

November Gardening Calendar

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It is not too late to plant your winter vegetable garden, in fact, November is the best time to plant spinach transplants. Spinach is not require as much space (or produce as much!) as broccoli or Swiss Chard so instead of 2 feet between plants 18 inches or even 1 foot will work. Prepare the bed by incorporating 2 inches of compost and 10 cups of slow-release lawn fertilizer per 100 sq ft of bed.

After the spinach is established, it works well to harvest up to one-third of the leaves at a time on an ongoing basis as you need them. Spinach is sensitive to heat, so hot spells temporarily cut back production.

In addition to spinach you can still plant broccoli, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, collards, kale, Swiss chard, and Chinese cabbage by transplants. Fertilize all the greens generously as was described for spinach. Plant radish, beets, lettuce, turnips, and carrots by seed. Side dress the winter vegetables including spinach every month with "winterizer" fertilizer. Greens are high nutrient users.

Watch the weather forecast. Your fall tomatoes will require protection from the cold through November if you are going harvest any large size fruit. Have the plant covering and heat source ready just in case. Often if you can protect the plants from the first light freeze you may receive another 5 or 6 weeks of mild weather which could mean harvesting full size tomatoes in December.

In the flower garden you will usually be able to enjoy blooms from zinnia and other warm weather annuals for the month of November but you can also go ahead and plant snapdragon, stocks, dianthus, alyssum, petunias, pansies, and calendula in the sun. For the shade use cyclamen and primula for color. Protect cyclamen from cold spells of 30 degrees or less. Petunias, snapdragons, and stocks will often take a break from blooming in December and January but will bloom again in the late winter and early spring.

November is the big month for citrus harvest. Limes, lemons, satsumas, and grapefruit come ripe in large numbers. Sometimes they do not completely change color, but they should be used up before the quality declines.

Take advantage of the lull in new hackberry and mulberry seedling germination by cutting them back to ground level and then applying Cut Vine and Stump Killer to the stems. The herbicide is inexpensive and works well to kill the seedlings, roots and all.

November is an excellent time to plant shade trees. In addition to the cool weather you can take advantage of plant sales at nurseries. Select from among live oak, Texas red oak, Mexican white oak, Mexican sycamore, cedar elm, bur oak, and chinkapin oak. Dig the planting hole to the same depth as the container and 2 times as wide. The trees listed are well adapted for our soils, so no supplemental soil additives are recommended. Cover the root ball area with 3 inches of mulch and water generously weekly or every time the soil dries to 2 inches deep.