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Desert Garden Calendar Monthly **DO** List

JUNE

Grass

Plant your Bermuda lawns if you haven't already. Fertilize every 4-6 weeks.

Trees/Shrubs

Pick early maturing deciduous fruit to prevent bird damage and ripen fruit at room temperature. June is the driest month, so plants may need more water. Apply mulch to the ground around heat sensitive plants to keep the roots cooler and prevent evaporation. Apply chelated iron to plants with iron deficiency symptoms. Heat tolerant plants can be planted right through the summer months. They will need to be watered on a regular basis until fall. Transplant palms, mesquites, palo verdes, and other arid shrubs and trees in the heat of the summer for best results.

Prune bougainvillea and lantana to stimulate growth and blooms.

Flowers

Cut back on fertilizing established roses to encourage plants to slow down for the hot summer. Water roses deeply as temperatures rise. Hose off roses in the early morning to increase humidity and control spider mites. Flowers for summer color include: celosia, gazanias, portulaca, vinca (periwinkle), gomphorena. Flower beds will need irrigation every other day through the summer. Fertilize flower beds to increase and keep flowers blooming. Stake taller flowers to prevent damage from summer winds.

Vegetables

Plant seeds for cucumbers, squash, cantaloupe, and muskmelon. Keep plants moist. Wilted leaves in the morning are a sign of moisture stress. Late afternoon wilting may be heat stress.

Use sunscreens that offer no more than 50% sun reduction. As your melons come in, place a board beneath them. This will keep them off the moist soil and prevent insects from attacking them. Begin harvesting onions and garlic.

Monthly **DON'T** list for June

1. Don't over water. Yes, it is very hot in the desert in June, so it might seem like watering more is the answer. Not necessarily true. Water slowly (prevents run off), deeply (use a soil probe or a long handled screwdriver to check that the water is penetrating 2-3 ft. deep for trees and shrubs, and 1-1 1/2 ft. deep for turf & flowers), and infrequently (let the soil dry between watering).
2. Do not prune citrus during the summer.
3. Don't shade corn, squash, melons, black-eyed peas, okra & grapes.
4. Don't add fertilizer to dry soil. If you apply fertilizer to dry soil and water it in, the fertilizer is carried toward the roots as a concentrated solution and will burn them. Always water first, then apply fertilizers to moist soils, and then continue with the rest of the water.