

NEW YEARS' RESOLUTIONS FOR GARDENERS

I RESOLVE:

Never to let trees be planted on my land without checking to make sure it is done properly.

To water deeply and weed shallowly, for the well-being of the growing plants.

To take good care of my tools, including not leaving them out in the rain.

To check regularly for pests and disease, but not get too concerned about a few blemishes.

To rotate crops every year in my vegetable garden to avoid pathogen build-up.

To wear a hat and sunscreen when working out in the sun, for my own well-being.

To only plant plants that will thrive in the location I have. Trying to force a mismatch leads to frustration and miserable plants.

To have a separate garden bed just for the new plants that I bought (because they were too beautiful to pass up) that don't belong anywhere else.

To chop all the fallen leaves and use them as mulch around many plants for weed control and to incorporate in the soil where it is hard and/or sticky

To use as little herbicides and pesticides as possible. When I do use them, to read and follow the label directions when using any herbicide or pesticide, for my own well-being and for more effectiveness.

To label my plants with weatherproof labels so that I know what that wonderful tomato, flower, etc actually is.

To plan future changes in a bed when the current plants are at their biggest so that I can tell how much room is actually available. Corollary: mark a spot then for where to plant bulbs later.

To compost as much excess plant material as possible. This includes kitchen trimmings, grass clippings, pruning waste, deadheaded flowers, and fallen leaves. Diseased material should be thrown in the trash.

To mulch my perennials generously after the ground freezes to help prevent winter damage.

To take samples of disease or insects to the Master Gardener Diagnostic Clinic (2020 White Bear Ave) when I don't know what the problem really is or what to do about it.

To prune trees in late February and in March, when I can see their structure and note what needs correcting. I promise to dip the pruner blades in a bleach solution between cuts on apple and pear trees to prevent transmitting disease.

To prune shrubs right after they are done flowering (whenever that might be) so that I don't prune off next year's buds.

To spend lots of time in my gardens just to enjoy them, not to work!!

Happy Gardening,
Jennifer Porwit