

## Phil's Garden Tips for February

### Tomatoes, Peppers, Eggplant, Solanaceae Family:

Start seeds in February. Transplant outdoors after last frost-March 15<sup>th</sup> in Tucson (Sunset Zone 12), April 15<sup>th</sup> (Sunset Zone 10). Take all but top two pairs of leaves off when transplanting and bury the stem to one inch below bottom pair of leaves. Adventitious roots will form on stem and produce a sturdier plant. Plants flower and produce fruit until about 95 degrees. Fruit that was set will still develop past 95 degrees. Keep watering even though plants may look bad. In August cut the plant back by 50 % and remove dead leaves. In hot summer, protect plants from afternoon sun by providing shade. Fertilize when first planted and after pruning.

### Vegetables:

Sow seeds and transplant starts of warm season vegetables. Transplants may be put out until the end of April. Valentine's Day, sow seeds of peas directly into ground. In Zone 10 (Southeastern AZ, Gila County), wait until the end of month to sow seeds of beets, carrots, broccoli, lettuce, cabbage, cauliflower, spinach, swiss chard and bok choy.

### For Spring Bloom:

Plant penstemon, salvia, angelita daisy, lavender, scabiosa, desert marigold and fairy duster.

### Fertilize deciduous fruit trees in February/March:

Apples, pears, apricots, peaches, plums, nectarines, figs and pomegranate.

### Flowers in February for Zone 12. In Zone 10, wait until April:

Pansies, violas, petunias, phlox, alyssum, lobelia, English daisy, osteospermum African daisy, arctotis African daisy, twinspur, nemesia, paludosum daisy, calendula, Iceland poppy, dianthus, carnation, marguerite daisy, Felicia daisy, armeria, statice, geranium, columbine, strawflower, gazania, toadflax, chrysanthemum, verbena, gerbera daisy. For frost tender annuals, wait until mid-March.