

Hi Everyone,

Well, it is time to get ready for the fall and winter season: cleaning-up annuals, cutting down perennials, adding fresh mulch and lightly pruning any straggly or dead branches back to the trunk. This is a good time to prepare hoses and sprinklers to have them ready for the spring or if we should need watering in the winter months. Remember that plantings can dry-out in the winter as-well-as the summer. I personally water well before the winter, so that dehydration hopefully will not occur.

The fall is an active time for fire ants and using "Come and get it" or 'Andro" are the best products for your property. Both products are safe for your animals, but deadly for the fire ants. You do not want to get bitten by them, because I know too well how badly they can hurt.

In October:

Lawn:

- Soil test to see what supplements your soil is in-need of.
- 60 to 80 degrees is a good time to start a new lawn.
- Fertilize only fescue grass through November.
- Fescue and Bermuda grass going dormant now.
- Do Not fertilize Bermuda, Zoysia, or Centipede grass at this time.

Houseplants:

- Prepare plants to bring them inside.
- Clean, repot, and check for critters before bringing them indoors.
- All houseplants should be indoors by 10/15. We bring ours in earlier for fear of an early freeze.

Perennials:

- Remove any perennials that you do not want anymore.
- Mark site of perennials so you know where they are for the spring.
- This is a good time to divide them.
- Keep deadheading roses and watering.

Trees and Shrubs:

- Prepare for winter by mulching with new mulch. 2" to 3" is adequate.
- Watch for fall webworms. I found them on our cherry tree recently - a little early - just cut the branch out of the tree or open them up so that the birds can eat the worms.
- Use 0-0-22, which will help roots to grow during the winter months. 0-0-22 is potash and there has been a question posed to me about adding this supplement to the soil. Due to our sandy soil and the fact that minerals just wash through, it is important to add potash for growth. If you feel hesitant then the important thing to do is to get a soil test to learn about your soil and how the potassium has depleted. Different zones and different areas of your property might require different procedures, so it is important when reading an article to be sure it is for our area and your individual property requirements. If you have planted in only the sandy soil - you most definitely need to supplement with potash. If you have amended and mulched the soil then you may not need as much. Over the years we have continuously mulched and amended, but still broadcast potash for root growth and all around health of the plantings.
- Remove mulch around roses and add new mulch.
- This is the best time of the year to plant new trees and shrubs because the roots will get a good start throughout the winter months and be stronger for the spring. Get a soil test and amend the soil with compost. Know your plant zone; your design plan; check exposure; focal point; check for mature size; maintenance required; and in our area - check for deer resistant plants. Water thoroughly after planting and then 3 times a week until the weather gets cold.
- Good time to select and plant flowering bulbs.

I have tried to address your questions from the survey that you all did and the last item is lighting in the garden. I shall try to give you an introduction into this design element in the landscape. There is very extensive information on the internet.

Landscape lighting:

- First and foremost you must lay-out a plan and decide what and how you wish to enjoy your garden in the evening.
- Do you want hardscape and paths lit? Do you want to include your decks and patio?
- Accent lighting enhances the beauty of your space and then there is spread landscape lighting (encompasses a wider area).
- Halogen or LED lighting?
- Match the reason for lighting to specific locations in you yard.
- A soft mood can be achieved by hiding landscape lighting behind shrubs.
- Highlight landscape design and home.
- Place fixture high up, inside a feature, and cast downwards over a large area.
- Place light fixture lower if you wish to illuminate a path or garden.
- Draw attention to prize plantings and trees.
- Use low voltage lights (uses 1/10 the power) with use of step-down transformer.
- Copper and brass fixtures will be most durable.

You can actually do this by yourself, but after reading many sites etc. I would get a professional unless you are very handy and patient. Good luck.

Any questions - please contact me at: EquineBRC@aol.com

Enjoy!

Barb