



Betty's Bloomers Nursery

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Merry Christmas!

I hope you are finding time to enjoy this holiday season between all the hustle & bustle of shopping, cooking and decorating. I know there are people out there who have already finished all their shopping and baking and are able to relax and enjoy, but for the rest of us maybe we can help with those hard to buy for gardeners or want-to-be gardeners on your list. Shade trees or fruit trees can make a good gift for someone with a new yard or just trying to improve an old yard. If you don't know what they might like a Betty's Bloomers Gift Certificate is always a good idea.

For that last minute Hostess Gift, we still have a good selection of Poinsettias in several different sizes and varieties.

What's in Season

Fruit trees and berry vines are available now for planting. When choosing a plant, make sure you are buying a variety that grows well here. All fruit trees have different "chilling requirements" for each variety which is a biological clock, or thermostat that measures dormant season exposure to cold. Specifically what the plant is measuring is the number of hours between freezing and 45 degrees. Each variety will have its own minimum number of chilling hours it must receive before

it can break bud and bloom in the Spring. If you plant a variety with a much higher requirement, it may not form good flower buds if it does not receive enough cold weather. As a result you may not get much fruit from your tree.

On the other hand, if you plant a type with a very low chilling requirement, it may have that requirement met by mid-winter. If it is then exposed to a few warm days, it may try to come into bloom prematurely, only to be caught by a late winter freeze. You can usually be safe by choosing trees with a chilling requirement of between 400-600 hours for our area. Check with a reputable nursery for these varieties or see your County Extension Office for a list of varieties for our area.

Camellias and Susanquas are beginning to bloom now, so now is the best time to choose the color and type of bloom you prefer. There are not many shrubs that will give you color in the fall & winter months like these do, so adding them to a partially shady bed will brighten up the winter garden.

To Do List:

With the recent freezes, perennial and deciduous plants are going dormant now. Pruning any dead or damaged foliage will help tidy up flower beds. Adding mulch will help protect the root system from

cold weather or prevent the soil from drying out too much. Fallen leaves can be raked into beds and best of all it is free.

Wood ashes from the fireplace are also free. Sprinkling ashes around shrubs add potash and other nutrients to the soil which improves roots and stems and add vigor to your plants. Azaleas, Camellia and your Vegetable garden especially benefit from a light layer of ashes added around the roots.

Something Extra

This morning was very cold with the temperature dipping well below freezing. It is pretty discouraging to see damage in our garden from the climate change. But, we should be grateful we do not have to deal with snow and ice storms like our northern neighbors or wildfires like out west. So, get outside when the weather warms back up and enjoy.

Contact us

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Happy Gardening!