

March ▶



GARDENING CHECKLIST and garden tips

March means new beginnings! There is plenty to do this month as the growing season is just around the corner.

Town & Country's plant doctors are available during store hours to answer your gardening questions. For accurate diagnosis, please bring in a sample (preferred) or a picture of the problem.

Tropicals and Houseplants

- Now is a good time to re-pot houseplants into slightly larger pots using **Town & Country Professional Potting Mix**.
- Houseplants sense spring with the longer days. Begin feeding with **Bonide Houseplant Food** to encourage healthy new growth.
- Add **orchids, African violets, bromeliads** and other flowering plants to bring color indoors.

Indoor Seed & Bulb Starting

- Start flower and vegetable seeds indoors. Ask for a copy of our **Seed Starting Guide** for recommended indoor sowing dates and tips for success. (Also available on our website.)
- Use **grow lights** to encourage healthy growth of seedlings and other indoor plants.
- Begin fertilizing seedlings with Fertilome **Water Soluble Plant Food 20-20-20**.
- Purchase **Crook's Brand garden seed** now. Take advantage of the Early Bird Sale.
- Apply **Hi-Yield Captan** to seedlings as first true leaves develop to prevent damp off disease.
- Mark your seedlings with wood or plastic **labels** to identify varieties and planting dates
- Plant **dahlia, canna, and begonia bulbs** indoors for planting out later.

Fruit

- Prune and thin raspberry plants to clean up last year's dead canes.
- Apply **Soil Sulfur** to prevent yellowing of raspberry leaves.
- Dormant **bare root raspberries** and **strawberries** can be planted beginning in mid to late March as soon as they are available.
- Apply **Casoron** herbicide granules to prevent weeds in raspberries all season long.
- Spray fruit trees with **Hi Yield Dormant Spray** to kill overwintering insects and eggs.
- Remove straw mulch from strawberries if it was applied last fall.

Flowers

- Prune back dead stalks on perennial flowers and ornamental grasses to the ground.
- Fertilize established bulbs with a side dressing of **Dutch Bulb Food**.
- Fertilize perennial flowers with **T&C Fruit & Flower Food**.
- Prepare seed bed and plant **wildflower seed** from mid March to late April.

Birds and Wildlife

- Continue to feed birds with suet, black oil sunflower, and high quality **wild bird seed**.
- Provide a water source such as a heated bird bath.

Vegetables

- Remove any spent vines and corn stalks from garden spot if not completed last fall.
- Add **Soil Enhancer** or compost as well as **sulfur**, and rototill into soil to prepare seed bed.
- If you have a high tunnel hoop house you can plant cool weather crops like lettuce now.

Roses

- Avoid removing winter protection from roses until weather warms enough that new shoots are beginning to emerge. Then prune canes to 8-12" on hybrid teas. Remove dead canes.

Lawns

- Rake matted grass as snow recedes to prevent snow mold from damaging your lawn.
- Apply Natural Guard **Soil Activator** (Step-1) to your lawn to help decompose lawn thatch and green up your lawn. This can be done anytime in March or early April.
- Ask about our **4-Step Lawn Program** for the greenest, healthiest lawn in the neighborhood.

Trees & Shrubs

- Prune most trees now. Skip maples and birches until summer to avoid excessive bleeding.
- Fertilize trees and shrubs with **Save-A-Tree** or **T&C Tree & Shrub Food**.
- Apply **Fertilome Tree & Shrub Systemic Insect Drench** to prevent most insect damage to your trees and shrubs for the entire growing season.
- Spray shade trees with **Hi Yield Dormant Spray** to kill overwintering insects and eggs.
- Check staked trees and loosen or remove ties around trunks if necessary to prevent injury.

Ponds

- When pond thaws, pumps and pre-filters should be cleaned and reconnected. The sooner you get your pumps and filters running the sooner your pond will start to get its ecosystem re-established and balanced.
- Remove as much sludge, leaves, and debris from pond as possible. Don't drain and scrub clean. This will kill beneficial bacteria and destroy the ecological balance in the pond.
- Bacteria should be added as soon as the ice begins to recede. **Microbe Lift Spring Cleaner** is excellent at jump starting your ecosystem in the spring and helping to break down accumulated organic waste.
- **Test the pH, Ammonia, Nitrite and Nitrate** levels. Continue testing weekly until your system has been running for 4-6 weeks and has stabilized, then check biweekly.
- Don't feed fish until water temperature reaches 50 degrees. (Check temp. in the a.m.)
- Hardy plants that over-wintered at the bottom of the pond can be moved back up to their growing locations and proper depths.
- Divide and repot your water lilies and marginal plants as needed.
- Fertilize pond plants with **Aquatic Tabs** for healthier, more vigorous plants.
- Clean and inspect biological filters and skimmers. Don't use chlorinated water as this will kill beneficial bacteria. Check filter pads and replace as necessary.

Always read and follow label directions when using any garden chemical or fertilizer.

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