year, even late summer. See *Bulbs for Florida*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_bulbous_flowers

Herbs: Herbs that can be planted from plants (not seeds) include bay laurel, ginger, Mexican tarragon, and rosemary. See *Herbs*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_herbs

Vegetables: Start planting eggplant, okra, peppers, pumpkin, squashes, and tomatoes for the fall garden. See *Vegetable Gardening in Florida*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_vegetable_gardening

What to Do

Palms: Check older fronds for yellowing as it may indicate a magnesium or potassium deficiency. Apply an appropriate palm fertilizer. See *Palm Nutrition and Fertilization*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_palm_nutrition

Vegetables: Solarize the vegetable garden for 4–6 weeks in preparation for fall planting if not done in July. See *Soil Solarization*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_soil_solarization

Poinsettias: Pinch back poinsettias and mums before the end of the month to allow time for buds to form for winter bloom. See *Poinsettias*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_poinsettia



Figure 8. Mexican sage.
Credits: Tyler Jones, UF/IFAS

Ornamental plants: Fertilize those plants that show signs of deficiencies. Rapid growth and leaching rains may result in nutrient deficiencies in some plants. See *Nutrient Deficiencies (Landscape Plants)*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_nutrient_deficiencies_landscape_plants and *Landscape Fertilization*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_landscape_fertilization

Fertilizer Bans: Numerous municipalities in south Florida prohibit the application of fertilizer to lawns and/or landscape plants during the summer rainy season (June–September). Does such an ordinance exist in your area? <https://fsl.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/FloridaFertilizerOrdinances.pdf?v=20190606>

Annuals/Bedding plants: Remove spent blooms, cut back, and fertilize flowering annuals and perennials to extend the bloom season into the fall months. See *Annuals*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_annual_landscape_plants and *Perennial Landscape Plants*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_perennials

September

What to Plant

Annuals/Bedding plants: If summer beds need refreshing, try scarlet sage, nasturtium, celosia, and wax begonia for color into fall. See *Annuals*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_annual_landscape_plants

Bulbs: Plant gladiolus every two weeks to stagger blooming. Stake each plant. **See** *Bulbs for Florida*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_bulbous_flowers

Herbs: Plant herbs that tolerate the warm temperatures of early fall, such as Mexican tarragon, mint, rosemary, and basil. **See** *Herbs*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_herbs

Vegetables: September opens the door for more vegetables to plant. **See** *Vegetable Gardening in Florida*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_vegetable_gardening

Shrubs: Consider placing native shrubs, like beautyberry, marlberry, firebush, and dahoon holly, where you can view the birds that enjoy them. **See** *The Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Guide to Plant Selection and Landscape Design*: https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/FYN_Plant_Selection_Guide_2015.pdf and *Shrubs*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_shrubs

What to Do

Lawns: Continue to monitor the lawn for signs of insect damage. Fall armyworms, chinch bugs, mole crickets, and sod webworms are still active this month. **See** *Turfgrass Pest Insects*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_turf_pest_insects

Fertilizer Bans: Numerous municipalities in Florida prohibit the application of fertilizer to lawns and/or landscape plants during the summer rainy season (June–September). Does such an ordinance exist in your area? <https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/FloridaFertilizerOrdinances.pdf?v=20190606>

Vegetable gardens: Prepare the fall vegetable garden if not done in August. Using transplants from your local garden center will get the garden off to a fast start, but seeds provide a wider variety from which to choose. **See** *Vegetable Gardening in Florida*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_vegetable_gardening

Perennials and bulbs: Divide and replant perennials and bulbs that have grown too large or need rejuvenation. Add organic matter to planting beds and monitor water needs during establishment. **See** *Seeds and Propagation (Lawn and Garden)*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_garden_propagation

Irrigation: Check that irrigation systems are providing good coverage and operating properly before summer rains taper off. **See** *Landscape Irrigation*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_landscape_irrigation



Figure 9. Cabbage, cauliflower, and broccoli.

