

NORTHWOODS YARD & GARDEN

Weekly Column

January 1, 2024

Consider Gardening Resolutions for 2024

With the arrival of the New Year, add gardening topics to your resolution list for 2024. Now is a wonderful time to think about the growing season, even though it is mid-winter.

Making sure to thoroughly plan before you plant is the one resolution that applies to all types of gardening. Plants need to be a good fit or match for the specific site conditions to assure long-term success. Consider all factors that influence plant health, including hardiness, soil conditions, and exposure to sun or shade. Also research mature size (both height and width), maintenance needs, potential pest problems, and aggressiveness to assure plants will be an excellent choice for your site.

When encountering the inevitable plant problem in 2024, resolve to properly identify the cause before taking steps to treat it. Once identified, consider all available options and proper timing for managing the problem. Oftentimes a variety of cultural practices will correct the underlying cause of the problem, rather than relying on chemicals. It could also be a case of the wrong plant for the growing conditions of the site.

When using fertilizers, resolve to follow rate and timing recommendations and other label directions. We all need to work to be as environmentally friendly as possible. Fertilizer recommendations help assure plant health and avoid any adverse environmental issues. Using more fertilizer than suggested does not necessarily mean healthier plants; it may be damaging instead.

When using pesticides, whether a weed killer herbicide out in the yard or an insecticide in the house, resolve to always read, understand, and follow all label directions. Using pesticides in any manner inconsistent with the label is a violation of federal law. All label directions are there for a reason, and not following them may potentially damage the plant, people, or the environment.

Resolve to develop a pruning plan for the trees and shrubs in your yard in the off-season. Tree and shrubs species vary in their pruning needs; methods and timing differ. Take time now to research how and when to prune the specific trees and shrubs in your yard.

Look for more details on these and more yard and garden topics in this column each week in 2024. In the meantime, visit your local library, bookstore, or search the web for more information on selection and care of yard and garden plantings. University of Wisconsin Extension has lots of information available to assist you.

Happy New Year and best wishes for growing great plants in 2024!

Interested in learning more about Horticulture in Iron County?
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