

March To-Do List:

- This is the month to plant your cool season vegetables, like peas and many leafy vegetables. It's also a great time to plant onions, garlic, and potatoes.
- It's also time to start thinking about working up garden beds. Be careful not to do this too early or too often though. We'll explain a bit more inside this newsletter.
- If you haven't already, be sure to take a moment to prune your roses. Proper pruning can make a world of difference in the health of your plants, and is best done before they start putting on growth.
- The lawn is going to explode in the next few weeks, so this is a great time to update and do maintenance projects so that your grass will be healthy well through summer.
- Expect to see slugs soon, as the weather warms a bit. The moment you see signs of slugs, start putting out slug bait. We recommend Sluggo®, an organic, child and pet friendly alternative to traditional slug control products.



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March: The Turning Point.

“In like a lion, out like a lamb”, March is the transition between the cold storms of winter and the warm gentle rains of spring. A lot of things happen in March. Bulbs start to poke their heads up and bloom. Flowering Cherries, Magnolias, Rhododendrons, and a host of other spring bloomers burst onto the scene. Buds swell, and new foliage begins to form. And like clockwork, the lawn begins its yearly growth marathon, just as you were finally beginning to get used to not having to mow every week.

We are on the doorstep of spring, and it's time to start emerging from the winter slumber and prepare for a new growing season! As we write our March newsletter, we have to point out that there was actually a bit of snow on the ground this morning. We are still admiring the blooming Camellias, Heather, and Witchhazel, which are harbingers of good things to come. When we write our April newsletter however, snow will hopefully be just a distant memory (but this is Oregon, so we make no promises), and we will be reveling in the full force of spring bloom.

So gardeners, start your engines! Spring is just a moment away, and it's time to prepare! We are here to help you in any way we can, with quality plant material, comprehensive gardening knowledge and information, and professional advice. Come visit us this spring, and grow with us!

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- Garden Rewards Coupons



Breaking Ground This Spring

Every once in a while the sun peeks out at us for a few moments, and people start getting spring fever. That usually begins with a good long look at the garden, and deciding that it's time to start working the soil so that you can get started planting as soon as it warms up a bit. Before you work your soil though, here are a few things to keep in mind:

Wet Soil Needs to Rest. One of the biggest mistakes made in spring is working up the soil too soon. Working up cold, wet soil will set you back in the long run. Patience is the key! We may have a day or two of warmer weather here and there, but your soil warms up very gradually over a long period of time. When the soil warms up, it basically comes back to life. Soil organisms start breaking down organic material, and moisture starts being consumed by trees and other soil critters. Moisture is also lost at a much faster rate due to evaporation, and also through the leaves of trees (once they grow leaves). The warmer, drier soil of spring works up much better and holds structure far better than the cold, wet soil of late winter. Our soil around here is still pretty cold and wet, which leads us to the next point...



Structure is Important. Soil structure is very important. You may not even realize that your soil has a structure, although we do admit that some of our clay soil is hard enough that it could be used to *build* structures. Soil is really an intricate development and partnership between many different elements. We think of our soil as “clay”, or “sandy”, but these terms only describe the mineral base that forms the core of our soil.

The actual soil is that mineral core augmented and manipulated by organic material, microorganisms, and many very complex chemical chain reactions. *Clay soil particles are microscopic.* What you see when you look at soil are the aggregates of clay and other mineral particles, held together by various chemical and physical mechanisms. This structure develops naturally and gradually, with a lot of work from the soil organisms, the proper amounts of organic material, oxygen, and water.

Good soil structure may take months or even years to develop, but can be destroyed in seconds by a rototiller. Cold,



Breaking Ground This Spring ...continued

wet clay soil doesn't break neatly up into crumbly pieces. It packs together into clumps and clods (water acts like glue with clay soil particles), and loses what good structure it may have had. Later in summer, you will usually find that your soil will harden, the ground will crack, and you will have a heck of a time trying to get water and nutrients to soak in. Waiting until the soil is drier (which usually means warmer) means that your soil will loosen up and crumble based on its natural structure, as opposed to being smashed into a soupy mess.



Add Organic Material. Organic Material (compost, etc.) is the lifeblood of your soil! Good soil should have at least 10% organic material by volume. Organic material helps your soil aggregate properly, loosens compaction prone soil, feeds the microorganisms that process nutrients for your plants, and moderates the soil moisture and temperature. Clay soil especially benefits from regular amendment with organic materials, and can turn from a horrible monster to a fantastic growing medium with just a little bit of work. What you can do right now is put several inches of compost or other material on top of your soil. When the soil warms up and dries out a bit (which the compost will speed up quite a bit), work the compost into the soil. When growing seasonal crops like vegetables, yearly applications of compost are suggested.