Credits: Tyler Jones, UF/IFAS

Citrus: Fertilize citrus with a balanced fertilizer either this month or in October. Use controlled-release nitrogen because rain will not leach it from the soil too quickly. **See** *Home Citrus Culture*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_citrus_home_citrus_culture

October What to Plant

Annuals/Bedding plants: Even though temperatures are still warm, begin planting for the cooler months ahead. Impatiens, alyssum, and dianthus are good plants for the fall/winter garden. **See** *Annuals*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_annual_landscape_plants

Bulbs: Plant agapanthus, rain lily, and Clivia lily now for blooms next spring or summer. Add organic matter to the planting bed for best results. **See** *Bulbs for Florida*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_bulbous_flowers

Herbs: A wide range of herbs can be planted from seed or transplants this month. Some to try include dill, fennel, parsley, and cilantro. **See** *Herbs*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_herbs

Vegetables: Easy crops that can be grown now include beans, broccoli, carrots, collards, lettuce, green onions, peppers, radishes, spinach, and tomatoes. **See** *Vegetable Gardening in Florida*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_vegetable_gardening



Figure 10. Strawberries.
Credits: UF/IFAS

What to Do

Lawns: Control winter weeds in lawns before they appear. Preemergence herbicides must be applied at the right time to be effective. Apply when nighttime temperatures are 55°F–60°F for 4–5 days. Mow lawngrass at the recommended height; mowing too short encourages weeds and stresses the turf. **See *Lawn Weeds*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_lawn_weeds

Ornamental trees and shrubs: Fertilize plants that are not performing as desired. This is the last month of the year to fertilize shrubs and trees. Controlled-release fertilizer provides nutrients over a longer period of time. **See *Palm Nutrition and Fertilization*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_palm_nutrition and *Landscape Fertilization*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_landscape_fertilization

Lawn fertilization: Fertilize lawns if needed. **See *Lawn Fertilizer*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_lawn_fertilization

Strawberries: Prepare beds and set strawberry plants this month. Strawberries also make a colorful and tasty container planting. Either way, water daily until plants are established. **See *Strawberries*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_strawberries

Palms: Palms have unique nutritional needs. Select a fertilizer that contains controlled release nitrogen, potassium, and magnesium. **See *Palm Nutrition and Fertilization*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_palm_nutrition

Oleanders: Control the oleander caterpillar, which is a year-round resident in south Florida, without harming beneficial insects by pruning off infested leaves or spraying

with BT (*Bacillus thuringiensis*). **See *Oleander Pest Management*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_oleander_ipm

Twig girdlers: Control twig girdlers by cleaning up and destroying fallen branches that young twig girdlers can use for harborage. **See *Twig Girdlers*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_twig_girdlers

November What to Plant

Annuals/Bedding plants: Create a display of fall colors with cool-season plants. Some examples include impatiens, strawflower, cape daisy, and pansy. **See *Annuals*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_annual_landscape_plants

Bulbs: Many bulbs like to get their start in cool weather. Bulbs to plant this month include amaryllis, crinum, and the many varieties of elephant's ear. **See *Bulbs for Florida*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_bulbous_flowers

Herbs: Continue planting herbs from seeds or plants. A wide variety of herbs like cooler, dryer weather, including cilantro, dill, fennel, parsley, sage, and thyme. **See *Herbs*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_herbs

Vegetables: Lots of choices exist for November including beans, broccoli, kale, snow/English peas, and strawberries. **See *Vegetable Gardening in Florida*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_vegetable_gardening



Figure 11. Hydroponic lettuce and herbs.
Credits: UF/IFAS

What to Do

Perennials: Divide and replant overgrown perennials and bulbs now so that they establish before the coolest weather arrives. **See *Seeds and Propagation (Lawn and Garden)*:** https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_garden_propagation

Lawns: Watch for brown patch and large patch until May. These fungal diseases cause areas of grass to turn brown. Since treatment is difficult, prevention with proper cultural practices is key. See *Turf Diseases*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_turf_diseases

Scale insects: Take advantage of lower temperatures to apply horticultural oil sprays to control scale insects. See *Landscape Pest Management*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_landscape_pests

