Annuals, Vegetables and Hanging Baskets

We have lots of annuals and hanging baskets and a good selection of vegetable plants. If you've gotten a late start this year or you want to plant a few more things, there is still time to plant vegetables and get a good harvest. If you don't want to plant a regular garden, try some veggies in pots.

Perennials

We've got a great selection of perennials and are putting out more varieties regularly. We just got in big shipments and more are on the way. Stop in and see what new kinds we have for this season. Come in throughout the summer to see what has come in to bloom. Definitely come in when you need something in bloom at a specific in your garden. We will be happy to help you find a few plants or to fill a new garden.

Choosing Perennials

I hear on a regular basis when I suggest a plant "I don't know what that is, so I don't want it." That kind of mentality takes the fun out of perennial gardening! One of the most enjoyable parts of gardening is trying new plants. If you already have a bunch of something, why plant more of it. The best gardens have a large variety of plants. This ensures a nice succession of bloom throughout the season. Look for early and late flowering plants to extend the flowering time of your garden. Most of my customers come in and buy whatever catches their fancy. They take it home and plant it somewhere. Some of the best gardens are really not planned at all.

A lot of customers don't want anything taller than 18" in their garden. Take a walk on the wild side and plant tall things. Try planting perennials that are 4 feet or even taller. This makes it easy to plant three or four rows of plants. The 18" plants may now be your shortest row.

People also only want perennials that bloom all summer. These are called annuals. Very few perennials bloom all summer. It's tough to plant a garden with just these plants. Part of the fun of perennial gardening is mixing plants so you always something in bloom.

Shade Perennials

We have lots of perennials that like shady areas. We have dozens of varieties of astilbes. They range from under a foot tall to ones that get to 4 feet. They flower in white, pink and red. Astilbes have bloom times from June through August so by planting several varieties, you can have them in flower through the summer. They are starting to bloom right now, so you can see their exact colors. We have over 40 varieties of hostas. There are some really spectacular types. There are lots of ferns ready right now and a few others coming on in the near future. We have white and pink old-fashioned bleeding hearts and a variety called Luxuriant that is everblooming. We have many other shade plants. Shade gardens can be really beautiful. They just aren't as bright and colorful as a sun garden.

Fruits and Vegetables

We have really beautiful fruits and vegetables. There are thornless blackberries, red, black and gold raspberries. We have 3 varieties of seedless grape – Himrod, Canadice and Concord. There are blueberries and blackberries. We have asparagus and rhubarb. There are also elderberries available. We have both June-bearing and day neutral strawberries (bear all summer). Now is a good time to plant all of these.

Dead-heading

Don't forget to keep the dead flowers trimmed off your perennials and annuals. Not only does it keep your plants looking nicer, The annuals will continue to bloom better and the perennials may come back into flower. Also keep the flowers trimmed off of your herbs. They keep a better flavor if they don't come into bloom.

Facebook

If you would like to follow us on Facebook, we are going to post things like plants that are in bloom, new varieties, new things in the garden shop or just interesting information. The correct page has an orange marigold picture. If you have trouble getting to that page, use the link on our website. www.shadowwoodgardens.com. There is good information on the website too.

Houseplants

The next couple months are a good time to work on your houseplants whether you have them inside or outdoors. Fertilize them with either a slow release food of give them some liquid fertilizer every couple weeks. Watch them for insects and spray them with insecticidal soap as necessary.

This is also when you should repot houseplants. By doing it now, you give them time to recover from the shock of repotting and give the roots a chance to grow into the new soil. Only go up one pot size when repotting plants. So this means if it is in a 10 inch pot, only go up to a 12". Always use a good soil-less mix. Loosen up the roots or if they are really thickly wrapped, cut some of them off. This can also be done if you have a really large plant that can't be moved to a larger pot. Cut off an inch or two of the roots around the outside of the root ball and the same off the bottom. This will allow you to keep the plant healthy without moving it to a bigger pot. If your plants are getting too big, now is a good time to prune them.

Roundup

The new formulation of Roundup is definitely not a very safe product. Two of the 4 ingredients have been banned by the European Union. It cannot be used around edible plants. Don't spray it near desirable plants. I would only use it in areas that you don't care what it kills. It could also be used on paved or gravel areas. It is 45 times more toxic than glyphosate. I don't think you can replant the area for months. It's unclear if it will kill all weeds to the root or if it will just burn the foliage off. It is very toxic to insects, birds, aquatic life and mammals. I would personally not use it. Unfortunately, we have lost a fairly safe and effective product and replaced it something far worse.

