

Ask The Plant Groom™ by Dale Groom, The Plant Groom™

QA1086

Is it OK to repot houseplants now or should we wait until next spring? -T. B.

If you need to repot houseplants now is an acceptable time to conduct the activity. I recommend it be done by the end of October.

When repotting move plants up to the next size larger and utilized lightweight potting soil. Plants in 8” containers should be moved to 10”, 12” to 14” and so on. Do make sure all containers have drain holes. Plastic, ceramic, terracotta, wood and other materials are all acceptable as container materials.

When should we cutback our crape myrtles? – G. K.

Never.

This fall I want to work up a bed for spring vegetables and would like to know what you recommend. – F. K.

Good idea. Take your time and you will be ready to rock ‘n roll wit your first planting in Jan.

- Make sure the area is free of perennial weeds, especially Bermudagrass and similar plants.
- Contact your local County Agents’ office of Texas Cooperative Extension, Texas A & M University System for soil test containers and instruction sheets. Take the samples as per instructions on the sheet and send it or them in for analysis this fall.
- After weeds are eliminated blend in 6” or more of organic matter with your soil. The utilization is usually the best tool for this activity.

- If you know the crop(s) you wish to plant starting in Jan. Beds may be constructed for them.
- The most efficient method of watering vegetable or any other garden is drip irrigation. Become familiar with the possibilities and if you decide to use one secure the components for installation.
- If you are not sure of the recommended varieties for Texas vegetable gardens be sure to visit <http://aggie-horticulture@tamu.edu> and secure a list

To secure a free soil test kit by mail send your request to me and include a long stamped self addressed envelope with two 1st class stamps on it to Dale Groom, Soil Text Kit, 10056 Marsh Lane, Dallas, TX 75229.

We have an area we'd like to screen with a hedgerow. What plants do you recommend?

The best family for most applications is holly. If you want a 12-15' tall by 10-12' wide row of super duper evergreen plants I highly recommend Nellie R. Stevens holly. Buford is almost as tall and wide. Dwarf Buford is 8-10' tall by 8' wide.

A 10' by 10' with blooms throughout the summer in sunny locations is *Abelia grandiflora*.

Fall is THE time to plant these suggestions as well as any other winter hardy landscape plants.

Whatever you decide to plant do not install *Photinia frazeri* or Red Tip *Photinia*.

Dale's Notes:

- Now is an excellent time to review plants in your landscape as well as throughout your neighborhood and city to become familiar with the types and varieties that made it through the summer and are rewarding us with bloom now.
- If all your landscape plantings are not mulched 3 – 4" deep in an organic mulch now is the time to proceed with this activity.
- Irrigate in the early morning as needed to maintain required moisture for bloom and growth.

Dale Groom, CEA -Horticulture, Native Texan, Columnist, Author, Radio/TV Host is also known as The Plant Groom™. You may send your lawn, garden, landscape and other horticultural related questions to Dale at dalegroom@mycvc.net. To receive Free horticultural help from the Master Gardeners M – F, 8:30am – 4 pm dial 214-904-3053.

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