

## **November Episode 3**

There is a chill in the air, plants like people feel it, too. The fall weather is acclimating your plants for the cold winter ahead. This week we are going to talk more about planting shrubs and trees and light pruning.

### **Shrubs and trees**

If you have flowers, shrubs, and trees to plant continue on. Transplanting for the next several months is ideal while your plants are dormant. Make sure you dig up a large root ball to keep from disturbing the roots as much as possible. Plant back into the ground as quickly as you can to keep the roots from drying out. Press 2 - 6 plant fertilizer tablets into the top couple of inches of soils around the root ball. The number of tablets you use depends on the size of the plant.

### **Are you going to use a live Christmas tree?**

Well if you are planning to celebrate Christmas with a live tree look around your yard for the location where you are going to plant it. If you live in a zone where the ground will freeze dig a hole prior to the freeze and fill with straw or mulch. Cover the hole with a piece of plywood or some boards to prevent a passerby from injury. Keep the excavated soil in your shed or garage so it won't freeze into a solid brick. After Christmas you can remove the filling out of the hole and plant your Christmas Tree using the backfill soil you saved.

Always stake larger trees and even some upright shrubs. If your prevailing wind comes from the northwest, then place a stake on the northeast and southwest side. This will allow the tree to move and still be supported.

When your fruiting vines and trees go dormant and lose their leaves you can start spraying them with a dormant spray. By spraying as early as you can you will get a jump on controlling diseases and insects that over-winter. Remember to follow the directions on the label of the spray you use.

In colder zones (Zones 6 and under) continue to water shrubs and trees until the ground freezes

### **Pruning**

Prune your evergreens to their desired shape.

In frost free areas you can lightly prune flowering trees after they drop their blossoms or on fruiting trees after harvest. Look for a reason to prune your plants. Are they infested with an insect, do they have a disease, or are they overgrown? Don't just go hacking because you feel it will be good exercise for you. Your heavy pruning should be saved until January or February just before your plants start their vigorous spring growth.

**Some more tasks you can do this month.**

Mulch you asparagus and strawberries with straw.

Tie up your raspberry canes.

Once your black berry vines have gone dormant you can cut them back to the ground and remove all of those thorny vines.

Place a marker anywhere you have planted bulbs in your flower beds.

You may dig them up in the spring if you forget they are there when you start turning your soil for other plantings. It is a good idea to make notes in your journal exactly where you planted also.

Empty your outdoor hanging baskets and other containers you use for summer annuals. Store them in a dry place to prevent breakage in the freezing cold.

Happy Thanksgiving to everyone. We all have something to be thankful for each day.

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