



Home Gardener's NEWSLETTER

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Jan/Feb Success Tips

1. **Spring will be here soon!** Start planning your flower and vegetable gardens, and landscape improvement projects (see back page for ideas on this).
2. **Apply a dormant spray** to fruit trees and roses to prevent many insect and disease problems this year. Do it right the first time—ask us what best to use for your particular plants, and when.
3. **Valentine's Day is February 14!** We have beautiful flowering house and garden plants that will provide years of sweet, fragrant flowers for your special sweetheart.
4. If you **dig down into soil** an inch deep and find it is dry, your plants need watering. Especially check plants in shallow soil, with shallow root systems, and under eaves.

2008 AARS Rose Winners

Our bare root roses have arrived and are ready for your garden! We have many new award winners, plus classic favorites.



Did you know that All America Rose Selection (AARS) winners must complete a two-year testing process? These champions are evaluated for fragrance, form, color, disease resistance, novelty, and overall value. This year's winners are sure to

please new and veteran gardeners—so take some with you today and give them a home in your garden!

Dream Come True. This flamboyant grandiflora has an unusual mild tea fragrance and yields flawless yellow 5-inch double blossoms, with ruby-red blushed tips. Its long stemmed, long-living blooms make an enchanting bouquet.

Mardi Gras. The stunning yellow orange buds on this floribunda open to reveal 4-inch bright pink and orange blooms with yellow bases. An exceptional performer, plant the Mardi Gras in a border with mixed perennials. As a hedge, it will delight passers-by with its wonderful peppery fragrance.



Iceland Poppies

Winter Bloomers

Is it possible to enjoy a colorful winter? *You bet!* Why suffer from a bleak season when there are plants that will naturally brighten your days? Come in and select your favorite colors while our stock is in bud and bloom. Here are some pleasant options to consider:

Annual and biannual winter flowers include *pansies*, *violas*, *stock*, *snapdragons*, *Iceland poppies*, and *dianthus*. For perennials, you'll want to browse through our *bergenias*, *cyclamen*, and *primroses*.

Don't forget our ever popular blooming shrubs such as *camellias*, *azaleas*, *leptospermums*, *lilacs*, *euryops daisies*, and *raphiolepis*. For attractive leaf color, certain evergreen shrubs will add visual interest—choose from *nandina*, *photinia*, *variegated duranta*, *euonymus*, *coleonema* (breath-of-heaven), *erica* (heather), and *loropetalum*. You can also add color with bright red or orange berries—some of our popular ones include *pyracantha*, *cotoneaster*, and *holly*. We also have bare root beautiful flowering cherry and plum trees! Say, "good bye winter doldrums," and "hello color!"

It's Fruit Tree Time!

Plant your backyard orchard now! Every garden should have several fruit trees such as *apple*, *apricot*, *Asian pears*, *cherries* (new low-chill!), *figs*, *nectarines*, *pears*, *peaches*, *persimmons*, *plums*, *pluots*, and *pomegranates*. You'll also want to choose from our scrumptious BERRY selection of high-antioxidant *blueberries* and *strawberries*, plus *raspberries* and *blackberries*, as well as *grapes*.



These delicious berry plants are now available, so come in while our selection is at its peak. Some of these plants are available throughout the year, but by purchasing early, you can choose from a wider selection, and the plants will leap into a strong start (how appropriate for a leap year!). For best results, mix in *Kellogg's Gromulch* and *Dr. Earth Organic 2 Starter Fertilizer (2-4-2)* to get new plants off to a fast start. Keep the roots moist before, during, and after planting.

Home-grown fruits are superior in flavor, higher in vitamins, cost less, and help reduce pollution resulting from grocery store transportation. Savor your fruits fresh from your garden, in a fruit salad, in jams, jellies and pies, or freeze them to extend your enjoyment through next winter.



FREE FLOWERING PLANT!

Receive a **FREE 4" ANNUAL** plant in bud or bloom with any purchase! Choose from colorful **pansies**, **snapdragons**, **ornamental kale**, and others!

GOOD WITH THIS COUPON ONLY, THROUGH FEBRUARY 29, 2008.

