

## OCTOBER

### MAINTENANCE

- ⊙ Pull up spent plants from your summer kitchen garden and clean up.
- ⊙ Compost only pest-free plant debris.
- ⊙ If you didn't prune your apricots in September, wait until January or February. Apricots are susceptible to *Eutypa*, a disease whose spores are most infective after the first rains. Pruning in August or early September allows pruning wounds to callous before the rains start.
- ⊙ Lift tender and half-hardy pond plants, trim off any dead leaves, and store the plants in containers of damp sand in a frost-free place. Keep covered with a perforated plastic sheet so that air can enter and plants do not dry out.
- ⊙ Garden tools will function better and last longer if regularly cleaned and oiled. Clean small tools by rubbing them with an oily cloth or with a handful of oily sand. Larger tools can be cleaned by plunging them into a bucket of oily sand.
- ⊙ To sharpen pruning tools, remove any blades that are badly blunted or damaged and either regrind or replace them.

### FERTILIZING

- ⊙ Feed overwintering plants with low-nitrogen fertilizer to help them become cold-hardy.
- ⊙ Spread compost or composted manure over all planted areas.
- ⊙ Do not fertilize or water deciduous fruit trees after the end of October.
- ⊙ Fertilize fescue lawns.

### PEST/ WEED CONTROL

- ⊙ Do your winter weed control on fescue grass.
- ⊙ Mildew is common at this time of year, especially on dahlias, zinnias, cosmos, lilacs, roses, and even apples. These plants will soon lose their leaves which should be collected and disposed of. Do not compost, and don't bother spraying at this late date.

## **PLANTING**

- ⊙ Cool-season annuals do great. Try coneflowers, pansies, primroses and Iceland poppies.
- ⊙ Scatter wildflower seeds.
- ⊙ Add some drought tolerant California natives.
- ⊙ Plant spring-blooming bulbs in containers.
- ⊙ Sow or transplant cool-season crops, along with artichokes, established herbs, garlic, parsley, spinach and onions.
- ⊙ Plant lawns from seed or sod by midmonth.
- ⊙ Plant shrubs, trees and ground covers.