December Garden Calendar

Vegetables and Fruits

Store leftover seeds and a cool, dry location, for example, in a sealed jar placed in the refrigerator.
Check vegetables in storage for spoilage.
Mulch strawberries for winter protection.
Clean and oil garden hand tools for winter.

Flowers

Mulch roses by mounding soil 6 to 8 inches deep over the plants to protect the graft.
Mulch perennial beds with 2 to 4 inches of straw, shredded leaves, or other lightweight material.
Cut tall hybrid tea roses back to 18 to 24 inches to reduce wind whipping and plant damage.
Continue to plant spring flowering bulbs until the ground is frozen. Water and mulch.
Give plants or gift certificates as holiday gifts for gardening friends.
Empty decorative pots and containers. Store inside or decorate for winter.
Keep poinsettias in warm, sunny and draft free locations.

Lawns

Pick up fallen leaves, limbs, and other debris from lawn to prevent suffocation of the turf during winter.
Store any leftover lawn fertilizers in dry location and out of reach of children and pets.
Store pesticides according to product label.

Trees and Shrubs

To prevent breakage, avoid shoveling snow onto trees and shrubs.
Check and protect the trunks of young trees and branches of shrubs for rabbit damage.
Living Christmas trees are special. Leave in your home no longer than one week, then acclimate to outdoors and plant in a desirable location.
Prune damaged branches throughout the winter months.
Water newly planted trees and shrubs in winter to prevent dry soil conditions.
Prune branches of junipers, pines, hollies, and other plants to use as holiday decorations.

Miscellaneous

State planning for next year by making notes and preparing orders.
Turn compost pile to encourage winter breakdown.
Cut one inch from bottom of fresh Christmas tree before putting into water.
Use natural materials in decorating for the holidays.
Keep ice out of birdbaths.

Additional resources for the month:

"Knowledge for Life"