

# Gardening chores can fill May days

Those May flowers which April promised us are blooming, but don't get complacent. There's still plenty to do to get your lawn and garden established. Extension specialists at Michigan State University suggest the following tasks are timely this month:

- Remove all nonbiodegradable materials such as plastic cord, wire and plastic burlap from root balls, trunks and stems of trees and shrubs before you plant them. If left on a plant, they will eventually girdle and kill it. Water thoroughly after planting and every week to 10 days during dry weather.

- Control tent caterpillars in fruit and ornamental trees by removing the caterpillars and their tents by hand or spraying the foliage of infested trees with *Bacillus thuringiensis*, a bacterial disease of caterpillars sold under several trade names.

- Check pine trees and other ornamentals for sawfly larvae. These caterpillar look-alikes are the immature stage of members of a nonstinging wasp family. Sawfly larvae often feed in large numbers, and they raise their heads when disturbed. Control them with Sevin or malathion.

- Look for cankerworms feeding in shade and ornamental trees. They are thin, green or brown caterpillars that move with a distinct inchworm motion as they feed on tree leaves. They can be serious defoliators. When infestations are severe, the caterpillars drip down

from the tree, suspended on fine silk threads. The recommended control is *Bacillus thuringiensis*.

- Prune spring-flowering shrubs and trees after they've finished blooming. Remove old, damaged, dead, weak or poorly placed branches and retain the young, vigorous growth to bear next year's flowers.

- Remove the blossoms from all strawberry plants planted this spring. If you allow them to bear fruit this year, it will drastically reduce the yields in future years.

- Thin apples and peaches about three weeks after flower petals fall, spacing fruits about eight inches apart. This will give you larger, better quality fruits.

- Remove unwanted sucker growth around raspberries when new shoots are about a foot tall.

- Continue a regular disease and insect control program in fruit trees.

- Plant seeds of cool-weather crops — onions, beets, lettuce, spinach, carrots and radishes — for the second and third times, and thin earlier plantings. Protect root vegetables against maggots by sprinkling diazinon on the planting furrow according to label directions.

- Seven to 10 days before the average date of the last frost, plant snap beans and sweet corn. These crops are susceptible to frost damage, but they usually take at least a week to germinate and emerge from the soil.

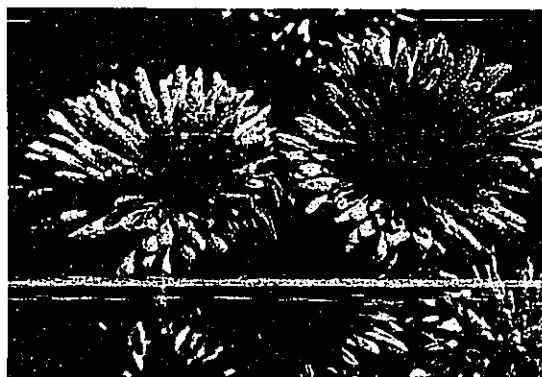
- Set vegetable transplants outdoors during the day for 10 to 14 days before you intend to plant them. This will give them a chance to get used to outdoor growing conditions.

- After the soil has warmed up and the danger of frost is past, plant seeds of cucumbers, squash, pumpkins and melons, and set out plants of peppers,

tomatoes and eggplant.

- Transplant vegetables and flowers on a cloudy day or in the evening so they have a chance to get over the shock of being transplanted before they have to cope with direct sunlight. Plants may need to be shaded and protected

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Now's the time to divide old mums and plant new ones so you'll have gorgeous blooms like these. Pinch about one-half inch from each growing tip to encourage plants to send out side shoots.

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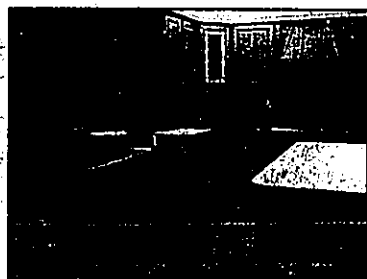
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