Be Good to Your Soil! It will return the favor with interest. Give it some organic material to work with. Keep a layer of mulch on top of it to prevent compaction and the destruction of soil structure. Work the soil only after it has warmed up a bit and dried out slightly. Only work the soil once as necessary to loosen it up, work in organic material, and remove weeds. Constantly or unnecessarily working your soil will destroy soil structure. Besides, if you wait until the right time, you should only need to do it once to keep your soil in good shape.

If you keep these things in mind, your soil will be far more pleasant to work with in the long run, and your plants will give you a remarkable return on your investment. Soil is the key to growing quality plants and getting the most out of your gardens. Treat it with consideration and respect, and you will be handsomely rewarded!



The Roses are Here!

We are celebrating the arrival of the roses at Farmington Gardens! Every year at this time, our rose section slowly fills up with the new rose plants. Throughout the season, these roses will put on a ton of growth, begin to flower, and put on an incredible show (and aroma) in the nursery. That is, at least, until they are sold out!



We bring in one large shipment of roses in early spring, plant them up, and offer them for sale immediately. If you are looking for a specific variety, this is the best time to find it, as the most popular or newest varieties tend to sell out earlier in spring. If you wait until summer, you may not find the exact variety that you are looking for (although there will be great substitutes available). Don't worry though, we make sure to keep plenty of extras of the most in demand varieties on hand, so they won't disappear too quickly.

This is definitely the best season to come pick out your roses. We have the largest selection right now, and it's a wonderful time to plant so that your roses get a head start and perform spectacularly for you this season.

Also, as we mentioned in our "March To-Do List", it's definitely time to prune your roses if you haven't already. A healthy and productive rose begins with proper pruning!

Speaking of roses, read on in our newsletter for more information on the Sunny Knock Out® rose, a brand new introduction for 2009 that is very exciting!

The Edible Invasion!

What do Potatoes, Onions, Garlic, Strawberries, Asparagus, and Rhubarb all have in common? Besides being fantastic garden plants that are fun and easy to grow and reward you with something good to eat, they are in stock and ready to plant NOW! This is the time to start planting these great edibles, which will reward you handsomely for giving them plenty of time to develop. All are easily grown, but if you need any help, let us know. Few things are as rewarding as growing your own food, and we have the products and knowledge to help you succeed!



The NEW Organics

The era of broad-spectrum synthetic pesticides is quickly coming to an end. For many obvious reasons, people are looking for more responsible and effective products to use on their home gardens and landscapes, driving a fast-growing market for “green” garden products.



Visitors to Farmington Gardens may have noticed a shift in our product lineup towards more natural pest control products, a trend which we are continuing to follow. Our goal is to phase out most of the older, more toxic products in favor of newer, safer products that are still very effective. “Effective” and “efficient” are the keywords in our search for new products, and we believe that our current products offer both of those things. We now carry a large selection of pest control products made by Bonide Products, from their “Garden Naturals” line. We will be highlighting products every once in a while that we feel are important, useful, and timely, because we have found that with all of the rapid changes to the home pest control market, many people just don’t know about the wonderful new products that are available.

Bonide Citrus, Fruit & Nut Orchard Spray

The season for dormant spray is nearly over! Once buds start to break and foliage and flowers emerge, the heavy-rate dormant sprays simply become too harsh for the tender new growth. Traditionally, if you had insect or disease problems during the growing season, you either had to live with it or use a pesticide like malathion, diazinon, or some other insecticide that usually smelled to high heaven and carried a pretty scary warning label. The fungicides weren’t quite as bad, but some still left a residue that wasn’t exactly “natural”.

We now have a solution to that problem, Bonide’s Orchard Spray! It’s made from all natural ingredients (that are still very effective), and can be used up to the day of harvest. It’s a great product to use during the regular growing season, when dormant spray isn’t an option and the critters are tearing up your garden.

ORCHARD SPRAY



- Controls a wide range of insects & fungal diseases
- Contains all natural ingredients
- Use up to day of harvest
- Great for Citrus, Fruit & Nuts
- Use as little as 2.5oz per gallon



Upcoming Events for March and April

It finally happened– we ended up with so many events, classes and workshops that they no longer fit on our regular events page (at least this month). To be fair, we did decide to include March AND April events in this newsletter, so that you can all look ahead and see what is going on this season. All classes are free unless otherwise noted, we just ask that you call and sign up so that we know how many people to anticipate. So sign up (and bring a friend), and come visit us and learn more about the art and science of gardening!

March

March 7th, 10 AM

Mason Bees - BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND! We have had an incredible amount of interest this year about mason bees – we held a class here on February 7th, and added a second session that day to accommodate all those interested. However, we are continuing to get phone calls, and so **we are scheduling an additional Mason Bee class on Saturday, March 7th, at 10 AM.** Beth will repeat her informative talk for those who missed it, but there will be plenty of time to get all your questions answered, as well as pick up bee larvae (ready to hatch) or bee houses.



