

Garden Calendar

(provided by Cornell Cooperative Extension, Putnam County)

May

- Wait until soil has warmed and drained before working. Tilling heavy wet soil can ruin soil structure (not to mention your back). Or, consider the sheet composting method (also known as “lasagna” composting) which does not require tilling.
- Begin to harden-off your seedlings before moving them out into the garden.
- Frost free date is May 15th in our area. Don’t plant your seedlings outside until we’ve passed this date. Resist the temptation of early sunny days.
- Cover squash and other cucurbits as they emerge with floating row covers to protect them from squash vine borer.
- Deadhead spring-flowering bulbs. Remember to let the leaves of these bulbs turn brown before you remove them so they have time to make and store food for next year’s bloom.
- Plant summer flowering bulbs and tubers outdoors.
- Begin mowing when grass is 4 to 4 ½ inches tall. Set mower height to 3 inches. Make sure that the mower blade is sharp.
- Do not fertilize your lawn until Memorial Day, and then do so only lightly. Research shows that spring fertilization causes a green-up of grass blades at the expense of root growth. The lush green foliage is a perfect breeding ground for insects and fungal diseases, and the weakened root system more easily succumbs to summer drought. The best time for lawn fertilizing is between August and November!