

Gardening Q&A

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Q. You often talk about two types of fertilizers this time of the year, “winterizer” and slow release lawn fertilizer, which is better?

A. It depends on the use. “Winterizer” is best as a lawn fertilizer in the fall but it also works for winter vegetables and flowers. Slow Release Lawn Fertilizer is best for spring lawn fertilizing and best for fertilizing trees, shrubs, vegetables, and flowers. The performance of the two products is close enough that you should take advantage of bargains when they appear. Buy and use the best bargain!

Q. With the rain the winter weeds are filling every open space in the landscape. Does that mean it is too late to apply a preemergent herbicide?

A. Yes, it is too late to effectively use a preemergent but contact herbicides work to control young weeds if you select the right product. Review the label of the products you are considering making sure they mention your targeted weed. Mowing is also an effective weed control practice for the lawn.

Q. My tomatoes have finally produced some full-sized leaves and set some fruit. Is there time to mature a crop this fall?

A. Sorry, but probably not. It will take a freeze free environment for another 50 days to develop some size and mature the fruit. If you need the space for broccoli, carrots, spinach, or any other cold hardy winter vegetables you will be better off pulling the tomatoes and using the space for them!

Q. Remind me how cold it needs to be before I must cover the cyclamen. They are beautiful and expensive; I want to get a full season from them.

A. Cover cyclamen when the forecast calls for temps of 30 degrees or less. The leaves are hardy, but the blooms will freeze, and it takes a long time for them to reset blooms. A strip of Insulate laid over the flower bed works well.

Q. Considering their cold sensitivity is it recommended to plant new citrus plants in the fall?

A. Citrus, especially lemons and limes will have to be protected from freezing temperatures whether you plant them or leave them in the container from the nursery. Sometimes it is easier just to move the container into shelter the first winter than it is to try and cover a newly placed plant. If you decide to plant them in larger containers or the ground this fall, be sure to have fabric to cover the plants and also a heat source such as mechanic’s lights or poultry heat lamps if temperatures below 28 degrees are forecast.