

June in Your Garden:

Since you won't get a newsletter for the rest of the summer months, you are on your own to keep things blooming in the garden. If you added compost and mulch in early spring, your garden should be very happy. Take a walk around the garden. Are there some dry spots? Add more compost, water it in well, and then add some mulch to hold in the moisture.

Don't neglect your roses after their beautiful display in May. Keep deadheading, remove suckers grow from below the bud union (the swollen lump below the lowest branching), and keep them well-fed. During the growing season, roses need equal amounts of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium. In the first week of June, feed with a balanced fertilizer. Two weeks later, feed with one half cup Epsom salts per bush. The 1 July and August, feed during the first week with a balanced fertilizer again, and the third week, feed with fish emulsion, one tablespoon per gallon, two gallons per bush.

For a steady supply of green beans, shelling peas, corn, squash, and other quick-growing vegetables, add new seedlings every three weeks. To protect Swiss chard, I put tulle, fine netting over the whole bed, because I have been plagued by unsightly leaf miners. Check the back of the spinach or chard leaf for tiny rows of white eggs. I scrape the leaf miner eggs off the leaves with my fingernail. To make sure you have plenty of summer herbs, like cilantro and basil, plant seedlings every two weeks. I plant the basil all around my tomato plants. Pick the leaves before the plants start to flower, and prolong the bounty by cutting off any flowers that appear. I only grow lettuce in the shaded areas around my kitchen door during the summer. Otherwise they go limp from the heat.

How are your hydrangeas doing? They would love some fertilizer late June or 4th of July. They do need some filtered sun, or two to three hours of direct sunlight. Right in front of them is where I plant impatiens. If you forgot to prune your ferns, at least trim off the brown curly leaves at the bottom.

Deep-water established trees, check your fruit trees for stress, and cover them with bird netting to save the fruit for yourself, instead of donating fruit to the squirrel population. If your fruit trees drop fruit, they probably need more water. Brace up any overlaid fruiting branches, and clean up leaves around your trees to prevent disease and discourage pests.

In **August**, azaleas, rhododendrons, and camellias need enough water to help them set buds for next year. Also apply an acid fertilizer. Shear back straggly lobelia, sweet alyssum, and petunias. Then fertilize EVERYTHING that is blooming. Always moisten the soil before feeding. Did you know that an inverted aluminum pie plate placed under a ripening melon reflects heat, helping to ripen the melon, and keeps the melon off the soil? I also keep winter squash off the soil as it ripens. How are your dahlias doing in August? Look for the San Francisco Dahlia Show at the Hall of Flowers in August.

Victoria Sullivan