



## What to Do in The Garden in September

A chill comes around the corner. A little frost hovers at sunrise. The garden may be waning, but there's a lot more to enjoy than you think. Besides cleaning the never-ending fall of leaves and debris, we now appreciate that it's ok to sit back and relax and let the garden do as it pleases.

Birds and critters are pecking through the fallen seed of fennel, tomatoes, peppers and squash; there's a hiss in the air from wind-blown ornamental grass, and the last rose is rejoicing in the cool weather. The cool, crisp nights, and the warm, Indian Summer days are planting conditions for many plants.

Let the garden sit for a while. Take the great symphony of the dead and the dying in; there's more to the wilting flora and fauna than meets the eye. There's peace in waiting for the next season and knowing what's hidden beneath this summer's fallen leaves.

Here are a few things to do in the garden. Don't rush. Relax. Let the crispy foliage surround you for a while before getting the urge to clean it all up again!



- Leaves fall for a reason. Instead of rushing to rake them up and dispose of them like garbage, use them in the garden and landscape. Run them over a couple of times with a lawn mower; rake the leaf mulch on top of your vegetable and perennial

garden for good, healthy winter mulch.

- Here are some top Fall- Flowering Perennials that can be planted now and are available at Sickles Market:

**Aster (Novi Belgii, ‘Michaelmas Daisy’)**

**Joe Pye Weed**

**“No Sneeze” Goldenrod Solidago,**

**“Autumn Joy” Sedum,**

**Heliopsis (False Sunflower)**

**Helenium (Sneezeweed)**

**Chelone (Turtlehead)**

**Caryopteris (Blue Mist Shrub)**

**Chrysanthemum**

**Anemone (Grecian Windflower)**

All of these will bloom until frost and attract an enormous variety of butterflies as they hatch, feed, and go on their life’s journey.

- Restart the Vegetable Garden! September brings cool nights and ideal conditions for cool-weather vegetables to grow like Arugula, **Romaine, Red Lettuce, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Radicchio, and Brussels sprouts**. By the time we get an inkling of a frost, you’ll have crisp veggies one last time! In fact, **Brussels sprouts** should be harvested *after* a hard freeze.
- Stop fertilizing and let things die back naturally. Pruning should be almost done by now and stopped. This protects new growth from winter die-off. Pruning can be picked up again in the spring.
- Start bringing in the potted houseplants that have spent the summer outside. Watch out for traveling pests. A good treatment of *Bonide Granular Insecticide* 2 weeks before bringing the plant indoors will stop the little buggers in their tracks.
- Cover tender shrubs and vines with burlap. Young **Fig** plants benefit from wind and freeze protection over the winter, as do vines such as **Jasmine, Kiwi, and Dutchman’s pipe**.

- September has the perfect conditions for planting, moving and dividing plants. Shrubs and trees settle in better in the fall months. The cooler weather means less stress for plants while establishing themselves.
- Now is the time to pick your growing herbs for storing, drying and freezing. Freezing herbs in butter inside ice cube trays preserves color and flavor for those times that you need to plop herbs in your cooking creations.
- Get the bulbs planted! Bulbs such as Daffodil, Tulip, Hyacinth, Crocus, Lily, and Anemone can go into the ground for spring blooming. Plant a few extra in pots, freeze outside for a couple of months, and then bring indoors for a pre-spring force bloom.
- Collect gourds and pumpkins from their garden hiding places and place where they can dry. When their stems are dry and twisty, it's time to pick.
- Clean the garden of moldy debris and diseased branches. Cut Phlox, Hardy Hibiscus, Daisies, and other deciduous perennials down to the ground. Save the Butterfly Bush pruning for the early spring. Collect broken branches, sticks and pinecones for use as fire starters in the Chiminea or fireplace.
- Collect seeds from your flowers for use in next years' garden. Marigolds, Zinnia, Cosmos, Morning Glory and Hollyhock produce lots of seed for storing. Store your seeds in a cold basement or garage for the best spring germinating.
- Bring out the Bird Seed and Suet! . Fall is the time to start attracting our feathered friends. They've helped us all summer long by catching insects; now, it's time to help them. **Coles Seed** has a great variety of seeds and blends for attracting specific birds to your backyard. It even has a HOT blend for discouraging Squirrels from raiding the feeders.
- Above all. Relax. Enjoy the fruits of your summer labor. Have a cup of warm soup from our Deli, kick back, and congratulate yourself on a job well done.