

# The Garden Corner

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Master Gardeners of Johnson County Missouri

As I'm writing this, it is 91 degrees with humidity at 78 percent. Ugh! The hot days of a Missouri August have arrived. If you are like me, you do your gardening chores early in the morning and save the hottest part of the day for things like reading your favorite book or writing articles for the Daily Star Journal. But what about the garden? What are some chores that we need to be concentrating upon? Deadheading of course – most of your summer bloomers will continue to flower for another couple of months. If we don't get at least one inch of rain during the week, we've got to drag out the water hoses and continue to wet down both our flower and vegetable beds. This is a great time of year to split some of our overgrown perennials like daylilies, or coneflowers, or Rudbeckia (black-eyed Susan). You can split and replant in another bed or pot the plants and bank them in for the winter where you will have them in the spring for that new bed you've been planning to create.

What about a fall vegetable crop? Radish, kale, lettuce, spinach; just to mention a few can be planted now and will make a delightful addition to fall salads. A friendly reminder: When you get your seed packet and discover how many days to harvest, count backwards from October 15<sup>th</sup> (our average first frost date) to determine when to get the seeds into the ground. I would recommend not pushing the planting envelop too much because that is the "average" first date. A few years ago we got our first measurable snow on October 13<sup>th</sup>! I don't care how great a gardener you are, snow you have to shovel will end the growing season.

While we're out tending to our crops, don't forget to replenish the hummingbird feeders. Those little fancy flyers will

be stocking up on energy to make their southern migration journey in the not too distant future. And, paying attention to the birdbaths will reward you with frequent visitors to get a drink or to take a soothing plunge to beat the heat.

Any August gardening list must include some amenities for the human critters wandering around looking for things to do: plenty of water – you need more than an inch a week, sun screen – no a shade cloth isn't the same, and take breaks – often. Thanksgiving and Christmas are coming up and we'd all love it if you were here to enjoy them with us!

For your questions/comments/suggestions you can write to: 370 NW 121 Rd., Warrensburg, MO 64093 or email to:

[maandpak@embarqmail.com](mailto:maandpak@embarqmail.com) and I'll get right back with you. If the vegetables mentioned above are not some of your favorites, give me a holler and I'll send you a complete list. Stay cool! See you next month.