

# June Monthly Reminders



COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE & LIFE SCIENCES

Cooperative  
Extension

Pima County -Master Gardener Program

## **Planting**

- June is a hot, dry month that is not the best for planting; pay extra attention to anything planted whether in the ground or in a container.
- Plant “yard-long” beans, also called asparagus beans. A trellis or other support at least 6’ tall is needed for support. These beans love the heat and will produce all summer and into the autumn.
- Plant seeds of cowpeas, muskmelon, okra, squash, sweet potato slips, and zucchini.

## **Fertilizing**

- Apply half-strength fertilizer to container plants every two weeks.
- If not done in May, apply the third of 3 annual applications of fertilizer to orange, tangerine and grapefruit trees. (Refer to *Citrus Fertilization Chart for Arizona* [AZ 1671](#))
- Fertilize palms (Refer to *Arizona Landscape Palms* [AZ 1021](#))
- Vegetables may need a side-dressing of fertilizer this month. Additional compost or a fish fertilizer solution may be enough. (Refer to *Ten Steps to a Successful Vegetable Garden* [AZ 1435](#))

## **Watering**

- Water most container plants twice daily through June. This does NOT include cactus and succulents, which do not need that much water, even at this time of year. Moving containers to an area with afternoon shade will reduce moisture loss.
- Use a soil probe to check if water is getting down to the roots of shrubs and trees.
- Prevent blossom end rot in the vegetable garden by maintaining even and consistent watering. Blossom end rot causes a black or brown sunken area to develop on the bottom (blossom end) of fruit. It is particularly common on tomato and pepper, but can affect any other fruits and vegetables.
- If needed, hand-water non-irrigated plants such as cactus and agave.

## **Maintenance**

- First, maintain your body! Drink lots of water regularly, and do not wait until you are thirsty. Wear sunscreen, sunglasses, and a wide-brimmed hat. Avoid outdoor work between 10 and 3 o’clock.

- Apply pre-emergent weed control according to the label directions prior to the onset of monsoon rains.
- Shade summer vegetables to keep them fruiting. Cover tomatoes, sweet peppers, cucumbers, and other sun-sensitive vegetables with 30% or 40% shade cloth supported with stakes or poles. Clip to stakes.
- Continue regular garden maintenance for tomatoes and other vegetables that fail to set fruit during temperatures in the 90's and above. When temps cool, production should return.
- Hand-pollinate squash to increase fruit set. In early morning, transfer pollen from the powdery yellow anther to the sticky female stigma using a small artist's paint brush or break off a male flower and brush the pollen onto the female stigma. (Female blossoms have baby squash under the flower, a slight swelling, while male flowers do not. (Refer to a YouTube video "Hand Pollinating Squash and Zucchini)
- Solarize garden beds to kill weed seeds, soil fungus and nematodes before fall planting. Till the soil to a depth of 12 inches and smooth out the surface with a garden rake. Next, wet the soil to aid in heating. Finally, cover the soil with a clear plastic tarp and tuck the edges into the soil to prevent the wind from lifting it up. Clear plastic does a much better job at heating the soil than white or black plastic. Leave the cover on a minimum of 4 weeks. After removing the plastic tarp, the soil is ready for planting. Wash tools in a bleach solution to prevent disease spread.
- Remove wilted tomato and pepper plants. Individual plants that wilt may be infected with a virus disease called "curly top." As the name indicates, leaves curl as if wilted; however, plants do not recover after watering. The virus is spread by aphids and other sucking insects. Spraying is not effective. The only control for this virus is to remove infected plants to limit the spread of the disease. Do not compost affected plants.
- Dead-head garden flowers such as marigold, geranium, zinnia, and rose. Removing faded blossoms before they go to seed will encourage your flowers to continue blooming. Cut faded flowers off with scissors or clippers; do not pull them off. Cutting insures the removal of the entire flower, including the seed-producing ovary.
- Check plants daily for signs of water stress and sunburn; cover with shade cloth if needed.
- For citrus, remove suckers below the bud union; on root-grown trees, remove root suckers below the soil surface.