

DECEMBER CHECKLIST

ANNUALS: Plant carnations, digitalis, pansies, petunias, shasta daisies, and snapdragons this month.

Bulbs: Check for declining plant portions and pests. Examine bulbs in storage and remove adhering soil or damaged portions. Consider replacing any bulbs which show discoloring sections as this may indicate fungal disease.

ROSES: Water as needed. Continue spray program, if fungi or pests are present.

CITRUS: Weed as needed. Protect grafted area if freeze occurs. If you think a freeze is coming: Leave the fruit on the tree. It may not freeze, and if it does, you still have several weeks to make juice or use the fruit before it deteriorates. The rule for fruit still on the tree is to consider it edible if it looks, smells, and tastes good. Leave the fruit on the tree if you suspect it is still not ripe. Fruit that has been frozen will develop white spots on the membranes between the sections and should be used as soon as possible.

FRUIT: Weed as needed. DO NOT cut blooms. DO not fertilize.

HERBS: Anise, basil, bay laurel, borage, caraway, cardamom, chervil, chives, coriander, dill, fennel, ginger, horehound, lemon balm, lavender, lovage, marjoram, Mexican tarragon, mint, nasturtium, oregano, rosemary, sage, savory, thyme and watercress can be planted now.

LAWNS: Do not apply fertilizer or any nitrogen this time of year, wait until grass is fully growing and any cold temperatures have passed. Keep mowing height the same year round. Water 1/4 to 3/4 inch every 10-14 days if we receive no rain.

TREES AND SHRUBS: Late December is the ideal time to begin transplanting plants if the weather has

turned cool. It is best to transplant trees and shrubs after they have gone into dormancy. Prune roots two to three months before digging by severing roots with a spade just inside the intended root ball to generate new root hairs and reduce transplant shock. Be sure to keep plants out of the ground as little time as possible. Do not put any amendments in the transplant hole, simply keep the plant irrigated well for 3-4 months.

VEGETABLES: Choices for this month include beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, Chinese cabbage, English peas, onions, and radishes.

Selected from Florida Vegetable Guide by JM Stephens, RA Dunn, G Kidder, D Short, & GW Simone, University of Florida and Month-by-Month Gardening in Florida by Tom MacCubbin

