

August Seasonal Gardening Tips – Subtropical Queensland

August has been cooler for longer this year but it's likely you will notice plants starting to 'wake up' as spring arrives. Look for new growth, flowers like lavender and spring-flowering bulbs, jasmine and mock orange starting to burst into bloom. Flowering perennials will start to bud up and spring-fruiting varieties put on new growth. You'll also notice seeds and seedlings will germinate a little faster as the soil warms up. If you haven't already worked on your soil by adding compost and nutrients and mulched it ready for planting, don't delay!

Check your seed packets and get the last of your short-maturing winter crops in and sow more flowers. Spring is a time when we need a lot of blooms in the garden to help [feed our pollinators](#) and beneficial insects, which in turn provide services for us and feed all those hungry new baby birds.

You've probably enjoyed not having to mow as often, but lawns may be struggling to stay healthy so you'll likely see more weeds emerging. Keep on top of the mowing and whipper snipping to avoid seed heads forming. Top dress with a light layer of compost and rock minerals, watered in with liquid seaweed and diluted Epsom salts. This will encourage strong root development and a thicker thatch to minimise weeds. Leave the catcher off your mower to self-mulch and return nutrients to the soil for a healthier lawn.

If you haven't pruned your dormant citrus and fruit trees to shape for the year ahead while they have been dormant for a brief period, you may have already missed the boat and already be seeing new growth. Get to it if you still need to do this job or wait till next year! If you want to plant more fruit trees, you can still source bare-rooted varieties to save money on your urban orchard and potted cultivars will be ready to plant out.

As plants don't grow as strongly over the cooler months, they don't have the same water requirements. This will change in coming weeks, so adjust your watering to avoid wasting this precious resource but then keep up with new growth as it appears. Keep adding compost and worm castings for [nutrient-rich soil](#) and enriched [potting mix](#) for food crops. Protect crops from wind that can dry them out quickly.

Your [container gardens](#) may need a top-up of fresh potting mix before new plantings. Follow my [potting mix guide](#) to improve bagged potting mix or make your own with easily available ingredients for a long-lasting, moisture and nutrient-holding soil. [Lifeless, dry dead dirt](#) won't grow healthy produce so invest in your health by focusing on your soil first.



What to Plant in August

If you're not sure *when* each of our five seasons starts and ends, or what to plant each month, refer to the perpetual [Subtropical Planting Guide](#). These are a few ideas to get you started! This is prime time for sowing Asian greens, beans, beetroot, carrots, celery, chard, chia, cool-season green manures, eggplant, kale, leek, lettuce, mizuna, mustard, [peas](#), potato, perpetual spinach, radish, [rocket](#), silverbeet, [spring onions](#), tatsoi and cherry tomatoes.

If you are impatient for [peas and beans](#), sow dwarf/bush varieties first, then climbers. The bush peas and beans will produce flowers and pods earlier than climbing varieties because these need to put on more leaf growth before flowering. The dwarfs will give you a quick crop and 3-4 harvests. By then, your climbers will be producing plenty of peas and beans and will last much longer so you can extend the harvest. A simple strategy for enjoying these vegetables for longer. Sow some peas as [microgreens](#) for crunchy pea shoots.

If you want to save money instead of buying seeds or seedlings, [watch this video](#) I created to help you learn how to grow food for free from kitchen 'waste'. The tips are so easy to apply and sustainable.

Fruits

Try planting Avocado, Blueberry, Carambola, Citrus, Coffee, Feijoa, Grape, Guava, Kiwifruit, Mulberry (easy from cuttings taken in the new moon phase), Nectarine, Olive, Papaya, Passionfruit, Peach (try tropical and dwarf varieties), Pomegranate, Tropical Apples and Strawberry runners. Remember to remove any buds from young fruit trees so they can put energy into growing roots, not fruit in their first year.

Feed your 'mother' strawberry plants well with compost and liquid seaweed to boost new root, shoot and flower growth. Time to sow new strawberry plants now too!

