Suburban Gardener

Garden Chores Listed For Fall Wrap Up

By BETTY FRANKEL
Special Writer

The gardening season is just about over for this year. Even avid gardeners have to admit this as they look at bare tree branches and withered stalks in the flower beds.

It is time now to finish up any planting that is still on the schedule. Get the last of those tulip bulbs tucked into the ground and if you still have some of the smaller bulbs that have not yet been planted, tuck them in also.

Now is the time to plant leaf-losing trees and shrubs. This can be done until late in fall as long as the ground can be worked. Or, if you have a really large tree that you want to transplant, prepare the hole now. The tree can be delivered to the planting site after the ground has frozen when a heavy truck driving on the lawn will not damage it.

ALTHOUGH some people plant roses in fall, most experts feel that this planting job is best done in the spring.

If you want to give your treees and shrubs a boost, you can give them a feeding now. However, only feed established trees and shrubs. Do not feed newly planted trees and shrubs. A light feeding in fall will get your lawn greened up early next spring.

Watering is a chore we do not often think about in fall. Before you put that hose away give all newly planted trees and shrubs a thorough soaking. Also, if you give all of your evergreens a thorough watering now they will come through the winter with less damage from drying winds and will look much greener next spring.

When these watering jobs are done drain the hose, coil it loosely, and hang it up in the garage or basement.

KEEP THE LAWN raked. Do not let leaves remain on the lawn all winter. They are apt to kill the grass underneath them as they mat down and cut off air circulation. Don't forget that those leaves are worth their weight in gold as compost. Put them on the compost pile and they will turn into rich humus that can be used to enrich the flower beds.

Mulching is done in winter for an entirely different purpose than summer mulching. The summer mulch is put on to keep moisture in the soil. A winter mulch is put on to keep the ground frozen. Use straw, hay, leaves or evergreen branches and do not put them on until after the ground is frozen. This blanket prevents alternate freezing and thawing which damages plant roots.

Plan to put a winter mulch on tender perennials, all newly planted perennials and newly planted shrubs. Don't forget that if you put the mulch on before the ground freezes you are inviting the mice to move in. They are then apt to chew up the very plants you are trying to protect.

Tidy up the shrub beds and the flower beds. Pull up all the weeds that have sprouted up. Cut back the stalks of withered perennials and pull up the old annuals. It is better to dispose of these rather than putting them on the compost pile because they might be harboring insects or diseases.

If there are some bulbs in the garden that you have not dug up yet, such as dahlias, glads, or canna. Be sure to do this rght away. Clean these bulbs, label them, and store them in a cool, frost-free place for the winter.

ROSES NEED a little special care. It is a good idea to cut back the stems to about 18 inches this fall and prune them shorter when spring comes. Work a little bone meal, about a cupful per plant, into the soil around the roots. Then bring in soil from another part of the garden and mound it up around each plant in a cone about a foot high. This will actually keep the soil around the roots warmer and prevent winter damage to the lower part of the cane.

Climbing roses and rambler roses should be checked and any long canes that might be whipped around by winter winds should be cut back. Also, make sure that all of the canes are securely tied so that they will not be blown around.

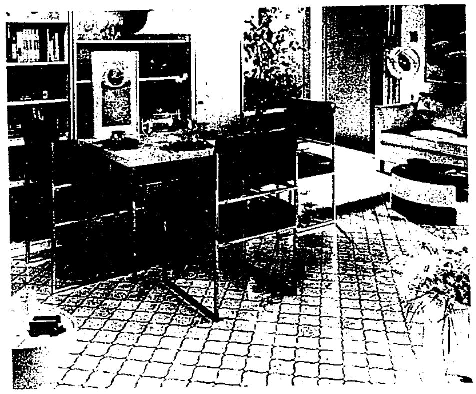
If you want to increase your supply of shrubs this is a good time to try making hardwood cuttings. Cut stems from forsythia and other shrubs six to eight inches long with four nodes on each stem. Tie these in a bundle and insert the bundle at a slant in a box of damp soil or peat moss and put in a cool cellar.

By spring many of these cuttings will have developed roots and can be planted in the garden.

Finally, when all the outdoor jobs are done, clean the tools, rub them with an oily rag, and store tham for the winter. Clean the lawn mower, drain the tank, and cover it with a sheet of plastic so that it will be ready to go next spring.

Store sprays and dusts in a dry place. Dispose of any with labels that you can't read.

Finally, turn your attention to indoor gardening.



OLD WORLD LOOK -- Vinyl tile floor also goes well with the solid, heavy, dark woods usually associated with Mediterranean decor. The pattern, named Portofino, has built-in cushioning and comes in a choice of five colors. It is one of the Castilian group by Armstrong.

New Cauliflower Released By MSU

A new cauliflower variety that protects itself from the sun has been released by Michigan State University's agricultural experiment station.

The new variety produces "wrapper leaves" that curl over the head resulting in the blanched, white tint most desirable in cauliflower. It gets its name–Self-Blanche–from this characteristic.

According to Dr. S. Honma, MSU horticulturist who developed the variety, Self-Blanche can be used for both fresh market and processing purposes. The variety matures in mid-season and a crop can be harvested over a relatively short period of time.

Self-Blanche heads are smooth, deep, solid, pure white and finely textured. They freeze well and have a superior flavor either cooked or raw.

The wrapper leaves give adequate protection to heads seven to nine inches in diameter. If larger heads are desired the leaves will require tying to get proper blanching. Also, the degree of self-wrapping is best if the variety matures during cool weather.

Self-Blanche could reduce costs for growers, processors and consumers, because the hand typing needed to blanch other commercial varieties is a major part of cauliflower production cost.

Self-Blanche has been commercially tested for three years in Michigan, Indiana, Oregon and Florida.

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