



# ELGIN NURSERY

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## Desert Garden Calendar Monthly **DO** List

### JULY

#### Grass

Plant your Bermuda lawns if you haven't already. Fertilize Bermuda grass lawns every 4-6 weeks with a 21-7-14 fertilizer.

#### Trees/Shrubs

Pick early maturing deciduous fruit which are particularly prone to bird damage. Pick before full maturity. Ripen the fruit at room temperature. Prune palms when flower spathes show or delay pruning until after the palm has finished flowering. Cut off dead blooms to stimulate rebloom. July is a good time to plant desert shrubs and trees such as red bird of paradise, fairy duster, and Texas ranger. Shrubs and vines such as bougainvillea also may be planted, and these do well in the sun and heat. Be sure to water all new plantings for at least two weeks before you cut back. Bougainvillea will produce more blooms if you reduce the water. They are drought tolerant. Less water, more blooms. 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 (yellow leaves, green veins). 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 in the heat of the summer for best results. Protect newly transplanted trees from heavy winds and dust storms by staking. Water mature trees deeply about every two weeks, every week for younger trees.

#### Flowers

Cut back on fertilizing established roses to encourage plants to slow down for the hot summer. Water roses deeply as temperatures rise. Water deeply both before and after fertilizing to prevent fertilizer burn damage. Hose off roses in the early morning to increase humidity and control spider mites. Flowers for summer color include: celosia, gazanias, portulaca, and vinca. Flowerbeds will need irrigation every other day through the summer. Stake taller flowers to prevent damage from summer winds. Nurseries still have summer flowers, but you will have to water them every morning for about two weeks before you can reduce watering to every other day.

#### Vegetables

Tomatoes don't do well when it's over 100°. Nurse the plants through the summer while providing shade and they will begin producing again in the fall. Alternatively pull them out and plant new ones in the late summer for fall production. Plant seeds for beans (pinto and snap), corn, Armenian cucumbers, melons, pumpkins, winter squash, and sunflowers. Keep plants moist. Wilted leaves in the morning are a sign of moisture stress. Late afternoon wilting may be heat stress. Shade tomatoes, squash, peppers and cucumbers to reduce the heat and help them survive a little longer. Mulch on top of the soil also cools it and helps retain moisture. 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. Solarize vegetable plots. Water the area to be solarized deeply and slowly, then cover with clear plastic, anchoring the edges to contain the moisture.

Don't use black plastic. Leave for four weeks. The heat beneath the plastic will be intense upward 140-150 degrees, cooking many of our gardening problems and weed seeds.

### Monthly **DON'T** list for July

1. Don't prune citrus or other sun sensitive plants during the summer.
2. Don't over water. Water slowly, deeply, and infrequently. Let the soil dry between watering.
3. Don't shade corn, squash, or melons.
4. Don't add fertilizer to dry soil. Always water first, then apply fertilizers to moist soils and then continue with the rest of the water.