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## SPRING GARDENING



It's spring...kind of. Days are lengthening and temperatures are rising which means we want to get outside and plant. But then we get another cold spell. Then we hear it might frost at night. Then it warms up again. Ah...spring in Prescott.

The last possible killing frost date for our area is mid-May. Yes, mid-May. Here are tips on what you can do while waiting for that final frost!

Cool season annuals such as pansies, violas and snapdragons will jump-start your containers. These tough but colorful annuals can tolerate light frost and cooler night time temperatures. Let these little beauties brighten your containers until mid – late May when they'll need replaced with warm season annuals that can tolerate our summer heat.



It may be too early for tomatoes but get a start on your vegetable garden with cool season vegetables that can withstand light to moderate frosts. Root crops include beets, carrots, turnips, rutabagas, and radishes. Leafy crops include broccoli, collards, cauliflower, cabbage, spinach, Swiss chard, mustard greens, and lettuce. Onions and potatoes are also a good choice for spring vegetable planting. If you start these vegetables now be prepared with a frost cloth if a heavy frost is predicted – or wait until 2 – 4 weeks before our last frost date to plant.



This is an excellent time to put in trees and shrubs. Many are still dormant or are just breaking dormancy. Planting now will allow them several weeks to recuperate from transplanting before the hot weather begins. It's also an ideal time to take a close look at your shrubs and trees

before they leaf out and remove dead and damaged branches.

If you didn't cut back perennials and grasses in the fall then you can do that now. Remove last season's top-growth from perennials so the new growth can emerge and grow unencumbered. Cool season grasses, such as 'Karl Foerester', Blue Lyme Grass, Blue Fescue, and Blue Oat Grass should be cut back very early – so if you haven't done this yet, now's the time! You can also plant summer blooming bulbs such as Dahlias, Cannas and Gladiolus.

There's plenty to do to keep you busy in your garden from now until mid-May. So get outside and enjoy!