

PHYTONUTRIENT GARDENER'S SEPTEMBER TO-DO GUIDE

The coming of fall is a slow transformation into winter

In the Phytonutrient Garden



The heat may not break until late September with the first frost occurring at the end of November. I no longer think of fall as a time to put the garden away, but rather the season for reaping all that I've sown during spring and summer. The colors are so saturated and there is such a bounty of fruits, flowers and vegetables.

In the Phytonutrient Garden



Plant transplants of broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, and kale; surround them with a thick mulch to cool the soil. Direct-seed spinach, lettuce, beets, carrots, parsley, turnips, and kohlrabi. If you want to grow your own transplants, it's time to start tomato and pepper seeds indoors. You'll need a greenhouse or cold frame, or supplemental lighting indoors.



In the Phytonutrient Herb Garden

Just like last month, Fall herb seeds or starters can be planted now. If you live in colder climates, use a cold frame, otherwise sow directly in the ground. Consider dill, cilantro, parsley, and chives..

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In the Yard



Plant pansies, stock (*Matthiola incana*), or some snapdragons, sweet alyssum (*Lobularia maritima*), Johnny-jump-ups (*Viola tricolor*), or pinks (*Dianthus* spp.). Apply a 1/2-inch layer of compost to areas of the lawn that are susceptible to brown patch; apply organic fertilizer to the entire lawn at the end of the month.

In the Flower Garden



Prune Roses back by about 1/3 this month. Plant annual candytuft (*Iberis umbellata*) and marigolds for fall color. Plant calendulas, stocks (*Matthiola incana*), bachelor's buttons (*Centaurea cyanus*), and forget-me-nots (*Myosotis sylvatica*) for early spring color.

In the Yard



Trees: Keep in mind that Winter is a great time to plant hardy evergreen and deciduous trees. In the winter, roots start to grow while the top of the plant is resting, and this gives your tree a nice head start come springtime. Plant native Texas trees whenever you can – they're generally drought tolerant (once they're established) and they're definitely best adapted to our soils and climate.