Herbs & Scented Geraniums

There is still a good selection of herbs and scented geraniums available. You have plenty of time to get a good harvest off of herbs. Plant some in pots near your kitchen so they are easily accessible when you need them. If you've never grown herbs before, start with whatever herbs you use on a regular basis. Then add a couple of different ones. Once you start cooking with fresh herbs, you'll never want to go back to dried. If you already grow herbs, try some new ones that you haven't tried before. We have many interesting mints like strawberry, apple, grapefruit and chocolate. Pineapple sage makes great iced tea and is good chopped up in fruit salad. Scented geraniums are good in iced tea and fruit dips. Seasoning celery is really celery and can be used in place of stalk celery in any recipe.

Lavender

Lavender is probably the most under used herb in cooking. Most people don't even realize you can cook with it. It is one of the most versatile herbs you can find. It can be used with poultry, in salads, baked goods, beverages and desserts. Use it fresh or dried. Add it to potato or macaroni salad. Steep some in water and use the water to make lemonade or orange juice. Add it to pound cake or any yellow or white cake. It makes great strawberry shortcake. It can be added to sugar cookies or shortbread. Cook chicken breasts in broth, salt and pepper, garlic and lavender. Eat them hot or chill and use to make chicken salad. Add it to the liquid when poaching fruit. It can also be added when making jelly. Give lavender a try for something different.

Labeling Gardens

It's always a good idea to label both perennial and herb gardens. The perennial gardens so that you know what you have and herb gardens so you don't eat something you shouldn't. We have nice metal markers that are inexpensive and last forever. When you write on them with a china marker, the writing becomes fairly permanent. It is easily removed with steel wool or sandpaper. There is also a new tall size. We carry beautiful clay herb markers if you want something nicer in your herb garden.

Daylilies

We have dozens of varieties of daylilies. They are budding up and will come into bloom in the next couple weeks. There are several types of everblooming daylilies. These bloom most of the summer. They are one of the few perennials that do bloom a good chunk of the summer.

Stakes

We have 6 foot heavy duty bamboo stakes, hardwood stakes and plastic coated metal stakes for tomatoes. There are lighter weight 3 and 4 foot bamboo stakes for perennials. We also have really nice 2, 4, 6, and 8 foot trellises made from treated lumber and 2' x 6' square trellises.

To-Do List

- Weed. The more you weed the less there are to reseed.
- Keep annuals and perennials dead-headed so they can possibly rebloom.
- Divide and move perennials as long as they aren't in bloom.
- Watch for diseases and insects and treat as necessary.
- Keep flowers cut off your herbs and start freezing and drying extra herbs.
- Fertilize everything.
- Mulch everything to preserve soil moisture and keep down weeds.
- Water as necessary.
- Prune flowering shrubs as they finish blooming.
- Label perennial and herb gardens.

Preen

Weeding is a never ending job. Try some natural Preen. It is corn gluten meal which stops germinating weeds from forming roots. It is safe for pets and people and can be used around all plants including edible ones. Don't confuse it with regular Preen which is a chemical. It can't be used around edible plants and is not safe for pets or people. It also stops some perennials from spreading.

Thoroughly weed a section of your garden and then apply The Preen immediately. Put the mulch over it. If your bed is already mulched, put the Preen on the mulch. Apply it every month for best results. You will start to notice a big difference in the amount of weeds you have.

Animal Repellants

We are getting hit hard by the deer this year. If you are having the same problem, start using repellants. We are using Liquid Fence which seems to be helping. We also have Deer Scram which some of our customers swear by. Repels All lists about every mammal there is, so you could give it a try. We are also trying Safer Critter Ridder Animal Repellant.

Recycling Pots

We are still happy to take old pots but we have to limit what we accept. We can only take white hanging baskets. We don't take back cell packs or flats. We can take regular pots and clay pots but no decorative pots. All pots must be emptied of soil. Bring them over and we'll take a look.

Bearded Iris

Cut the foliage of bearded iris back to 3 or 4 inches. They will put on new leaves and look nicer for the rest of the season.

Cilantro and Dill

If you like to have cilantro and dill weed available for use all summer, you need to buy seed and sow new crops of them every couple weeks in the summer. Both of these herbs tend to go to flower very quickly. They can be sowed in pots and they germinate very fast.

Dogs

We love to meet your dogs and certainly don't mind them wandering around with you. But please let us know before you take them out of the car so we can put our dogs in the house.

While you're here, take a look at our Pet Corner. There are lots of things for your dogs and cats and lots for pet parents.

