

October is a great time for planting. The nights are finally cooler and daytime temperatures take a bit longer to really heat up, allowing us to work a bit longer in the garden. Here is a list of tasks that can be very successful during October:

This is a great month for planting turf grass. Be sure to water in and do not let the soil dry out completely for a couple of weeks. Soil should be moist, not soaking wet. After grass is established (does not pull up), begin deep, infrequent watering program to promote deep, health root establishment. For more information on turf, go to AggieTurf.tamu.edu.

Plant fruit trees, especially citrus, star fruit, avocado, and mango during October. Remove all of the grass in the area so that the young tree does not have to compete with grass for nutrients. Be sure to build a well for watering and move it out, following the drip line, as the tree grows.

If you are planting young avocado, the folks at River's End Nursery, recommend caging them and covering the cage with shade cloth along the sides. During the summer, you may have to cover the top of the cage, as well. Avocado is a under-story tree and the shade cloth on young trees will keep the leaves on. Remember, avocado gets very tall, so don't plant it within 10 to 15 feet of your home. For a world of good information on fruit and nut trees, go to <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu> and click on the Home Lawn and Garden section, then on Fruit and Nut Production.

This is the best time for beginning your vegetable garden. Our Fall gardens certainly offer the largest variety. Plant your favorites every two weeks through the season to extend the growing and harvesting time. Remember, you don't want 5 tons of carrots, you want 5 months of carrots! Just now you can plant all of the root vegetables: beets, root parsley, carrots, radish, turnip, parsnips, and kohlrabi

Broccoli, Brussel sprouts, cauliflower and cabbage are also planted now through November. Onions, leeks and chives thrive in our cool winters, as do the greens. This is the time for collards, kale, mustard greens, and all of the fancy lettuce you want. Leaf lettuce does especially well here in the fall garden. Cilantro, parsley, Swiss chard, dill, fennel and spinach can all be planted now through the holidays.

You are too late to plant tomato, squash, and pepper from seed, but the garden centers still have plants for sale. For a complete list of what vegetables you can plant, at what time, go to <http://hidalgo-tx.tamu.edu>. Click on "Horticulture and Landscape Information," then on the Vegetable Planting Guide.

For those who enjoy putting rain water on the garden, we still have some space in our Rain barrel workshop on October 8. Contact our office for reservations at (956) 383-1026.

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