

Note that the information in our monthly tips is intended for gardening in the Bountiful, UT area and may not be accurate for different climates.

August Gardening

Ave High 90° F.
Ave Low 60° F.
Ave Moisture .92"

Each year is different, let the weather be your guide. Use this gardening guide as a simple reminder as to what needs to be done in your garden this month.

August is often the continuation of hot and sultry days, the traditional "Dog Days of Summer". August also produces some of the driest weather of the year. Thunderstorms can frequently arrive in late afternoon, and after a few minutes, the sun returns and the humidity increases.



Sweet corn has never been sweeter, and watermelon never so refreshing, as those eaten fresh from the garden in August. Vegetable production peaks for the summer crops. This is truly the beginning of the harvest season.

Although it is not as hot as July, the hot temperatures of August make it tough to want to spend much time working in your garden, so take advantage of any cooler days to work on your gardening projects.

Flowers

✓ Watering can be the a problem this month, particularly when the weather is hot. Vegetable and flower gardens need a consistent supply of water every week to keep them green and looking nice.

✓ Try to water thoroughly, and deeply each time you water. When possible, water in the morning or early evening. Deep watering will encourage the plant's roots to grow deeper into the soil, where they are less likely to dry out. Light, surface watering actually wastes water, because the water doesn't reach the root zone of the plant, and the water evaporates from the top inch of soil.

✓ The best way to tell if your plants are receiving enough water is dig down a few inches. The soil should be moist at least 3 or 4 inches deep to insure that the water is reaching the root zone of the plants.

✓ Be sure to check the hanging baskets and container plants for water every day during hot weather. Check them every second day on moderately hot summer days. Don't just check the surface. Push your finger an inch or two into the soil to be sure there is adequate moisture throughout the entire root area. Water them thoroughly each time you water, but be careful not to overwater them.

✓ **Hanging Basket Tip:** If your hanging baskets dry out too severely, the soil may shrink away from the pot. Then, when you water, all the water just runs out of the pot, without soaking into the soil. If your hanging basket dries out severely, it is an excellent idea to set your plant in a bucket of water for an hour or two, so it can completely re-saturate the soil.



Soak any container anytime it has wilted severely. Don't overwater them, just soak them so the soil stays uniformly moist. This tip also applies to any container gardens you may have on your deck or patio.



✓ Take out a few minutes to pick off the old dead flowers on your annuals, as well as any spent flowers on perennial plants. A little time spent on grooming the plants will make a big difference in the overall appearance of the garden. By removing the spent flowers, they should continue to flower longer into the season. This gardening activity is called 'Dead Heading'.

✓ Perennial and biennial plants can be started from seed sown directly into the garden this month.

✓ When planting flowers or shrubs or trees, always take time to properly prepare the soil by mixing generous quantities of Bumper Crop, Acid Planting Mix, peat moss, or homemade compost with your existing soil.

✓ Fall blooming Crocus can be planted this month, to give you an extra week or two of flowers after the main garden plants have finished for the year.

✓ Spring flowering perennials can be divided and transplanted this month or next. Be sure to do this during the coolest part of the day and then water the plants thoroughly after transplanting.

✓ Fertilize mums, hardy asters, and other fall blooming perennials.

✓ **Mid-summer Blossom Tip:** Don't be afraid to give your annual flowers a summer haircut. Cut them back by one half their height, then fertilize them with **Blooming and Rooting Fertilizer** once a week for the next three or four weeks. Your plants will respond with a surge of new growth and produce an abundance of new flowers. You will definitely notice a difference in your flower garden.

✓ Plant hollyhocks, poppies, and larkspur for next spring's blossoms.

✓ Prepare for fall bulb planting by making plans or researching bulb varieties.

Roses

✓ Fertilize your roses for the last time this month. Do not fertilize them again until next April. Roses need to slow their growth in October to prepare for winter.



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✓ Prune your hybrid tea roses in mid-August to promote more fall blossoms. Maintain a spraying schedule to control insects and diseases.



Lawn

✓ Water your lawn 2" per week. Apply 1/2" of water each time you water your lawn. Don't water your lawn every day.

✓ Don't fertilize your lawn until later this month unless absolutely necessary. If your lawn needs a boost, apply Ironite or Humic Acid during July or Early-August, not nitrogen.

✓ Contrary to popular belief, a brown lawn isn't necessarily a dead lawn. Grasses go dormant in times of drought, but will quickly return to life with the onset of fall weather.

✓ Raise the cutting height of your lawnmower. Taller grass cools the roots and helps to keep the moisture in the soil longer.

✓ Fall is a great time to rejuvenate your lawn. Lawns that are scheduled for renovations should be killed with Kleenup Grass killer or with Roundup this month.

✓ Lawn insects may be a problem this month. If so, apply **Insect & Grub Control**, or **Quick Kill Lawn Insect Control**. These two products contain both a quick acting insecticide as well as a long term insect control



✓ Lawn diseases may be a problem this month. If so, apply **Fertilome F-Stop Lawn Fungicide**, or **Bonide Infuse Disease Control**. If your lawn has 'Take All Patch' or 'Necrotic Ring Spot', you will need to re-apply your fungicide once a month the rest of the summer, and you will probably need to over-seed your lawn later this fall with a more disease resistant type of grass. These two diseases are very hard to control chemically. Planting disease resistant varieties and fertilizing with organic lawn fertilizers are sometimes the best control for these lawn diseases. For more information, please read **J&L's Lawn Disease Prevention and Control** handout.

