

Summer to Fall Container Transition

By Late summer, annual containers can be looking a little tired from the summer environment. Time to transition it into an autumn fall look.

As with all seasonal containers they need the same care.

Water needs to be checked daily and this is dependent on the size of the container, type of soil used, location of shade/sun, and plants used.

Fertilize every 2 to 3 weeks to keep nutrition in the soil because of leeching and plant uptake. Synthetic fertilizers like Miricle Grow or Jacks are utilized quickly. Organic fertilizers like Espoma, Fox Farm, Down to Earth stay in the soil longer. At time of planting, we use Lurvey slow release fertilizer, begin fertilizing after a few weeks of purchase.

Trim and Prim all season long. Dead head, prune leggy growth, pinch. All of this is needed to keep plants pretty and healthy.

Transition – Labor Day is the target date to start the transition. Look at your container. Which summer annuals are not looking good, replace them. In early fall think of the autumn look you like. Leave the specimen plants or grasses and fill in with mums, pansies, cabbage/kale, coleus, swiss chard, rudbeckias.

The root systems of the summer plants are intertwined, they will need to be cut and pulled out. Fill in with fresh soil as you are adding new plants. Sun/shade plants are still a concern for early fall planting. Add accents for character if you have open spaces, mini pumpkins, gourds, etc.

End of September/early October is the target date to look at your container again. Replace any plants that have faded as Mums do with plants that will last till November. Sun/shade plants are no longer a concern due to sun intensity and shorter days. Then in the first weeks of November, Christmas greens begin to arrive. Now we transition for winter.