

Gardening Question and Answer

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Q. We are new to the area and the damage caused by the freezes surprised us. Will the lantanas come back? How about crepe myrtles, Pride of Barbados, a desert rose, and a knockout rose?

A. Yes, all the plants listed are deciduous or root hardy. They will resprout in early spring. At some point you can cut back the killed foliage of the Pride of Barbados and lantana. The stems of the roses and crepe myrtles will not be frozen back. New leaves will appear.

Q. In using the ice cube trick to keep the poinsettia soil moist is it necessary to use 6 or seven ice cubes every day or will every other day work?

A. Try adding ice cubes every other day at first. It will probably be enough in most situations. If the soil dries with the every other day schedule, switch to every day. A key part of keeping the poinsettia healthy and blooming for 4 or 5 months is to soak the soil one per week in the sink.

Q. We covered our Meyers lemons and Mexican limes, but the leaves were knocked off any way! What is next this winter? Are they ruined?

A. Since they were covered it is likely that the stems were not frozen. Be prepared to cover them again if another freeze is forecast. This time use two thicknesses of Insulate, blankets or other material. Also have a heat source such as a mechanics light available for each tree. Make sure the bulbs in the heat source are old-fashioned heat producing bulbs and not LED technology.

Q. We have damage in our lawn from what we think are chinch bugs. Will we have to replace the grass, or will it recover?

A. Chinch bugs cause patches of dead grass but in my experience, lawns recover from chinch bug damage. Treat with a soil insecticide in June and August and keep the lawn irrigated. Follow label instructions on the soil insecticide.

Q. Our broccoli produced very large heads, which we used. Now it is producing small heads that are just as tasty. We just harvested the large cauliflower heads. Will they also produce small heads like the broccoli?

A. Unfortunately no, after harvesting the cauliflower head you can remove the plant to the compost pile. If you have Brussels sprouts, kale, spinach, collards, and Swiss chard they will continue producing into the spring.