

GARDEN CHECKLIST

In this week's article I want to mention some things gardeners need to be considering for June. The following is a garden checklist:

- ✓ Grasshoppers are small at this time of year, and now is a good time to take control measures with either Sevin liquid or 50% WP, or Malathion. Because grasshoppers are mobile, re-infestations are sure to occur. Check routinely for re-occurrence particularly if you are adjacent to an open unkept grassy area.
- ✓ Keep in mind that lack of moisture can happen quickly especially for newly planted shrubs and flower beds. Flowerbeds may require watering twice a week whereas shrubs and fruit trees need a good soaking once a week. Do remember, some plants require more moisture, so pay attention to those specific needs.
- ✓ When harvesting potatoes this month, spread potatoes out in a protected well ventilated area for curing. Once cured (2-3 weeks), store potatoes in a dark cool place. Check routinely and dispose of spoiled potatoes promptly.
- ✓ When planting root bound transplants, tear the root system apart before planting. If nothing is done, the roots often continue growing in a circular pattern and plants never grow off good. Root bound plants are also more drought susceptible.
- ✓ Because of all the rain we've had earlier, some ornamentals are showing some signs of powdery mildew. Those in the shade have a greater potential of a serious outbreak. You will have to use a fungicide for those in the shade. The following fungicides are recommended for powdery mildew: Immunox, Funginex, and Daconil.
- ✓ Late this month separate crowded clumps of irises. You can dry iris clumps and plant this fall or you can replant right away. Share with all your garden friends any extra irises.
- ✓ Annuals planted early last month need their first side-dressing this month. Fertilize them with another balanced fertilizer like 13-13-13 at the rate of one-quarter cup for each square yard of bed area. Fertilize again every 4 to 6 weeks, but use ammonium nitrate at 2 tablespoons for each square yard.
- ✓ Check azaleas for azalea lace bugs. Use Orthene (acephate), malathion, permethrin, or imidacloprid (Merit). One application is not going to work, so repeat spray is necessary. Refer to your product label for determining how many days between spraying intervals. Do not spray more than 3 times per incident.
- ✓ Renovate strawberry beds after harvest. Thin back to narrow rows.

- ✓ Keep a clean garden. Mulch around plants with a 3-4 inch layer of organic material such as shredded bark, pine needles, straw or grass clippings to help prevent weeds, conserve moisture, moderate soil temperature, prevent soil borne disease and slowly add nutrients back to the soil as it rots.
 - ✓ Tomato diseases are going to happen if they haven't hit you yet. Control of foliar disease is important in maintaining productive foliage and for providing shade to fruit for prevention of sunscald. While there are some cultural practices that will help reduce foliar diseases, a spray program is needed to achieve adequate disease control because resistance to common foliar disease is not available in tomato varieties. Formulations of chlorothalonil (ex. Daconil 2787), mancozeb and maneb are effective against Septoria leaf spot, early blight (the most common tomato disease), and anthracnose. The first spray should be made at bloom and a 7-10 day schedule should be maintained thereafter. A preventative schedule is critical because these diseases are difficult to control once they become established. If you have a leaf spot disease, spray every 4-5 days. Always read and follow fungicide label directions.
 - ✓ Check your tomatoes for blossom-end rot. This dry rot looks like dark brown, leathery scars on the bottom of the tomato (the blossom end). This condition is caused by a combination of calcium deficiency with wide fluctuations in soil moisture. Pruning causes stress to the plants that increases the incidence. You will also see varietal differences. Mulching and uniform watering will help prevent blossom-end rot. Some gardeners have gotten good results with routinely applying liquid calcium called Stop Rot. A soil test result will indicate pH level and will also give a recommendation on the amount of lime if needed which could help prevent future rot problems.
- For more information on any of the above points, contact the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Baxter County Cooperative Extension office at 425-2335.

Mark D. Keaton
County Extension Agent-
Telephone: 425-2335
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