

## Plant lovers' corner

### PLANT ANNUALS IN MAY

You can start planting annuals any time now unless you are located in a frost pocket area, then it might be wise to wait another week.

Donald B. Lacey, Extension specialist in home horticulture at Cook College, Rutgers University, says the date he has circled on his calendar to plant annuals in the Rutgers Display Garden in New Brunswick is May 23.

You don't have to wait until planting time to buy the plants you want. If you wait too long the best selections may be gone, so do your shopping now.

Lacey suggests you keep your plants in a protected area at home. If you see you are going to get a frost you can take them inside.

Proper soil preparation is important. Cover the soil surface with about two inches of peat moss. If you haven't added lime within the last two years, add three to four pounds for every 100 square feet.

Apply one to 1½ pounds of 5-10-5 or 5-10-10 fertilizer to every 100 square feet. Using a fertilizer with a higher rate of nitrogen will only encourage leaf growth.

Work the peat moss and lime into the soil by turning it under about the depth of the spade, about six to eight inches, then rake in the fertilizer just before planting.

A thorough soaking of water when you set your plants will get them off to a good start.

### SEVERE WINTER DAMAGES EVERGREENS

Many gardeners are concerned about the damage their evergreens have suffered as a result of the severe winter and are asking how they should be treated, says Donald B. Lacey, Extension specialist in home horticulture at Cook College, Rutgers University.

The combination of wind and bright sun during periods of low temperature has caused considerable browning of foliage and some dieback of twigs, particularly on Japanese holly, azaleas and rhododendrons.

Lacey recommends waiting a few more weeks before doing any drastic pruning. Dormant buds should break open further down the damaged stem. The dead tips can be removed at this time.

### HARD TO GARDEN WITHOUT SPRAYER OR DUSTER

You can't get along without a sprayer or duster in your yard and garden, according to Louis M. Vasvary, Extension entomologist at Cook College, Rutgers University. He reviews the kinds you can get.

The garden hose sprayer connects to a garden hose and uses the household water supply and water pressure to apply pesticides.

Compressed air sprayers, simple in design and operation, are relatively expensive to buy and maintain. For best results, fill the tank to only three-fourth capacity, allowing room at the top for building air pressure.

The plunger type carton is filled with dust and you can

throw it away when it's empty. They come in many sizes and you can use them not only in your flower and vegetable gardens but also to control ants, fleas and other pests in the lawn.

Many garden sprayers and dusters also are used to control household pests, says Vasvary.

### GROUND COVER GOOD SUBSTITUTE FOR GRASS

If you have trouble growing grass under shade trees or if you have a steep terrace or slope that needs the strength of a muscleman to struggle with a lawn mower, then a ground cover is one of the answers to your problem.

Ground covers are low plants that spread quickly and are used where lawn grasses do not grow well or where grass is hard to maintain.

More than 200 plants can be used as ground covers but ivy, pachysandra, and periwinkle (myrtle) are the most popular and known as the "big-three." Now is a good time to buy and plant ground cover.

If you're working under trees where the ground is dry and there are plenty of roots, Donald B. Lacey, Extension specialist in home horticulture at Cook College, Rutgers University, suggests you dig a pocket, fill it with a mixture of good soil and peat moss, and plant the ground cover in clumps or single plants.

Next Spring spread a granular 5-10-10 fertilizer.

On terraces, slopes or banks, mulch the area first with salt hay or straw. To keep the mulch from blowing away, tie it down with string or baling twine in a crisscross pattern and anchor it to pegs, then make your pocket and plant your plants.

If preparing a newly-graded bank, use the same procedure as you do when planting annual flowers.

Spacing of plants depends on their type, and how quickly they will spread. One plant or clump every one to four square feet is a good guide. Closer spacing will cover the area quicker but it will cost more.

### CONTROL CABBAGE MAGGOTS

Cabbage maggots soon will attack cabbage plants and cause them to appear sickly and wilted.

Adult maggots (flies) lay eggs at the same time sour cherry trees are in full bloom.

The flies lay eggs on the stems of cabbage trans-

plants and the tiny maggots cause the roots to become brownish and slimy by their feeding activity. Many times the legless, white maggots can be found feeding in the stems and larger roots of plants.

Cabbage plants can be protected from maggot attack by applying a spray of 20 per cent diazinon (four fluid ounces per 1000 square feet) to the developing plants. The mixture can be applied with a small sprayer or a sprinkler can. Be sure to soak the stems and soil around the stems thoroughly.

### MUST SPRAY APPLE TREES ON TIME TO KILL PESTS

Soon apple insect pests that bore into developing fruits or feed on leaves will be active in this area.

Unfortunately, few homeowners realize the problems associated with apple production and become discouraged when they witness the damage inflicted by insect pests on backyard trees.

Prize-winning fruits can never develop if left to chance alone. They are the result of planned horticultural programs and carefully timed pest control spray schedules.

Successful insect control on apples is based on preventing injury before it starts. Some apple pests are present in the spring and others in the summer so insecticides must be applied according to a prearranged schedule.

Failure to apply one spray can result in wormy fruit since fruit pests are always present and injury to unprotected trees can occur in as short a period as two or three days.

