**Q&A**

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Q: What are the recommended tomatoes for the fall? When should we plant them?

A: Use heat setting varieties where possible. Among the varieties to look for are: Tycoon, Tygress, Sun Pride, Solar Fire, Surefire, Phoenix and BHN 968. Plant the new transplants between late July and late August. Postpone until later in the period if temperatures are still in the high 90s.

Q: Why is it too late to treat grubs once the damage is evident on the lawn?

A: Grubs grow to the point by July when the damage appears, that they are full size and quit feeding. If the grubs are large and not feeding, the insecticide will not kill them. The insecticide needs to be applied when they are actively feeding and vulnerable. Apply a soil insecticide in May or June next year to prevent the damage.

Q: Tell us about Vitex. Is it on sale at our favorite nursery?

A: Vitex is a drought-tolerant blooming plant that grows to a 25-foot tree. Hummingbirds and butterflies like the blooms as a nectar source. Deer do not eat vitex. Grow it in full sun.

Q: Our new gold lantana has quit blooming and the leaves look dusty. I don’t see any insects. Is it a fungus disease? Can we treat it?

A: The symptoms you described are caused by lace bugs. They are a sucking insect. Now that the damage is done you will have to wait for six to eight weeks for the plants to recover and resume blooming. Acephate is the usual insecticide used to control lacebugs. The Fertilome or Bayer systemic products may also work.

Q: We have decided to let our Bermuda grass go dormant rather than irrigate it all summer. How long after the rains start will it take to green up?

A: Bermuda grass will green up within one week after substantial rains on most sites. Zoysia grass usually takes a little longer.

Q: Which is the fastest growing shade tree between live oak and cedar elm? Is Texas red oak faster?

A: Texas red oak and Mexican white oak are faster than cedar elm and live oak but all are good shade trees. Cedar elm is faster than live oak on most sites.

For questions about horticulture, water conservation and the environment, email Calvin Finch at Calvin.finch@tamu.edu.