



April Calendar of Gardening Tasks

Ornamental Trees, Shrubs and Hardy Perennials:

Now is the time to fertilize trees, shrubs and hardy perennials (if they are not surrounded by turf). For the most accurate fertilizer recommendations a soil sample should be submitted to Clemson's Agricultural Services Laboratory. You can either take your sample to your county Extension office, bring it by the nursery or mail it directly to the lab. Spring is the busiest time of the year

for the lab so expect delays on getting your results. The best time to submit samples is during fall and early winter months. Specific fertilizer recommendations will be in the results as well as liming recommendations. For more information on taking a soil sample please visit:

<https://hgic.clemson.edu/factsheet/soil-testing/>

If you don't soil test, use a complete fertilizer such as a 16-4-8, 12-6-6 or 12-4-8 formulation. For the sandy soils of the coastal area slow-release fertilizers work best. Clemson recommends that shrubs and trees receive 2 to 4 pounds of actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet of root spread area per year. Split applications work well so apply half of the recommendation now and the rest in early summer. Apply the fertilizer over the whole root spread area underneath the crown of the shrub or tree and out beyond the crown at $\frac{1}{2}$ of the crown radius. For perennials, spread fertilizer away from the base of the plants over the root zone. Be sure to water fertilizer in well and off of any plants. If applying fertilizer over mulch more water may be needed to get the fertilizer into the soil under the mulch.

For formulas to calculate actual needed amounts of fertilizer please visit:

<https://hgic.clemson.edu/factsheet/fertilizing-trees-shrubs/>

Annuals:

Now is the time to decide on and purchase the summer annuals you want to plant in your garden and/or decorative pots. Winter flowering annuals may still look good if you have been keeping them watered, fertilized and dead-headed. By the end of this month though they may be struggling with the warmer temperatures. Replacing these with summer annuals now will give the summer annuals the opportunity to get established before temperatures soar. As always, be sure to try a new plant or new color combination to help jazz up your landscape.

Vegetable Garden:

It should be safe to start planting transplants or direct seed some vegetables. For exact dates for transplanting and seeding consult the planting chart in Table 3 of Clemson's HGIC factsheet, Planning a Garden: <https://hgic.clemson.edu/factsheet/planning-a-garden/>