Irrigation: Turn off systems and water only if needed. Plants need less supplemental watering in cooler weather. See *Landscape Irrigation*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_landscape_irrigation

Poinsettias: Watch for hornworms on poinsettias planted in the landscape. This pest can quickly defoliate a plant. Handpick or treat only the infested area. See *Poinsettias*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_poinsettia

December What to Plant

Annuals/Bedding plants: To add color to the winter garden, plant masses of begonia, impatiens, and geranium. See *Annuals*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_annual_landscape_plants

Bulbs: Amaryllis is a popular plant for the holiday season. It can be forced to bloom now or planted outdoors for spring blooms. See *Bulbs for Florida*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_bulbous_flowers

Herbs: Plant herbs that thrive in cool weather. Some examples include parsley, thyme, sage, dill, fennel, and cilantro. See *Herbs*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_herbs

Vegetables: Reliable cool-season vegetables to plant this month include broccoli, carrots, kale, green onions, and others. See *Vegetable Gardening in Florida*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_vegetable_gardening

What to Do

Poinsettias: Enjoy one of the most popular holiday plants. Protect it from cold until spring, and then plant it in the garden for next year. See *Poinsettias*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_poinsettia



Figure 12. Poinsettia.
Credits: Tyler Jones, UF/IFAS

Irrigation: Irrigate if the weather has been warm and dry. Monitor plants for signs of stress and water only as needed. See *Landscape Irrigation*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_landscape_irrigation

Lawns: Continue monitoring for brown patch and large patch fungal disease until May. Proper cultural practices are key for control. See *Turf Diseases*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_turf_diseases

Houseplants: Inspect regularly for pests on indoor plants. Keep in mind that plant-specific temperature, light, and humidity are key to ensuring that indoor plants thrive. See *Houseplants*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_house_plants

Soil test: Consider performing a soil test if plants do not perform as desired or if new plantings are planned. See *Soil Testing*: http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/hot_topics/agriculture/soil_testing.html and *Landscape and Soil Test (Home Lawn and Garden)*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_home_soil_testing

Compost/mulch: Use fallen leaves and other plant debris to provide the carbon ingredient needed for successful composting and also to make a good mulch. See *Backyard Composting*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_home_composting and *Landscape Mulches*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_mulch

Landscape and garden pests: Continue monitoring and treat as needed. While cooler weather generally means fewer pests, some populations actually increase at this time of year. See *Landscape Pest Management*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_landscape_pests

Holiday trees: Consider enjoying a live southern red cedar and then plant it in the landscape when the holidays are over. See *Christmas Tree Selection and Care*: http://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/giam/potpourri/holiday/xmastree_care.html

Protect: Protect tender orchid, impatiens, and tomato from falling temperatures. See *Cold Protection and Chilling Damage of Landscape Plants*: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_landscapes_and_cold

What to Do Every Month

- Adjust irrigation based on rainfall: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_landscape_irrigation.
- Prune off dead blooms and seeds to encourage new flowers.
- Monitor for insects and disease.
- Plant trees, shrubs, and flowering annuals/perennials and water until established.
- *The Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Guide to Plant Selection and Landscape Design*: https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/FYN_Plant_Selection_Guide_2015.pdf
- Warm months—Mow lawns at recommended heights: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/lh028>

UF/IFAS Resources for Gardeners

- UF/IFAS Publications (EDIS): <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/>
 - UF/IFAS county Extension offices can help! <https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/find-your-local-office/>
- Florida-Friendly Landscaping™: <http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/>
- Gardening Solutions: <http://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/>
- Florida Master Gardener Program: <http://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/mastergardener/>
- Living Green: <http://livinggreen.ifas.ufl.edu/>
- UF/IFAS Books, Flash Cards, Apps and other gardening resources: <http://ifasbooks.ifas.ufl.edu/>
- Planting dates and other vegetable gardening information are also available as a free mobile app called 'Florida Fresh.' Access an app provider for your mobile phone or download it from <http://m.ifas.ufl.edu>.

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