

# Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for September

*"The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now." Chinese Proverb*

The kids are back in school, we are packing lunches, and our vegetable gardens are overflowing with nutrient rich edibles. It's fall harvest and a great time to get the entire family involved in picking and planting fresh fruits and vegetables for meal preparation. Kids adopt the patterns of parents, thus, we need to be great examples of healthy dining. In the coming weeks, crops, like cabbages, broccoli, brussels sprouts, carrots, cauliflower, kale, kohlrabi, lettuce, peas, radishes, salad greens, scallions, spinach, and Swiss chard can be planted. They actually prefer the growing conditions that late summer and early fall offer and taste better when grown in cooler temperatures. Autumn is filled with gardening chores. What better way to enjoy the dog days of sunshine and color!

- **PLANT** trees and shrubs throughout the next two months. For colorful fall foliage, visit your nursery to examine the trees that would look best in your landscape. Ask for growing advice.
- **CUT** peonies stalks to within two inches above the ground level and discard all felled cuttings (they are not good for compost).
- **SHEAR** back leggy petunias, lobelia, and other annuals to keep them blooming until frost.
- **ORDER** new varieties of spring bulbs (tulips, hyacinths, narcissus, scilla, crocus) from your favorite catalogues that you won't find in local nurseries.
- **FERTILIZE** budding plants.
- **PRUNE** berry bushes once the harvest is complete.
- **PROTECT** your home from wildfires by creating defensible space around your property. Fire season extends through November. Make sure to clear brush, weeds, flammable landscaping under eaves, leaves from gutters, and tree limbs near the house.
- **CLEAN UP** is essential around the yard as leaves begin to fall and perennials die back. Get out the rake and broom for a good work out.
- **CHECK** out new favorite fall planting perennials (Echinacea, ornamental grasses, peonies, hydrangeas).
- **TRANSPLANT** Naked Lady bulbs in fall right after blooms fade. Divide with a spade and plant bulbs at the surface. It could take two years before they sprout their pretty heads, but you will get the deep green strap-like foliage in late winter/early spring.
- **HARVEST** beans, tomatoes, beets, peppers, zucchini, cucumbers, pears, apples, corn, leeks, and other edibles.
- **TOP** cilantro to keep it from bolting, or gather the seeds of coriander if your plant has already dried as well as those from fennel plants.
- **RAKE** any fallen fruit from trees to keep disease and deer at bay.
- **PAY** close attention to soil fertility when planting year round else your garden won't flourish. Always supply new beds with fresh nutrients of compost and other organic soil amendments.
- **WATER** regularly until winter arrives. September and October can be the hottest and driest months of the year in our region.
- **COOK** elderberries before eating. They do make a wonderful syrup or jelly.
- **THINK** ahead to winter gardening. If you plan on growing lettuces or delicate crops, consider floating row covers, cold frames, or covered hoop tunnels to protect your plants from frost. Rapid temperature changes are damaging.
- **VISIT** the Be the Star You Are!® booth sponsored by Lamorinda Weekly at the Moraga Pear and Wine Festival on Saturday, Sept. 28 from 10 to 4 p.m. to meet me, our Teen Scene writers, and pick up a packet of FREE potpourri. My autographed books will be available for sale benefiting charity. [http://www.btsya.com/events\\_calendar.html](http://www.btsya.com/events_calendar.html)
- **CALCULATE** fall planting with this easy guide: [http://www.johnnyseeds.com/t-Summer\\_Plant\\_Fall\\_Harvest.aspx?source=Home\\_Slide2\\_082013-vegetables](http://www.johnnyseeds.com/t-Summer_Plant_Fall_Harvest.aspx?source=Home_Slide2_082013-vegetables)
- **PHOTOGRAPH** your September garden to remember for next season. My Naked Ladies surprised and delighted me and I now have lots of photographs of their graceful legs.

See you at the Pear and Wine Festival. Enjoy the final days of summer and the advent of autumn. Life is precious, school is in session, driving carefully!

Happy Gardening and Growing to you!

©2013

Cynthia Brian

The Goddess Gardener

Cynthia@goddessgardener.com

www.goddessgardener.com

925-377-7827

Cynthia is available as a speaker and consultant.



**ADVANCE  
TREE SERVICE**  
& Landscaping  
Family owned in Moraga since 1987

Lic.: #611120



Your friendly neighborhood arborists Darren and Lew Edwards

## California Trees

Darren lives his life with passion, and trees have been his passion since he was a kid, working with his father in the tree care company, he is a firm believer in the power of planning, and in the importance of giving back to those aspects of life that sustain you.

California has a rich horticultural history and many extraordinary specimens of trees can be seen in nearly every community here. Each of the many tree species provides unique form, texture, color and often aroma. These are the trees that provide shade, help to conserve energy, improves property value, reduces storm-water runoff, sequester CO2, mitigate air pollution, and make urban living healthier and more peaceful. "We all have a role to play in planning for the future of our trees". So invest in the future and plant the correct type of tree in the proper location.

So don't wait until it's too late, have a complete inspection by a Certified Arborist at Advance Tree Service and Landscaping

*Advance Tree Service*

*Your Authority on Trees and Landscape.*



**925-376-6528**

**advancetree@sbcglobal.net www.advancetree.com**

Follow us on Twitter (*advancetree*) and like us on Face Book  
(*ADVANCETREESERVICEANDLANDSCAPINGINC.*)