

Ask The Plant Groom(tm) by Dale Groom, The Plant Groom(tm)

QA1085

Some of my trees have brown leaves. Is this due to the weather or do I have a disease problem? - G. D.

Trees throughout Texas are suffering from our prolonged drought of 2006. Impact is seen in evergreen as well as deciduous trees.

In the urban landscape leaf browning and/or drop could be aided or stopped entirely by irrigating in the drip line of trees. The drip line is located at each tree's limb spread. For example, an oak with a 40' wide spread should be watered approximately 20' from the trunk.

We want to do some landscaping at our home and were told the fall is a good time to do this. Is this council correct? We have always been acustom to planting in the spring. Please advise. - T. K.

"Fall Is For Planting" and it's the very best time of the year to install winter hardy landscape plants in Texas. Trees, shrubs and vines all may be planted during the fall.

October and November are two ideal months to install landscapes. The soil is usually warm and contains a good quantity of natural soil moisture plus air temperatures are mild and plants are often ... on sale. These all combine to create a favorable time slot for installing landscape plantings.

Fall plantings usually begin establishing their root systems shortly after installation is completed and have 8 -9 months of growth and establishment time before our typical blast furnace heat of the following July and August hits.

The information you received is correct. If plans are being formulated to install new plantings next spring let me strongly council you to install them this fall.

One last word please. It is advisable, wise and prudent to install plantings that are well adapted and Water Wise in new landscapes. This combination will reduce the consumption of potable water and input. A rose, perennial, cut flower or other specialty garden as well as the entire landscape can be Earth Kind(tm) and Water Wise.

The combination of creating Water Wise and Earth Kind(tm) landscapes or gardens may save as much as 60% on potable water usage and virtually eliminate the need for additional fertilizers of any kind or other aids of any type.

When looking for low to almost no maintenance roses be sure to ask for Earth Kind(tm) Roses. There are currently thirteen varieties on the market to select from. Texas Cooperative Extension, Texas A & M University System, and collaborative partners state wide has tested Earth Kind(tm) Roses in real world

plantings. Once established these beauties are not sprayed with anything, no fertilizer of any type is needed and no pruning or deadheading is necessary. Give them a try because you will love them.

Last year we had weeds all over our lawn in the spring. How do I keep from having this problem in the future? - E. L.

Weed seeds are prevented from germinating by the utilizations of weed preventers. The two basic weed types are grassy and broadleaf. When securing weed-preventing aids be sure you understand what type or types of weeds you wish to control and which products target these specific plants.

Timing is important to achieve the best control with your selected product or products. September is the ideal month to apply weed preventers for winter/cool season weeds. Remember, always read and follow label directions when applying weed preventers or any gardening aids.

We love pansies and want to plant this fall as soon as possible. What's the earliest you recommend planting them? - D. A.

I'm with you!!! Call me a pansy. These babies are the most winter hardy annuals color available and October is usually a good month. November is also good.

Dale Groom, CEA-Horticulture, Native Texan, Columnist, Author, Radio/TV Host is also known state wide as The Plant Groom(tm). You may send horticulture related questions to Dale at dalegroom@mycvc.net. To speak to a Master Gardener M - F, 8:30 am - 4 pm for Free horticulture help dial 214-904-3053.

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