



LET FALL GARDENING BEGIN!

Gardening offers many benefits, including moderate exercise, added vitamin D exposure and overall greater mental and physical health. Not only is it fun to eat the fruits and vegetables from your own garden plot, it's also environmentally sustainable and helps contribute to the local food ecosystem.

To improve your garden, learn the ins and outs about growing different fruits and vegetables, as well as California native plants. From beginner to pro, sound gardening tips can help ensure a bountiful 2020 fall planting season. Remember to be safe—wear a mask at all times on Garden Center grounds!

MAXIMIZE YOUR PLOT IN 7 STEPS

1 Get organized. Start by cleaning and organizing your gardening space. Clear summer weeds, rake dead leaves and remove dead plants to freshen your garden space and prepare it to grow new life.

by composting plant debris, dried leaves, grass clippings and vegetarian kitchen scraps. Healthy, moist and enriched soil is the cornerstone of a thriving garden.

2 Make a plan. Plan your space. It can be helpful to physically draw out a garden plan to that outlines out what you want to plant where.

3 Find your tools. Take stock of your current tools and identify new tools you will need. Clean and sharpen your cutting shears, gather your shovels and dust off your gloves.

4 Compost your (organic) waste to create the best environment for plantings. Divert your waste from a landfill, replenish soil nutrients, retain moisture, prevent weed growth and fertilize soil



5 Be water wise. Shrink your water footprint. Local food uses the least water, and what's more local than your own plot? To take water conservation to the next level, choose native plants that require less water.

6 Start seedlings. Get ahead of the growing season by starting your seedlings indoors about six weeks before planting them in your plot.

7 Deal with pests. Avoid overgrown vines and vegetables—any place rodents might nest. Do not use poison to detour any pests—the best remedy is a clean and tidy garden plot.

ISSUES & UPDATES

Wheelbarrows & Missing Tools

Our wheelbarrow fleet is showing signs of age and wear. Do not overfill, add too much weight or use over a bumpy or muddy surface. Please exercise caution when using any wheelbarrow—new or old. Also, many of our primary tools are missing or have not been returned to the appropriate storage facilities. Some are damaged, as well. Please treat



all borrowed tools with care and consideration, and always return them to the appropriate storage area so that fellow gardeners also have tools to use.

Reminders

The updated operating rules are posted on the website. [View them here.](#)

The main water valve at Garden Center 1 will be shut off daily from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. for water conservation

Help Protect Fruit, Tools

Taking items from another's garden or taking Garden Center tools is prohibited. If you see someone who seems "out of place" picking fruit, you may ask them if they are the plot holder or if they have permission to harvest the tree. However, never place yourself in danger, and do not actively confront anyone. Contact Security at [949-580-1400](tel:949-580-1400) (24 hours/day) if you think the situation warrants.

If you have questions about these or other issues and updates, contact staff member Mark Costello at mark.costello@vmsinc.org or [949-268-2387](tel:949-268-2387), or stop by the Garden Center 2 office Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to noon.

A MESSAGE FROM STAFF

The Garden Centers have never looked better—garden and tree plots look healthy, and the grounds are lush and beautiful. We need your ongoing help to maintain the grounds and keep the facilities looking like a showplace—cleaning and organizing storage barns, removing litter, occasional weeding in common areas and clearing unnecessary debris from pathways and common areas. We all have a vested interest in the Garden Centers, and your help is appreciated!

Don't Forget ...

- **Keep** pathways, common areas and plots weed free
- **Harvest** all produce; leave nothing on the vine
- **Remove** trees or dead plants from plots
- **Be** courteous and respectful to other plot holders
- **Share** water with your neighbors if necessary
- **Report** issues to staff
- **Keep** your plot tidy; eliminate debris and clutter
- **Return** tools to storage after use
- **Maintain** plot fences and gates
- **No** large gatherings of more than 15 people are permitted.
- **Reduce** the size of green waste items to ensure others can place green waste in the receptacle.