

MARCH CHECKLIST

Citrus: Always remove graft freeze protection **once** threat of freeze is over. Fertilize program begins for lemon, orange, kumquat using citrus fertilizer. Follow fertilizer label for frequency (slow release is used less often). Check for citrus insects and disease, apply fungicide just at new leaf flush or after bloom drop.

Fruit: For mature Loquat trees, fertilize trees 2 to 3 times per year. The fertilizer should be applied just before or at bloom, perhaps during late fall, again in March, and once during the summer. The fertilizer mix should also include phosphate (P₂O₅) and potash (K₂O); use a 6-6-6, 8-3-9 or similar material. Blueberries can begin fertilization program using acid loving fertilizer in February, April, June, August and October in small amounts. Apply general garden fertilizer to plum trees. Weed as needed.

Flowers: Water as needed. Over-watering causes root and stem rot. Opt for drought tolerant plants such as purslane or periwinkle. Group your plants together according to their watering and light requirements. Bulbs will be in full bloom. To conserve plant energy, cut off the old seedpods after flowering. Fertilize perennials this month if you missed last month. Plant poinsettias in landscape during late March. Cut back plants to within 12 to 18 inches of ground level. Pinch back new growth every four weeks until September 10. Fertilize monthly from May to September. Ageratum, alyssum, amaranthus, asters, baby's breath, balsam, begonias, browallia, calendulas, calliopsis, celosia, coleus, cosmos, crossandras, dahlias, dusty miller exacums, gaillardias, gazania, geraniums, hollyhocks, impatiens, kalanchoe, lobelias, Marguerite daisies, marigolds, nicotine, ornamental peppers, pentas, phlox rudbeckias, salvia, strawflowers, streptocarpus, sweet William, thunbergia alata, torenia, verbenas, periwinkles, and zinnias can be planted.

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

Roses: Continue spray program (every 7-10 days). Water as needed. March 15, apply liquid fertilizer. Check your micro irrigation system (leaks, dirt in system, timers)

Lawns: I know it is hard to wait, but fertilization should begin April 15 - see below. Watering may change this month but unless grass is actively growing, err on the side of less water rather than more. March is the month to add a pre-emergent weed killer to lawns if you have had a problem in the past with summer weeds.

Shrubs: Prune and fertilize azaleas with acid fertilizer as soon as they finish blooming. Azaleas may be transplanted now as well. Overgrown shrubs can be cut back using selective pruning, avoid shearing these shrubs. Dr. Ed Gilman's UF/IFAS publication on pruning shrubs and trees is an excellent source of information edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_tree_pruning

Trees: Make sure younger trees maintain a straight trunk as new growth begins. Remove or prune all limbs competing with the central leader. Fertilize Tea Olive using acid loving fertilizer. Palms should have a "palm special" fertilizer applied over the root system under the spread of the fronds. The configuration should be 8-2-12-4 (N-P-K-Mg). Ideally this would also include manganese, boron, sulfur, etc. with appropriate formulations. Use a slow release fertilizer March, June and September. Anything within 30 feet of the palm should just be getting palm fertilizer. Nutrient deficiencies may take months to recover so please use an appropriate palm fertilizer.

Vegetables: Have soil tested prior to planting. The pH and the nutrient content of the soil is an important factor in production of vegetables. This month's choices for planting include snap beans, pole beans, lima beans, beets, cantaloupes, carrots, celery, collards, corn, cucumber, eggplant, endive/escarole, kohlrabi, lettuce, mustard, okra, bunching onions, parsley, English peas, Southern peas, peppers, potatoes, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, radishes, summer squash, winter squash, tomatoes, turnips, and watermelon. Be sure to use the Florida Vegetable Guide when selecting the best cultivars for our area: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/vb021>

