

Gardening Q&A

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Q. Do daylilies need to be thinned out? Where should they be planted? Do any pests bother them?

A. Daylilies should be planted in full sun in a soil that is well drained. A raised bed where the soil is enriched with compost and 10 cups of slow release lawn fertilizer such as 19-5-9 for every 100-sq. ft. of bed works well for daylilies. Control slugs and snails with a bait. Deer love daylilies so plant them in full sun out of their reach. Thin out daylilies every 3 or 4 years by digging up and dividing the bulbs. The bulbs are easy to divide. Replant the pieces of bulb 12-24 inches apart depending on the size of the plant.

Q. We have already used up our first planting of radishes. Can we plant more?

A. Yes, you could plant a row of radishes every 2 weeks through March to keep your pantry well supplied all through the winter.

Q. My son did some work for a friend in the Hill Country. In addition to some pay he received a load of oak firewood. It looks like it was just recently cut. Should we be afraid of oak wilt infection? What should we do to protect our trees?

A. Continue to paint any wounds on your oaks as you discover them. Can you check with the wood supplier to see if the firewood came from an oak wilt killed red oak? If it is not from an oak wilt killed red oak, the firewood is no threat. The conservative option is to wrap the pile in clear plastic to prevent access to sap beetles and to speed up the drying out process. Keeping it sealed in the plastic will protect the trees in your neighborhood from this potential source of oak wilt infection.

Q. We discovered that our broccoli plants were covered with cabbage loopers. We did not have any Bio-Worm Killer so used malathion to kill the loopers. Can we still use the broccoli? Is there a waiting period?

A. Yes, most malathion insecticide products are labeled for cabbage loopers. Refer to the label. It will tell you how long you need to wait between your insecticide application and harvest of the vegetables. It is probably somewhere less than 7 days.

Q. Are there any winter blooming flowers that deer do not eat?

A. Lavender lantana often blooms into the winter. Deer generally do not eat it. They often will also pass on snapdragons; experiment with a few. Salvia greggii blooms into the winter. Paper whites begin blooming in January and daffodils and cemetery iris begin to bloom shortly after them. Deer pass up all 3 plants.