March 7th, 1 PM

‘An Asian Vegetable Primer’, with Sue Berge from New Dimension Seeds. New Dimension Seeds are a collection of easy-to-grow, fast maturing, delicious Asian vegetables. The seeds are conveniently color-coded into Spring (harvested in summer and early fall), and Fall (harvested during cooler fall and winter). Sue demystifies Asian vegetables and teaches gardeners how to grow and cook with them using mainstream American cooking methods as well as different ethnic cooking methods that have been adapted for daily cooking.

March 29th, 1 PM

‘Backyard Cultivation of Hops,’ with Tony VanHoutin. Farmington Gardens own in-house microbrew specialist, Tony will share his tips for growing your own hops, whether for brewing or ornamental purposes. Since there are many different varieties, all with their unique characteristics, Tony will make suggestions for which type to use for which brew.



Upcoming Events for March and April... Continued

April

April 4th, 10 AM

Carl Grimm, Metro's Natural Gardening Specialist, on "**Landscaping with Organic Edibles.**" Carl combines edible, ornamental and native landscaping tips to help home gardeners kick the chemical habit in style. Learn the essentials to organic gardening, as well as new ideas for bringing beauty to the veggie bed and food to the flower border – what a great concept!



April 4th, 2 PM

"The Ins and Outs of Choosing Trees", with **Brian Schiffer**, our resident arborist. April is Arbor Month, when we celebrate the benefits and value trees bring to our community. Join Brian for an in-depth discussion on choosing the right tree for the right place and how to correctly plant your new tree to get it well established.

April 19th, 3 PM

Celina Gomez and Linda Shively, on "**Kitchen Gardening 101.**" If you've ever wanted to grow your own tasty vegetables, but didn't know where to begin, then this is the class for you. We will cover the basics of backyard edible gardening, from the benefits of raised beds, to soil preparations, to choosing a great selection of culinary plants. We'll wander out to our demonstration vegetable garden, so you can see what's going on there and how we manage to grow so much in such a small space.



April 25th, 1 PM

Linda Eshraghi on "**Japanese Maples**". This is for the Japanese maple enthusiast! We will meet at Eshraghi Nursery and tour our propagation and growing operation with owner Linda Eshraghi. More complete information will be in next month's newsletter and on our website. You will not want to miss this!

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tracting Business in the
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OLCB# 8633



Super Sales Now on Our Blog!

From time to time we have certain plants available at an amazing discount, at prices that you won't find anywhere else. These deals are usually for a limited time only though, or while supplies last. Since our newsletter information spans an entire month, most of these sales aren't advertised here due to the limited nature.



We do, however, post super deals on our blog, which allows us to add and remove sale information as we need to reflect current availability. We have two different categories that we post our sale blogs under. "Sales and specials" is for regular store sales and specials. "The Bargain Hunter's Blog" is where we post items that are being sold at blowout prices, are of limited quantity, and will most likely never be seen at that price ever again! As we head into spring, there will be more and more sales posted to our blog (there are only a few currently), so check frequently to see what we currently have. And remember, you can always subscribe to our blog via the built in RSS feed, so you will always be updated when we add information!

<http://blog.farmingtongardens.com>

And Now for Something New!

Introducing the all new Sunny Knock Out® Rose from Star Roses, the first and only fragrant member of the fabulous Knock Out® family of shrub roses. Check out the next page for more details on this exciting new rose, and also be sure to check out our coupon page for a \$5 off coupon!



The Sunny Knock Out® Rose

'Radsunny' PP#18562



DESCRIPTION

This newest release from Bill Radler is the only fragrant member in The Knock Out® Family of Roses. It has a slightly more compact and upright habit than The Knock Out® Rose with bright yellow flowers that fade quickly to a pastel cream color. The yellow color stays more intense during cooler times of the year. The dark, semi-glossy foliage contrasts nicely with the bright blooms.

Introducer: The Conard Pyle Co./Star Roses
Breeder: William Radler
Type: Landscape Shrub Rose

THE BUD

Form: Pointed
Color: Bright yellow
Size: Medium 2"

THE BLOOM

Color: Yellow at opening, turning cream pale yellow when fully open.
Form: Single.
Number of Petals: 5-7.
Size: Medium.
Diameter: 3"
Fragrance: No flower fragrance, but the petioles release a strong sweetbriar fragrance similar to Rainbow Knock Out.®

THE PLANT

Vegetation: Very vigorous.
Habit: Upright.
Inflorescence: 1 to 5 flowers per stem.
Foliage: Dark green, semi glossy.
Disease Tolerance: Very good.
Flowering: Generous blooms from spring until the first hard frost.
Size: 3-4' high x 3-4' wide.
Zone: 5-9.