Talks for any Groups

I am scheduling talks for any kind of club for the Fall and Winter and even into next year. Give me a call and we can discuss the many topics that I have available. 724 836-2255

Planning ahead for next spring

If you need a quantity of annuals, vegetables or herbs for next spring, you can order them now while it is still fresh in your mind. This way you can be sure to get everything you need.

Watering

Right now we are pretty good with rain. Perennials and shrubs, unless newly planted, don't need watered yet. Newly planted annuals, vegetables and herbs may need watered if we don't get rain every few days. Once they are established, you can cut back on watering. Nothing should need watered everyday except container plants when they fill out. Going out and waving a hose over your plants is not watering, it's cleaning the dust off the leaves. You are maybe wetting the soil down an inch at best. The correct way to water is slow and deep. The best way to do this is with a sprinkler or soaker hose. You should ideally put down an inch of water once or twice a week depending on the weather. You will probably end up using less water in the end. If you have trees or shrubs that need water, take a milk jug, bucket or similar container and poke a hole in the bottom of it. Fill it with water and it will slowly seep out deeply watering the plant. Always water at the outer edge of the foliage, not directly next to the trunk.

Mulching

Mulching sort of goes with watering. Although most people think of mulch to keep down weeds, it also helps retain soil moisture. A good layer of mulch will help reduce moisture loss from the soil. This is why everything should be mulched. Trees, shrubs, perennials, annuals and even herbs can be mulched with a decorative bark mulch. Vegetables can be mulched with straw or grass clippings with no chemicals. Some people use mushroom manure and then till it in come fall.

We will be closed Saturday July 4th. Our regular hours are:
Tues. – Sat. 10-6 Sunday 11-4 Closed Monday

Slugs

With all the rain we've had this spring, slugs are causing a lot of damage right now. People have been coming in with pictures of all types of plants with slug damage. We have Sluggo Bait. It is an organic slug control that is safe for everything but slugs. Most of the other baits on the market are very toxic so please don't use them.

Garden Shop

Stop into the Garden Shop when you come out. We have lots of gardening and gift items. There is always new stuff coming in. We also have gift certificates.

Clay Pots

We have clay pots in sizes from 4" to 14". They are really good quality pots. There are also saucers for all sizes.

Fertilizing

If you haven't fed your trees shrubs and perennials yet this season, get to it! Your best bet is one of the Espoma organic fertilizers. They are granular so they last longer. Keep up on feeding your annuals, vegetables and herbs.

Go to our website for a list of pollinator plants that we carry. www.shadowwoodgardens.com

Peonies

We have a good selection of peonies in all colors. Plant them now so you will get blooms next spring.

Problems with spring planting this year

If you planted your annuals flowers, vegetables and herbs before the last week of May this year, you may be experiencing problems. We are hearing of plants dying or not growing, seeds not germinating and tomato plants turning purple. This is because the temperatures, both soil and air, were too cold and the soil was too wet. It doesn't take freezing temps to damage plants. Soil temps below 60° will damage tender plants. Combine that with daytime temps in the 60's and nights as low as the 40's and soggy soil, it's a recipe for disaster. The roots on tender plants have been damaged. This means that they need to put on new root growth before the plants can even start to grow. The roots also can't take up fertilizer, so they struggle to grow due to lack of food. If your plants still look okay, they may be able to start to grow. They will definitely be behind, so your harvest will be delayed. Get fertilizer on everything. If everything looks too bad, we do still have some veggies, herbs and annuals. It may be faster to just replant. I would resow any seeds that have not come up yet. Most veggie seeds germinate fairly quickly and it's still early enough to get a good crop.

As I have said before, planting early does not get you a head start on the season. Some years, you get lucky. Others, like this one, can be a huge problem. Never plant tender plants before mid-May. Two week forecasts are available on places like the Weather Channel. If you see in mid-May that daytime temps are only in the 60's and nights are in the 40's and 50's, don't plant yet. I still recommend not planting until the end of May to be safe.

Newsletter

We are still going to be sending out the next few newsletters by mail, but we will eventually be going to all e-mail. They are costing us thousands of dollars a year to mail. You can go to the website www.shadowwood gardens.com to sign up. Or you can scan this QR code to sign up. We appreciate your help with this matter.

Organics

We have a good selection of organic pest controls and fertilizers. Better for the environment and you.

We have a nice variety of coralbells. Six varieties of hardy lavenders. Many sedums, both short and tall types. Creeping phlox, creeping thyme and other low growing plants. Milkweed and butterfly weed.