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DECEMBER GARDENING TIPS

This is a Great Time to Plant!

PLANT:

- **Trees, shrubs, ornamental grasses, etc. now so they can get well established by next summer's heat.**
- **Annuals & Perennials** - Pansies, violas, ornamental cabbage/kale, Swiss chard, cyclamen, dianthus, primrose, salvias, skullcap, Heuchera (coral bells), and more. Dig, divide & replant spring blooming perennials.
- **Spring-flowering bulbs including daffodils and narcissus** can be planted now. **Tulips & hyacinths** that have been refrigerated for at least 45 days at 45° can be planted after mid-December.
- **Fruit and pecan trees, grapes and berries.**

PRUNE:

- **Peach & Plum trees** to 8-9 ft. by removing vertical shoots. **Grapevines** by 80-85% of canes.
- **Perennials** by removing dead foliage. Mulch over those that die back to the ground for added protection.
- **Shrubs** as needed to reshape and remove dead branches—save major pruning for late winter.
- **Trees** as needed to remove mistletoe, dead or damaged limbs, and unwanted roots—limit removal to 1 or 2 significant roots each year. Good time to prune **oak trees** to avoid Oak Wilt problems.

WATER:

- Container plants & flower beds as needed; shrubs & trees less often in cool weather, but deeply to produce hardier, better rooted plants. **Water before forecasted frosts or freezing temperatures to reduce damage to plants and trees.** *This is a good time to install drip irrigation or call Covington's to do it for you (LI0021683).*
- To improve water retention in your plantings, add **Soil Moist & Expanded Shale** (holds 38% of its weight in water). Or use **Covington's Soil Builder** which contains compost, greensand, and expanded shale, and also breaks up clay, adds nutrients, & revitalizes microbial activity.
- Top dress landscape & flower beds with at least a 2 inch layer of **mulch** to help retain moisture, reduce weeds & maintain soil temperature. Keep **frost cloth** on hand to cover & protect tender plants from freezing temps.
- Trees installed for less than two years must have special care to ensure a strong and healthy root system. See our Plant Article on **Tree Care for the First Two Years** on our website or come by and pick one up.

CONVENTIONAL FERTILIZATION, WEED, DISEASE & PEST CONTROL SOLUTIONS

FERTILIZE:

- Pansies & other annuals with **Covington's Premium Flower & Garden Fertilizer or Hi-Yield Blood and Bone Meal.**
- Newly planted trees and shrubs every 3-4 weeks for the first year with **Ferti.lome Root Stimulator.**
- Feed house plants with **Ferti.lome 20-20-20 Water Soluble Plant Food.**
- Existing ryegrass and fescue with **Covington's Premium Lawn Fertilizer 21-7-14.**

WEEDS & DISEASE CONTROL:

- Spot treat broadleaf weeds such as dandelion, henbit & clover in St. Augustine or Bermuda with **Ferti.lome Weed Free Zone** (effective to 40°). Spot treat nutsedge and crabgrass with **Bonide Sedge Ender.**
- Keep fallen leaves off your lawn—they compact and trap moisture which can lead to turf diseases. Apply **ferti.lome F-Stop** to St. Augustine for fungal infections including Take All Patch and Brown Patch. For added protection, spread ½ inch layer of **Canadian Brown Sphagnum Peat Moss** on infected area & water in.
- Use **Ferti.lome Systemic Fungicide** for powdery mildew, disease & fungi on hawthorne, photinias, roses, etc.

INSECT & PEST CONTROL:

- Control aphids, spider mites, mealy bugs, other problem insects with **Bonide Systemic Insecticide**.
- Control fungus gnats in house plants with **Hi-Yield Systemic Insect Granules**.
- For best control of scale use **Hi-Yield Dormant Oil Spray**.
- To control fire ant mounds/infestations, use **Hi-Yield Bug Blaster Granules**.
- To kill borers in trunks of trees, use **Ferti.lome or Bonide Systemic Insect Drench** which protects for months.
- Use **ferti.lome Triple Action** or **Bonide Fruit Tree Spray** for insects on fruit trees and **Bird X Netting** to protect ripening fruit from birds.
- For rabbits, use **Rabbit Scram** and/or **Bonide Repels-All Spray**.
- Use eco-friendly **Armadillo Repellant** in a convenient hose end sprayer to get rid of armadillos.

ORGANIC FERTILIZATION WEED, DISEASE & PEST CONTROL SOLUTIONS

FERTILIZE:

- Newly planted trees and shrubs with **Garrett Juice Pro w/Mycorrhizae & Soil Microbes** to help prevent transplant shock, increase beneficial microorganisms, and encourage root development.
- Flowers/perennials w/**Happy Frog Fruit and Flower**; Roses w/**Happy Frog Rose Food**.
- Turf, shrubs & trees with **Milorganite Organic Nitrogen Fertilizer 5-2-0**, or **Good Natured Make-it-Green 4-1-2**; or use **Happy Frog All Purpose 5-5-5** for shrubs and trees.
- Vegetable gardens with **Good Natured Make-it-Green 4-1-2** or **Happy Frog Tomato & Vegetable fertilizer**.
- Use **Corn Gluten Meal 9-0-0** to feed turf and prevent weeds. Also spread **Dry Molasses** to enhance weed control and encourage healthy soil.
- Apply **Garrett Juice Plus** once a month to your landscape to increase beneficial micro-organisms in the soil and to reduce the need for water.
- Add **Texas Greensand** for deep greening in lawns, trees and landscape plants.

WEEDS & DISEASE CONTROL:

- Spot treat grassy and broadleaf weeds with **20% Vinegar**. Add **2 oz. of Orange Oil** per gallon of vinegar during warmer weather to enhance the kill on weeds and grasses.
- Use **Horticultural Corn Meal** on landscape plants, vegetables and turf for disease control.

INSECT & PEST CONTROL:

- To treat individual fire ant mounds, use 3 to 4 ounces of **Orange Oil** per gallon of water as a drench.
- Spray **Orange Oil** in areas infested with pillbugs, sow bugs, ants and spiders.
- For cabbage loopers on cole crops, use **Hi-Yield Thuricide at dusk or Spinosad**.
- For bugs & fungus use **ferti.lome Triple Action Plus** containing Neem Oil. Also use **ferti.lome Triple Action Plus** for insects on fruit trees.
- Protect ripening fruit from birds with **Bird X Netting**.
- Spray **Bonide All Season Oil** for scale on holly, crape myrtles & fruit trees.
- Control slugs & snails with **Bonide Slug Magic or Sluggo Plus w/Spinosad**.
- Use **Nature's Guide Diatomaceous Earth** for crawling insects.
- Use eco-friendly **Armadillo Repellant** in a convenient hose end sprayer to get rid of armadillos.
- Use **Mosquito Bits Granules containing BTI** for fungus gnats in house plants.
- Use **Rabbit Scram** and/or **Bonide Repels-All Spray** to deter pesky flower munching rabbits.

This is a great time to plant!

Our nursery experts are available 7 days a week to provide assistance with your plant needs so you can be successful in your garden and landscape.