

What To Plant

As temperatures start to moderate, look for colorful plants to brighten up the landscape. Chrysanthemum, pansy, geranium, angelonia are a few that will chug right through the fall and winter without damage.

Miss the spring bulbs of northern gardens? There are a few daffodil bulbs that will perform admirably with the small number of cool nights here. Choose types that bloom with no more than 200 chilling hours, which is what we get in a typical winter. Carlton, Erlicheer (pronounced early-cheer), February Gold, Soleil d'Or, and Trevithian are several types that perform well in north-central Florida. The Florida Daffodil Society piloted a number of daffodils down into central Florida and these are some of the ones that performed as a perennial with minimal chilling. If you can't find these locally, connect with the Florida Daffodil Society.



Trevithian Daffodil



Erlicheer Daffodil

Edibles:

There are many edibles that thrive at this time of the year providing a cornucopia of edible delight. Choose plantings that produce reliably during fall and winter's cooler temperatures.

Plant intermittently unless you plan to do a lot of canning or being the best neighbor on the block sharing with all of your friends. Few of us can consume 25 heads of lettuce, but a few planted every week or every other week will give continuous salads and burger toppings for months.

Strawberries are treated as an annual here in Florida. Typically this is because many are brought in from Canada with little ability to withstand our summer heat. They perform well growing either in the ground or in a hanging basket.

Herbs add flavor to most any dish. Excellent fall choices include: Dill, fennel, parsley, rosemary, cilantro.

Fall vegetable plantings can include peas, cabbage, onion, (white) potato, radish and all the leafy vegetables such as kale, lettuce and spinach. Fresh grown and harvested beets taste NOTHING like beets from cans and jars. Treat yourself to amazing flavor by starting a few beets this fall. Check out the University of Florida's Vegetable Gardening guide for more information.



Fresh grown beets

Select a site that gets 5-6 hours of bright sun, is located near a water source, and rid the soil of competing weeds and roots. Even a small planting in a container on the porch will bring you joy and a flavorful harvest.

What To Do

Weeds:

Control annual winter weeds before they appear. Since many winter weeds are annuals (chickweed, clovers, wild geranium, etc), the seeds germinate in the fall. So timing the control strategies is critical. Don't wait too late to act. Apply pre-emergent herbicides before the first of the plants emerge and these products will effectively prevent weed germination.



Usually in October, apply a pre-emergent product such as PREEN or others when the nighttime temperatures are cool for several consecutive nights – usually about 55 or 60 degrees. Waiting until weeds are noticeable and creating another round of seeds is a tougher time to reduce their spread.

Watering:

Check irrigation controllers to assure that the rain shut off is working and only watering plant material, with no misaligned heads. Watering won't make sidewalks or houses grow. These measures will assure that water applied to the landscape is effective and efficient. It also saves money and the environment.



By the end of the year, turn controllers to OFF and run about once every 10-14 days while plants are dormant and temperatures are cool. Do this after Thanksgiving but before friends and family arrive for holiday festivities, or it might get forgotten.

Mulch:

Now is a great time to get a 2-3" layer of mulch in landscape beds. This may be as simple as adding a top dressing over existing material to bring it up to the 2-3" layer. Be sure to use mulch made from materials that were once alive, such as leaves, pine needles or wood chips. Utility trimmings are not uniform but you can't beat the price of FREE. They will often drop them at your house. Our county landfill also creates FREE mulch. Grab a shovel and head on over!

Lawns:

What NOT to do

Do not use weed and feed products.



For specific gardening information,
be sure to contact our office.
527-5700