

Gardening Tips April 2007

Farmers' Almanac Timely Tip:

April is a good month to divide perennials, fertilize trees, and clean up the garden, and to place mulch and dead material in your compost heap to make fertilizer. It is also a good time to prune hedges.

Ask the Farmers' Almanac:

What's the best way to keep an Easter lily alive and healthy?

To keep your potted Easter lily at its best, place it in cool daytime temperatures of 60-65 degrees and nighttime temp about 5 degrees cooler. Avoid placing the potted plant in direct sunlight, which will cause the flower to wilt. Most plants will lean toward sunlight. To keep the plant growing upright, turn the pot every two days.

Keep the plant moist, but not soggy. Most Easter lilies are sold in pots covered with decorative foil jackets. No water should ever be left standing in the bottom of this covering or the lily will be ruined. Remove the pot from the foil every time you water the plant. Once the water has soaked into the soil, you may return the pot to the decorative foil covering.

Do you have any suggestions on how to start a compost pile easily and simply?

The easiest way to start a compost pile is to start collecting natural "garbage" from the kitchen such as coffee grounds, leftover lettuce, vegetable scraps, etc. Then pick a place in your yard where you can start the pile. There are plenty of bins available for purchase; however, you can construct a simple wire bin to start the pile. Chicken wire is good to use. The wire will help stop the animals from spreading the pile out. To the pile add: shredded newspapers, feathers, dead leaves, old hay, wood ashes, grass clippings, and livestock manure. Do not put in meat and dairy products.

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For more info on composting check out the following links:

http://www.marlysgardens.com/photos/whats_happening/fall2006/the_scoop_on_compost.pdf

http://www.marlysgardens.com/photos/whats_happening/fall2006/leaf_compost.pdf