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APRIL GARDEN CHECKLIST

In this weeks article I want to mention things gardeners need to be considering for April. The following is a garden checklist:

- ✓ You can prune spring flowering shrubs such as spirea, flowering quince, forsythia, and azaleas once they have finished blooming. This is a good time to fertilize these shrubs, too.
- ✓ Begin cover sprays on fruits when three-fourths of petals are off and every 7-14 days (7 days during rainy weather) till harvest to control diseases and insects. Avoid using Sevin on apple trees until 30 days have passed from full bloom or until fruit is the size of a quarter. Sevin will cause young developing apples to drop.
- ✓ This is last call to divide and replant overcrowded summer and fall blooming perennials.
- ✓ The older leaves of Southern Magnolia often look diseased this time of year. The winter does bring out (make visible) damage done by insects and possibly some disease organism from last growing season. Fortunately, the old leaves will fall when the new growth starts to push out. As the old leaves fall, rake and remove them.
- ✓ Transplant and divide spring flowering bulbs after foliage begins to die down. Spring bulbs need to be left undisturbed, including mowing, for at least six weeks after blooming. Bulbs are being replenished with food reserves and next springs flower will also be initiated during this period.
- ✓ Summer flowering bulbs can be set out now. You have many choices including gladiolus, tuberose, callas, cannas, elephant ears, and caladiums.
- ✓ Be on the lookout for the symptoms of fire blight on your pyracantha, apple, pear and crabapple trees (ornamentals also). Young shoots will blacken and turn downward. Take control measures immediately by pruning diseased portions out. Disinfect pruning shears before and after each cut.

- ✓ Watch for cutworms that girdle newly planted vegetables during the first few weeks of establishment. Foil wraps around base of stem will provide necessary protection. Speaking of worms, watch for cabbage looper and cabbageworm insects. These guys can be controlled by using Bt.
- ✓ Most warm season vegetables can be planted now. Hold back on planting okra and peppers until the first of May. Soil temperatures are still too cold for these warm season vegetables. Soak okra seeds overnight in water and then plant.
- ✓ If you're a person who is interested in growing things that are edible yet ornamental, incorporate some showy vegetables in your flowerbeds such as ornamental peppers, eggplant, and leaf lettuces.
- ✓ Try growing cucumbers up on a trellis this year. This not only reduces space, but cuts down on disease and insect problems.
- ✓ Now is the time to sow seeds of many herbs outdoors. Among the easiest to grow from seeds are basil, borage, chives, dill, sweet marjoram, oregano, parsley, sage, and catnip.
- ✓ Only plant what you can care for in your garden. Don't try to manage too large a garden and not do any of it well.

For more information on any of the above points, contact the Baxter County Cooperative Extension office at 425-2335.