Q&A

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Q. I see that broccoli transplants are already in the nursery. It is still very hot. Should they be planted now, or is it best to wait?

A. As long as they can receive adequate water the cole crops (broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, and collards will do okay. If they are planted this early in the heat they will quickly produce small heads and you will probably want to plant later as well. The later planting in September or October will lengthen the harvest season.

Q. The pecan crop in our neighborhood is looking great. The nuts are large and it looks like they may be ready earlier than normal. Does that mean that the heavy spring rains and a hot dry summer are ideal for pecans?

A. The conditions would have been more ideal if the rains had continued through July and August. There is some speculation that the nuts will not be filled out. For best quality harvest mature pecans directly from the tree. The next best situation is to collect them from the ground as soon as they fall. The nuts should be refrigerated when possible. For more information on harvesting and storing pecans, visit the plantanswers.com website.

Q. We have sandburs and they are terrible, but what is the weed that grows upright with alyssum like flowers and produces the sticky seeds the size of aphids? The dogs avoid sand burs but get full of this other sticker. They are a winter weed, how can we control them?

A. I believe you are describing beggar’s lice. It is a winter annual weed. Apply a pre-emergent herbicide such as Dimension, Amaze, XL, or Trimec now to prevent its germination in the lawn or shrub border. The herbicides if applied as per the label instructions will also prevent bedstraw, rescue grass, annual bluegrass, dandelions, and thistle.

Q. Our tomatoes are already setting fruit. We have Roma, Surefire, Tycoon, Solar Fire, and BHN 968. What do we need to do to protect them from pests and maximize the crop?

A. Irrigate your tomatoes at least twice/week and side dress with one quarter cup of lawn fertilizer per plant every 3 weeks. If your garden has a history of fungus on tomatoes, apply a preventative spray of Daconil as per the label instructions. Spraying a dilute spray of seaweed extract under the leaves every week will help slow down spider mite development. Watch for hornworms and other caterpillars. Pick them off by hand or spray with a Bt based product. Protect the tomatoes from birds with bird-netting or pick the tomatoes as soon as they show a color change from green.