

July Monthly Reminders



COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE & LIFE SCIENCES

Cooperative
Extension

Pima County -Master Gardener Program

Planting

- Plant pumpkins now to harvest for Halloween. Most varieties mature in 100-120 days.
- With monsoon rains, plant seeds of beans, corn, melons, and squash. Visit Tucson's Native Seed/SEARCH on Campbell Avenue south of Fort Lowell for their Monsoon Garden Collection of drought-tolerant and heat-adapted vegetables, herbs, and wildflowers.

Fertilizing

- Fertilize palms with fertilizer designed specifically for these plants. Water it in well.
- Some rosarians recommend that roses be given a break during the hot summer months with no fertilizer applications. Then start the slow-release fertilizer again in September, with the last application around mid-October. Other rosarians prefer to continue using slow-release fertilizer at half-strength throughout the summer. Determine what works best for your roses in your conditions (Refer to *Rose Care in the Low Desert* [AZ 1305](#))

Watering

- Harvest rainwater from your roof into wooden barrels or plastic trashcans. Keep the containers covered to prevent mosquito breeding. You can attach a hose bib near the bottom of the barrel to distribute the rainwater to your garden (Refer to *Harvesting Rainwater* [AZ 1344](#))
- Water lawns in the morning. High summer humidity coupled with nighttime watering can encourage fungus diseases. The best time to water is during the hours of 4-8 a.m.
- In recent years, monsoon rains have started in early July; adjust your watering frequency as appropriate.

Maintenance

- Prune mesquite, eucalyptus, and palo verde. These trees heal more quickly during hot weather. Some sap loss may occur, but it will not harm the tree. Do not put any sealers on the pruning cuts, and never remove more than one-quarter of the tree canopy at one time.
- Remove faded blossoms to direct the plant's energy to forming buds, not seeds.
- Pick melons when they ripen. Watermelons that are ripe will have a patch of yellow on the underside of the fruit. If the patch is still white, it is not ready to pick. Also tendrils on the vine just above the melon should be brown and shriveled. If tendrils are still green, the watermelon is not ripe. Determine the ripeness of cantaloupe by pressing lightly on the blossom end. If it gives slightly, it should be ripe. Also, the fruit should provide a sweet melon fragrance.

- Monsoon season brings intense storms with strong, damaging winds. Trees with very heavy leaf canopies are more likely to be injured by strong winds. They act like sails catching the wind. Some thinning of internal branches may be necessary to lighten the canopy and prevent storm injury. If it occurs, remove storm-damaged limbs by pruning back to a side branch or the main trunk. (Refer to *Pruning Deciduous Shade Trees* [AZ 1139](#))
- Check your tomato plants for hornworms. Remove them by hand.
- If you haven't yet, spread 3 inches of mulch under plants; keep the mulch a few inches from the main stem or trunk.
- Continue using 30%-40% shade cloth to protect vulnerable plants during extreme heat. Clip cloth to poles in order to hold it a few feet above plants.

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