

February Monthly Reminders



COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE & LIFE SCIENCES

Cooperative
Extension

Pima County -Master Gardener Program

Planting

- Sow annual seeds outdoors or plant starts for black-eyed Susan, fleabane, gaillardia, gloriosa daisy, Mexican sunflower, nasturtium, primrose and sunflower.
- Plant perennials such as autumn sage, butterfly weed, chuparosa, damianita, desert mallow, desert milkweed, lavender, moss verbena, and pineleaf milkweed.
- Fruit and vegetables – plant potatoes. Sow seeds outdoors for chard, beets, carrots, peas, leafy greens, cilantro, dill, and parsley.

Fertilizing

- Fertilize citrus (1st of 3 annual feedings). For oranges, tangerines, and grapefruit, apply 1/3 of the total in January-February, 1/3 in March-April, and 1/3 in May-June. For lemons and limes, apply 1/3 of the total in January-February, 1/3 in March-April, and 1/3 in August-September. (Refer to *Diagnosing Home Citrus Problems* [AZ1492](#) and *Citrus Fertilization Chart for Arizona* [AZ1671](#))

Soil

- Prepare garden soils for spring planting. Soils in southern Arizona generally have less than 1% organic matter and are lacking in nitrogen and phosphate. Successful in-ground vegetable gardening requires amending the soil each planting cycle to provide a better environment for plant roots. (Refer to *Ten Steps to a Successful Vegetable Garden* [AZ 1435](#))
- Amendments to use are either organic (carbon-based) or non-organic. Organic amendments good for desert soils are compost, composted manure, and worm castings. These add essential nutrients and mineral for plant growth. Non-organic amendments such as perlite and pumice will increase aeration and drainage. Improving soil structure creates favorable conditions for seed germination and root growth.
- Avoid using wood ash and crushed eggshells. Wood ash will raise our already high soil alkalinity and crushed eggshells will needlessly add calcium to already calcium-abundant desert soils. (Refer to *Fertilizing Home Gardens in Arizona* [AZ1020](#))

Maintenance

- Prune any dormant deciduous trees and shrubs you missed in January. Although only minimal pruning is necessary for citrus trees, dead and diseased wood as well as crisscrossing limbs should be removed. (Refer to *Pruning Deciduous Shade Trees* [AZ1139](#) and *Pruning Citrus* [AZ1455](#)).
- Continue watching for cold nights, and protect plants as needed. (Refer to *Frost Protection* [AZ1002](#))
- Leave frost damage on plants until the danger of freezing has passed.
- Cut back ornamental grasses to about 1 foot high before new growth starts.

Watering

- No irrigation for cacti, agave, yucca and desert trees and shrubs through the end of the month as per winter watering guidelines.
- Continue winter watering guidelines for all other plants, trees, shrubs and containers.