

**Too Late to Plant a Garden?**  
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**For week of June 21, 2010**

Vegetable gardening should be well under way by now. However, that is not to say that everyone has their gardens in and growing. As a matter of fact I was asked just the other day if it is too late to plant a garden. My response may surprise you, as I told this fellow “no”. Many crops can be double cropped or planted late. For example, you can harvest your radishes and plant that area with another crop. Beans, peas, beets, radishes, green onions, and leaf lettuce will all work well as a later sown crop.

Choose varieties with shorter maturity dates. Some vegetables like kohlrabi, lettuce, Swiss chard, and turnips can tolerate cool temperatures and even a light frost, so these can be planted for fall harvest. Tomatoes and peppers can still be transplanted as long as the maturity date is not too long. We should not be ready to hang up the garden tools yet. Often we think that horticulture ends by the end of June. I say differently. With that said, let’s discuss what is happening with the rest of the growing season.

July and August are not only for maintenance of the lawn and garden, but a time to make adjustments and add additional plant materials. Evaluate perennial beds to see if more plants should be added or if some plants should be divided or even moved to another location. Make notes on a map of your garden or label your plants so you do not forget what you decide. Replace any perennials that didn’t make it through the winter. Inspect trees and shrubs for insect damage. I have seen scales, cutworms, cankerworms, and aphids so far this year. Keep your garden free of weeds and you will already be ahead of any insect and disease problems before they start.

Your lawn needs some attention in July and August too. If you haven’t fertilized this year, apply one pound of actual nitrogen per 1000 square feet of lawn surface area. You may consider applying herbicide at this time too. When mowing allow the grass to get a little longer as this will stimulate additional root growth. The grass plants will need additional roots when the weather gets a drier. Make sure your turf and trees receive at least an inch of water each week. Deep longer watering is best for root growth and general plant health.

Keep an eye out for disease too; samples have come in of frog eye spot and fireblight on apple, leaf and shoot blight on poplar, and brown root rot on strawberry. Usually when a disease is found the damage is done but keep some notes on what is found. This information can be very useful in later years when deciding whether or not to apply a fungicide. If you have American elms watch for flagging, a symptom of Dutch elm disease. Typically, one or two limbs will be infected and show yellowing and wilting first. If flagging is noticed get professional help to determine if the problem is in fact Dutch elm disease.

More information on horticultural can be found by visiting us online 24 hours a day on the extension website at <http://www.co.pennington.sd.us/extension/extsvc.html>, which is updated often, or by calling me at 605-394-2188 or by e-mail at [ricky.abrahamson@sdstate.edu](mailto:ricky.abrahamson@sdstate.edu). Feel free to send me any feedback about my articles or our web site.