Houseplants

✓ Water houseplants regularly and fertilize to promote new growth. Warm and dry weather means it will be necessary to water and mist your house plants often.

✓ Check plants for insects such as scales, aphids, and spider mites. Wash plants to remove dust layers on their leaves. Washing leaves also helps to eliminate spider mites, aphids, and mealybugs. **Insecticidal soap**, **Bonide Systemic Houseplant Insecticide**, and **Fertilome Indoor/Outdoor Multi purpose Insect Killer**, are three products that are great to use for most houseplant pests.



✓ Make cuttings and repot plants before summer slips away.

✓ Make sure your houseplants are prepared for your vacation and they will look great on your return. You may need to make arrangements to have someone water your houseplant while you are on vacation. We have several tips about preparing your plants for your vacation in our **Healthy Houseplants Handout**.

Wild Bird

✓ Change and clean the water in your bird bath regularly, and keep it filled. Standing water is less healthy for the birds, and may become a breeding ground for mosquito larvae.

✓ Try feeding the birds with a new kind of wild bird food, to see if you can attract new species. Try peanuts, dried cherries, or other dehydrated fruit and nuts. You may have a cherry tree that you don't know what to do with all the fruit. Pick the cherries and dehydrate them, to feed the birds in the fall and winter.

✓ Refresh the water in your hummingbird feeder as often as necessary. Never use corn syrup, maple syrup, molasses, honey, artificial sweeteners, brown sugar or anything else. Use only white granulated table sugar, the stuff you put on your breakfast cereal.

✓ The ideal location for a hummingbird feeder is close to a window in your house so that you can watch the hummingbirds when you are indoors. The feeder should also be hung in a shady spot if possible, to keep the nectar from spoiling as soon. Hummingbirds are more likely to spot feeders that are hung near plants that attract the hummingbirds.

✓ If you use more than 1 feeder, hang them so that both feeders can't be seen at the same time. Hummingbirds are very territorial and will guard the feeder by chasing off other hummingbirds that try to use the feeder. This is usually done by a



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dominate male hummingbird. If the hummingbird can find a spot where it can see both feeders, it will be able to guard both of them at the same time. This will make it difficult for other hummingbirds to sneak in to get a drink.



✓ Hanging the feeders on opposite sides of the house is a good way to prevent this aggressive hummingbird behavior.

Vegetables & Fruits

✓ Now is the time to start and plant many of your fall and winter vegetables. Plant seeds of green onions, carrots, beets, lettuce, spinach, radishes, swiss chard, peas and turnips directly into the garden early this month.

✓ Plant transplants of broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage for fall production.

✓ Enjoy the harvest of your homegrown fruits, vegetables and herbs!

✓ Continue to watch for insect, slug, and snail, damage throughout the garden, and take the necessary steps to control the problem.

✓ Prevent powdery mildew on squash, pumpkin, cucumber, and melon plants.

✓ Water your garden about 1 inch per week.

✓ Harvest crops on a regular basis for season long production.

✓ Use a Net to protect ripening fruit from hungry birds.

✓ Fertilize strawberry beds for added flower bud development.

✓ Weed control is also very important, because with the warmer weather and increased watering, weed seeds will germinate and grow faster, and mature to the point of producing more seeds. Take advantage of your spare time to keep the weeds cultivated out of all parts of the garden.



Fruit Trees

✓ Continue treating for codling moth and peach tree borers.

✓ Spray peaches and walnuts for the walnut husk fly.

✓ Ease fruit loads on branches, and prevent breakage, by propping the branches with wooden supports.

✓ Water trees deeply once a month. Don't let them go into the winter dry.

✓ Spray peach and other stone fruits now to protect against peach tree borers.



Trees & Shrubs

✓ Summer blooming shrubs can be pruned after they have finished flowering. Remove any dead or diseased branches.

✓ If you give spirea or weigela plants a heavy pruning, just after they finish blooming, they will often respond with another set of blossoms within a few weeks. Not all shrubs respond the same way, so learn which plants to prune and which plants to leave alone.

✓ Water older trees and shrubs deeply once a month. Turn a hose on slightly and let it soak for an hour or two. Do not waste water, let it soak in as deep as possible around your plant's roots.

Miscellaneous

✓ Turn compost pile and add water when dry.

✓ Divide irises and daylilies.

✓ Keep the weeds pulled, before they have a chance to flower and go to seed. Otherwise, you will be fighting newly germinated weed seeds for the next several years.

✓ Weeds in the garden are harmful because they rob your plants of water and nutrients, harbor insects and diseases, and, on occasion grow tall enough to shade your flowers and plants.

✓ A weed is '**Any Plant Growing In The Wrong Location**' including herbs, wildflowers and perennials.

A weed is but an Unloved Flower ~Ella Wheeler Wilcox

A weed is a plant that has mastered every survival skill except for learning how to grow in rows. ~Doug Larson

A weed is simply a plant that wants to grow where people want something else.