It is time to apply the first insecticide spray when 90 per cent of the blossom petals have fallen from the tree. A spray at that time controls curculio, leaf rollers, and several kinds of leaf feeding caterpillars.

For more information about spraying your apple tree ask your county agricultural agent.

### SEEDLINGS IN BACKYARD GREENHOUSES NEED COVER

Backyard greenhouses are becoming increasingly popular and more home gardeners are growing their own flower and vegetable plants from seed than ever before.

Novice greenhouse owners will find that there's more to starting their own seedlings than just planting seeds in flats or containers and letting the sun penetrate through the glass or plastic to start germination, according to the horticulturists at Cook College, Rutgers University.

Seedlings in greenhouses need to be conditioned. As the temperature gets warmer the plants will get "leggy" or stretch and you'll end up with weak, spindly plants unless the temperature is controlled.

You can reduce the temperature in your greenhouse by ventilation or cover the plants with a lightweight cloth (cheesecloth) or window screening to shade the seedlings. This will help harden them so they'll be ready to set out when weather conditions permit.

If you bought your bedding plants and are holding them until this cold, damp weather breaks, keep a close check to see that they don't dry out.

Plants kept for a long period of time should be watered, fertilized, and protected from the wind.

### CHRYSANTHEMUM WILT INCURABLE

Many home gardeners find each fall that some of their chrysanthemum varieties are stunted and fail to produce many flowers no matter how well fertilized the plants may be.

This indicates that chrysanthemum wilt disease is present, says Spencer H. Davis Jr., Extension specialist in plant pathology at Cook College, Rutgers University.

Dr. Davis explains that the fungus that causes wilt lives in the roots and stems of the plant. Once the 'mum plant is infected, it never gets any better, and the fungus will continue to live in the roots year after year.

Dr. Davis advises that the cure for chrysanthemum wilt is drastic. Just pull out all infected plants and throw

them away. Merely moving the plants to another location will only help to spread the fungus to other parts of the yard.

Many varieties of chrysanthemums are resistant to wilt disease. Your nurseryman may not have the exact color you want, but his wilt-resistant plants will grow. You may get a list of disease resistant varieties from your county agent.



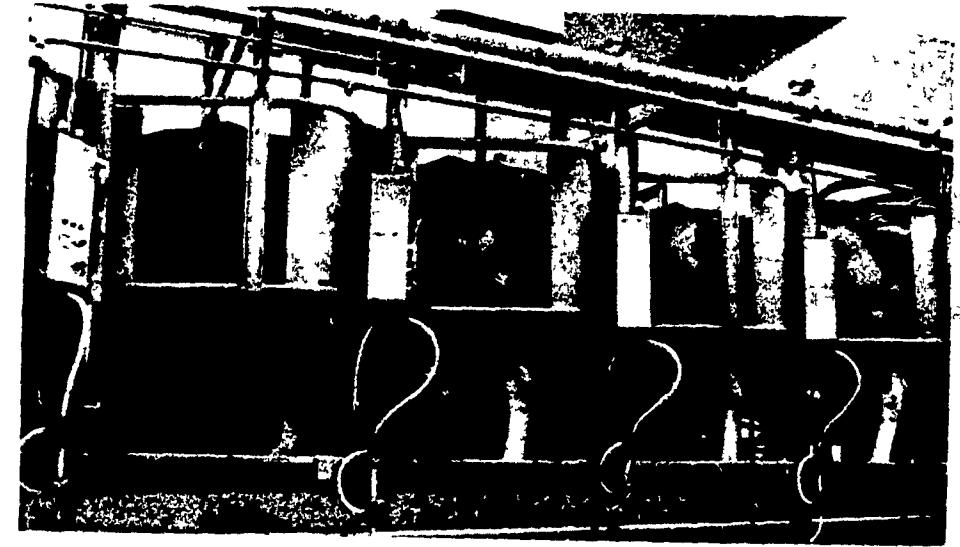
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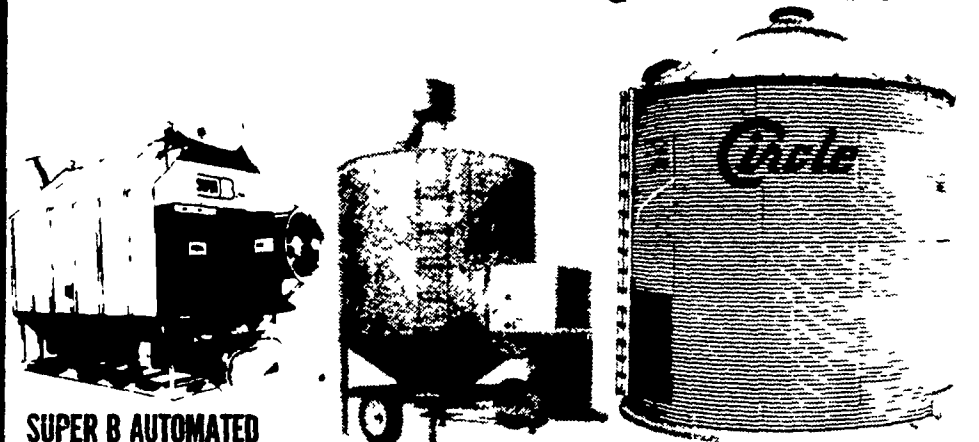
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