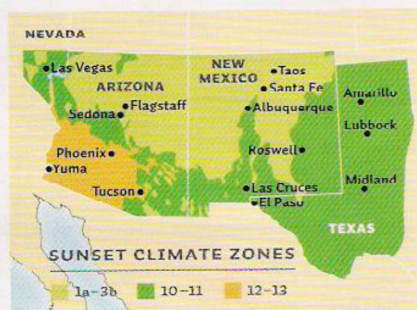


What to do in your garden

June



Idea shopping

Santa Fe Botanical Garden 2007 tours

The bountiful winter snowfall should result in a lavish display of flowers for this year's Botanical Garden tours, featuring private gardens in historic neighborhoods, some of which employ rainwater cisterns and other water-conserving strategies. Visit five gardens on June 3 and tour four on June 10. From \$35, ages 16 and under free; www.santafebotanicalgarden.org or 505/428-1684.

Planting

Cold-hardy agaves Sunset climate zones 1a-3b: June is the ideal month to set out agaves. Try miniature century plant (*Agave toumeyana* v. *bella*), Parry's century plant (*A. parryi*), and Utah century plant (*A. utahensis* 'Peach Springs'). Choose a hot sunny site with good drainage. All the above are available from High Country Gardens (www.highcountrygardens.com or 800/925-9387).

Gourds Some of the oldest domesticated plants, gourds are a great way to quickly cover a ramada or hide a wall during the warm months. To germinate, soak seeds overnight and plant 1 inch deep near a wall, trellis, or tree that the vines can climb. The following varieties are adapted to zones 1a-3b and 10-13: 'Acoma Dipper', 'Acoma Rattle', 'Alamos', 'Canyon Mix', and 'Peyote Ceremonial'. All are available from Native Seeds/SEARCH (www.nativeseeds.org or 520/622-5561).

Pomegranates Zones 10-13: These attractive shrubby trees native to Iran and other hot climates thrive in the desert. 'Wonderful,' a well-adapted variety for the region, bears large burnished red fruit filled with red arils (the rubylike bits of fruit). Although pomegranates survive in poor soil and on little rainfall, they produce more and higher-quality fruit if watered weekly through summer.

Summer wildflowers Zones 10-13: When summer rains hit, sow seeds of devil's claw (*Proboscidea parviflora*) and summer poppy (*Kallstroemia grandiflora*). Both attract native pollinators. Purchase devil's claw from Native Seeds/SEARCH, and summer poppy from Wild Seed (602/276-3536).

Vegetables Zones 2b-3a: Sow seeds of broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbages, carrots, chard, radishes, and turnips. Zones 10-13: Sow seeds of Armenian cucumbers, black-eyed peas, cantaloupe, chiles, corn, eggplant, okra, summer and winter squash, and watermelon.

Maintenance

Provide shade Zones 11-13: When cactus and succulents are heat-stressed, the skin may suddenly wilt, turn yellow, and become wrinkled. If you notice these symptoms, protect from afternoon sun and water deeply every one to two weeks. South African succulents—such as aloes, ice plants, and living stones—may need even more protection, requiring up to 70 percent shadecloth. Cover tomatoes and peppers with 50 percent shadecloth to increase fruit set and reduce sunscald. Keep all heat-sensitive plants under extra shade through September.

Water wisely Zones 12-13: June is the harshest month for many leafy plants. Avoid moisture stress (leaf-tip burn or a sudden loss of leaves) by irrigating deeply and often enough so the soil doesn't go completely dry. On the hottest days, potted annuals may require water twice daily. —SCOTT CALHOUN

Tip from the test garden

WATER VEGETABLE BEDS Keep edibles well-irrigated with one of the following methods. (Use a bubbler and a gentle stream of water.)



Furrows 3 to 6 inches deep and up to 12 inches wide help irrigate straight rows on level ground; create them by running a hoe through the soil down either side of a newly planted row of crops, no more than 3 to 4 inches from the plants.



Basins channel water directly to roots of large vegetables such as peppers, squash, and tomatoes. Dig a circular depression in the soil around the plant, at least several inches wider than the plant and 3 inches deep. On level ground, link adjoining basins as pictured above to simplify watering.