Herbs and flowers

Sow American Upland or Land cress, Angelica, Basil, Borage, Calendula, Celosia, Chervil, Chicory, Chives, Coriander (slow bolt), Dill, Herb Robert, Hyssop, Lavender, Lemon balm, Lovage, Marjoram, Mint, [Nasturtium](#), Oregano, Parsley, Perennial 'Sawtooth' or Mexican coriander, Rocket, Rosemary, Sage, Salad Burnett, Sorrel, Thyme, Watercress, and Tarragon. Flowers to sow include Calendula, Cornflower, Dianthus, Marigold, Lobelia, Nemesia, Pansy, Petunia, Sweet Alyssum, Phlox, Snapdragon, Statice, Strawflower, Sweet Pea and Viola.

[Interplant your herbs and flowers between vegetables](#) (particularly brassicas) to attract beneficial predator insects to keep [caterpillars](#) and other [insects](#) in balance.

Issues to watch out for:

- [Fruit fly](#) is a threat we all live with. Unfortunately, mild temperatures mean we could expect them earlier this year, with more generations recurring over coming months. Put your traps in place to minimise damage and control the life cycle. Other strategies that may help are to 1) select early fruiting trees, to miss the fruit fly attack; 2) grow dwarf varieties or keep fruit trees small; 3) cover with suitable exclusion netting.
- Plant a trap crop of Nasturtiums or American Upland Cress to attract the [Cabbage White Butterfly](#) to lay eggs on these plants instead of your brassicas. Sacrificial plants make it easy to squish caterpillars in one spot instead of all over your garden. The cress is toxic to the caterpillars, so this helps break the lifecycle. A sneaky but effective strategy. Decoys, exclusion nets, cloches for young seedlings, interplanting and other [organic controls](#) can help you manage this pest.
- [Aphids](#) will appear on new spring growth, along with scale and mealybugs so have your [strategies](#) ready.

Garden Tasks

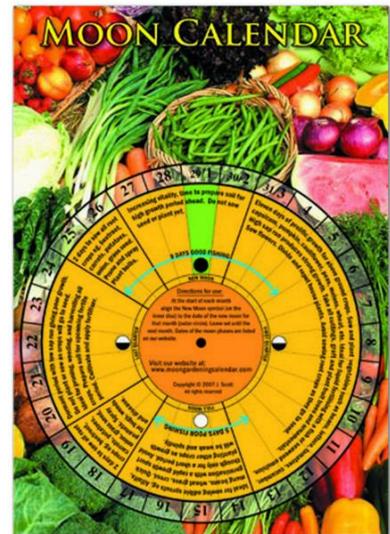
- Prune old asparagus ferns, feed and mulch.
- Divide and transplant arrowroot and garlic chives.

- Prune passionfruit vines to remove dead stems and deciduous fruit trees after frost.
- Feed, weed and mulch around fruit trees if you haven't already done so.
- Maintain your tools, build garden beds while it's cool and vertical structures ready for spring planting.
- Sow microgreens seeds for a continuous supply of nutritious leafy greens.
- pH test your soil and add any amendments. Aim for well-mulched nutrient-rich moisture-holding soil.

Have fun and get planting! Enjoy this time of year and if you need one-on-one help, check out my [onsite garden consultations](#) and [live chat garden coaching](#) services to help fast track you to success.

Helpful Gardening Guides

Refer to my laminated double-sided [Subtropical Planting Guide](#) for what to plant now, more pests to watch out for and other key tasks. The perpetual [Moon Calendar Gardening Guide](#) also provides you with exact dates to fine-tune your planting, fertilising, propagation, grafting and sowing activities for optimum abundance. [Learn more about Moon Gardening](#) and [save money when buying both guides with this Special Offer](#).



I hope you've enjoyed these tips. May the year ahead be filled with an abundance of good health and harvests!

Kind regards,



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