



The Micro Gardener

'Making it Easy to Grow Good Health'

April Seasonal Gardening Tips – Subtropical Queensland

Autumn typically starts when our daytime temperatures are under 30°C and (more often than not) < 70% humidity most days. Some residual humidity can hang around due to the rain, but not for long. You'll notice a transition period over about a week as the daytime temperatures move out of the 30's and nights also cool down. Being outdoors is a lot more comfortable and enjoyable.

This month and next are prime planting times for our autumn and winter crops. We only have short seasons during autumn (April/May) and winter (June/July) so make the most of them. That means getting your timing right and being prepared to plant ASAP! Sow little and often (succession plant) for a continuous harvest of fresh ingredients.



The new moon cycle is the best time for sowing above ground crops, flowers, fruit trees and ornamentals. This is a time when the moon's gravitational pull of moisture affects the flow of plant sap, drawing it UPwards into them stems, branches, leaves, flowers, fruit and seeds. [Sow seeds](#) for quicker germination or plant seedlings of above ground crops for robust growth. If you see your grass and weeds grow fast during this moon phase, don't just blame the rain! The gravitational pull of the moon doubles the effect of available soil moisture as the water table rises. Use the [Moon Calendar](#) to swing timing in your favour.

Transplant seedlings and plant [fruit trees](#) during the new moon phase. Pre-soak in liquid seaweed first to provide growth hormones and stimulate root development. Divide plants and take cuttings. They will strike best with extra nutrients available in the strong sap flow. Learn more about [moon gardening](#). By understanding how nature's monthly lunar cycles work, you can use timing to your advantage for pest-resistant plants and abundant harvests.

Preparing for Planting

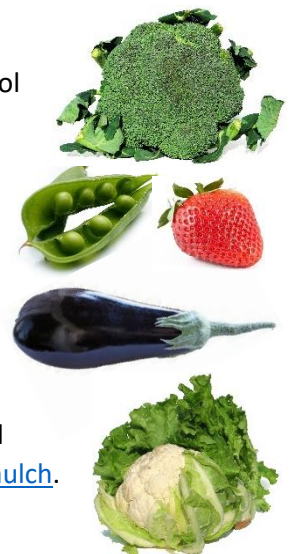
With all the summer growth, there are plenty of plants and grass clippings to provide free organic matter to make [compost](#). Chop and drop arrowroot, comfrey, old [pumpkin](#)/cucumber vines or 'green waste' and turn this abundance into [nutrient-rich healthy soil](#) to feed your garden. [Re-grow free plants from kitchen scraps](#) or recycle as compost ingredients. Tired depleted soil won't grow healthy plants, so prepare your pot or plot first. [Learn how with 3 simple steps](#).

What to Plant Now

All your [leafy greens](#) will do well from this point forward. [Lettuces](#), kale, coriander (yes, it's finally cool enough to sow those seeds), [rocket](#), silverbeet, rainbow chard, Asian greens and celery to name a few. Grow these herbs and leafy vegetables as [microgreens](#) or [sprouts](#) for fresh fast ingredients too.

A few other crops to consider include: [Peas](#) (who can live without them?), [beans](#), broccoli, cabbage, capsicum, cauliflower, eggplant, leeks (ready just in time for soups), [nasturtiums](#), pineapple sage, [spring onions](#), strawberries (time to remove runners) and most [herbs](#) including dill and borage. Sow flowers like sweet peas, marigolds, calendula, cosmos and viola for colour and pollinators.

If you haven't yet sown your seed potatoes or [garlic](#), hold off until a root crop day during the waning moon phase but prepare your soil well now. Avoid planting during the dormant phase after the full moon. It's a waste of time. Both these crops do best in soil rich in nutrients (plenty of compost) and [mulch](#).



What to watch out for

[Aphids](#), [QLD fruit fly](#), caterpillars, slugs and snails (they love the wet). You may start to see [white cabbage butterflies](#). 😞

Happily, you should expect to see grasshopper numbers start reducing as the temperatures become cooler!

Remember a healthy garden ecosystem includes a [BALANCE of pests to predators](#). i.e. 'pest' insects are part of a food chain and you need *more predators* than pests! Plant [flowers](#) to provide nectar and pollen for bees, pollinators and beneficial predatory (insect eating) insects like parasitic wasps. Many of these predators rely on nectar as a supplementary food source as adult insects, but their larvae eat pests like aphids and scale. [Hoverflies](#) and ladybirds are a couple of examples.

Garden Tasks this Month

- If you haven't yet mulched your garden, do so now (ideally after rain). Hold all that valuable moisture IN for the growing season. Rainwater also is rich in nitrogen whereas town water contains chlorine and fluoride chemicals, and pharmaceutical residues.
- Fertilise citrus and fruit trees if you haven't already. New season fruits and flowers place a high demand for nutrients on your trees. Topping up the soil 'pantry' ensures you will have a bountiful harvest of sweet juicy fruits.
- Harvest your [basil](#) and make pesto before it sets seed, or save seeds for spring planting.
- Prune and remove summer crops that have finished. Use in compost, liquid feeds or as mulch.



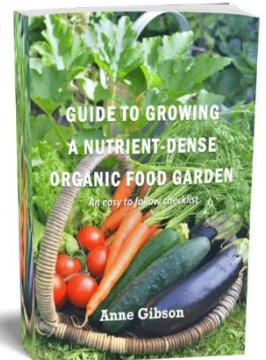
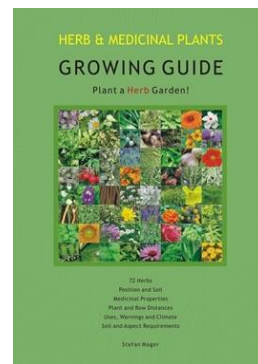
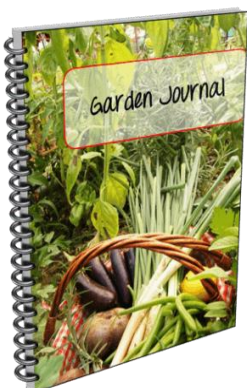
Helpful Gardening Resources

- [Subtropical Planting Guide](#) – Designed specifically for our local climate's five seasons.
- [Moon Calendar Gardening Guide](#) – Work with the moon's cycles each month for optimum planting times.
- [Microgreens Growing Guide Chart](#) – A comprehensive guide to growing a wide variety of herbs and vegetables.
- [Guide to Using Kitchen Herbs for Health](#) – How to guide on growing and using 25 kitchen and medicinal herbs.
- [Seed Starting Guide: Quick Tips for Starting Seeds Successfully](#) – Everything you need to know!
- [Design Tips for a Productive Kitchen Garden](#)

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](#).



[Check out all gardening guides and books here.](#)

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

Cheers,



Anne Gibson

The Micro Gardener



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