

## **May Garden Checklist Angelina County, Texas**

- Dig and divide any crowded spring bulbs once bulbs have matured and the foliage has browned. Thinning is needed every three to four years to produce large, plentiful blooms. Replant immediately in prepared soils or share with friends who have garden space.
- Check for insects and diseases. Spider mites can be especially troublesome at this time. Insecticidal soaps or labeled miticides can be helpful in their control.
- Water or soil moisture is essential for good plant production. Mulch beds and vegetable gardens to conserve moisture, control weeds, prevent soil crusting and improve appearance. Consider using pine straw—it is plentiful and doesn't float away in rainstorms.
- Hand pull and hoe weeds before they produce seed.
- Plant heat tolerant summer annuals. Zinnias, portulaca, and cosmos can be direct seeded. Purchase periwinkle, salvia, marigold and purslane plants for transplanting. Be sure to water transplants adequately until roots become established.
- Pinch back the terminal growth on newly planted annual and perennial plants. This will result in shorter, more compact, and better-branched plants with more flowers.
- Removing faded flowers from plants before they set seed will keep plants growing and producing more flowers. A light application of fertilizer every four to six weeks is also helpful.
- Pinch back chrysanthemums, Mexican marigold mint, autumn asters and other late summer and fall blooming perennials to prevent the necessity for staking.
- Roses have high fertilizer requirements. For most soils, use a complete fertilizer for the first application just as new growth starts, then use ammonium sulfate or other high nitrogen source, every four to six weeks. For organic sources use cottonseed, rotted manures or alfalfa meal.
- Spray rose varieties susceptible to black spot, using a spray containing trifenox (Funginex) every 7 to 10 days. Many of the Old Garden roses and some of the newer ones have considerable resistance to black spot.
- Prune climbing roses as they complete their spring bloom season. Remove dead or weak wood as needed.

- A good schedule to follow for fertilizing Bermuda and St. Augustine grass is the "Major Holidays Rule": divide your total nitrogen requirement for the year by four. Put down this rate of nitrogen on or near each of the four holidays: Easter, Memorial Day, 4th of July, and Labor Day.
- Check the mowing height on your lawn mower. The key to thick, luxuriant turf is to mow more often, cutting no more than 30% of grass blade each time you mow.