Snail Trivia



- ⇒ Did you know the common brown garden snail was imported from France during the California Gold Rush as a culinary venture?
- ⇒ Ducks and chickens love to eat them, but geese don't.
- ⇒ Snail-sex: cross-fertilization follows a courtship that includes tentacle caresses. When mate-less, the versatile mollusk can self-impregnate.
- ⇒ If not enjoyed as a delicacy, snails can be controlled with bait. Where possible, plant annuals snails don't like such as *ageratum*, *alyssum*, *aster*, *calendula*, *California poppy*, *cosmos*, *lobelia*, *phlox*, *portulaca*, *verbena*, *viola*, *zinnia*, and *plants in the mint family*. Snails (and slugs!) will also pass up these perennials: *armeria*, *astilbe*, *campanula*, *dianthus*, *iberis*, and *penstemon*. ♡

A Gift From the Heart

Here's an easy, fun project for kids (and the young at heart) to make and give for Valentines Day, or just to say, "I love you!" It's a plant that has been trained into a heart shape, called a **topiary**.



The supplies you will need:

- ☞ Wire coat hanger
- ☞ Wire cutters
- ☞ Needle nose pliers
- ☞ Six to eight-inch size pot filled with good potting mix
- ☞ A plant with a long trailing stem, such as English Ivy
- ☞ Green twist ties
- ☞ Ribbon

First plant the ivy in the pot. Adults, please help bend the coat hanger into a heart shape and insert the bottom part of the wire frame into the pot. *Optional:* Wrap colored ribbon around the heart so that it looks festive until the ivy has a chance to cover the wire frame.

Loosely wrap the ivy vines around the wire frame, and gently secure in place with a twist tie. As the vines grow, continue to wrap the ending tendrils around the wire frame and trim to keep the heart shape. When ready to give as a gift, decorate with ribbon bow.

TIP: Rotate the plant a ¼ turn every time you water it. Plants tend to grow towards the sun and this will keep the ivy growing evenly and full. ♡

Make Plans to Update Your Yard Now!

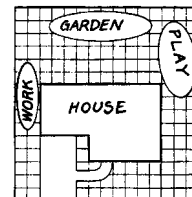
Now that the new year is here, the time has come to reflect upon last year's garden and prepare for the coming spring. ♦Have any plants outgrown their space or become prone to pests and diseases? They will need to be replaced! ♦Are you ready for a change in colors? ♦Are other plants more appropriate for the area? Since relandscaping projects benefit from planning ahead, here are some helpful hints to get you started.

Write out your family's needs and uses for your yard.

Consider creating a questionnaire and making it a family adventure in order to include everyone's ideas and needs. This will help make you more aware of the role you want your yard to play for family time and activities.

Use grid paper (¼ inch squares work well) mounted on cardboard to **draw your existing garden area according to scale**. Include buildings, driveways, patios, planting areas, and other special features. Seeing these on paper often helps identify problems as well as opportunities.

Place tracing paper over your drawing and use tape at the top to create a hinge. Pencil in existing plants, arbors, flower beds, and trees. Add and subtract additional tracing paper while developing and updating your landscaping ideas. ♡



Waffle-Cake with Fruit and Ice Cream

Plant berries and fruit trees now so that you can enjoy this scrumptious dessert later from your garden bounty.

2 cups fruit
~ washed blueberries, raspberries
or other garden-fresh ripe fruit ~



1 lemon cake mix
1 pint vanilla ice cream

Follow cake mix package directions; add an additional ¼ to ½ c. water to make a thick, flowing batter. Pour ¼ c. batter into center of pre-heated and pre-greased waffle iron. Cook the waffle until golden-brown and firm. Top waffle with a scoop of ice cream and ¼ c. fruit and serve immediately. Serves 8. *Everyone loves this!* ♡

Winterizing Your Lawn Mower

Now is a good time to invest some time and energy in your engine-powered lawn mower to extend its life before the busy months of spring begin.

☒ If you are not going to use your mower for a long period, **fuel** should be drained (run engine to clear completely), or treated with a gas stabilizer to keep residue from clogging the fuel lines and carburetor. If adding gas stabilizer to new gas, make sure to run the engine a few minutes to get it into the carburetor.

☒ **Change** oil, air filter, and foam pre-filter (if present) while the engine is still warm. Your owner's manual will indicate the appropriate oil.

☒ **Check and replace** spark plugs once the engine is cooled if needed.

☒ **Sharpen** blades, lubricate wheel bearings and throttle cables with WD-40 or silicone (not oil!), tighten screws, and replace any broken parts. Dull blades use more gas than sharp ones and will result in a lawn with a tattered, whitish look.

☒ **Clean** off any accumulated grass and oil on the engine and mower deck.

☒ **Keep inside**, during wet, cold weather, or loosely cover with an anchored waterproof cover. ♡

