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## What To Plant Now

By Madison Moulton, Botanical Interests & WAN Staff

Welcome to the planting season that transitions between spring and summer. From warm-season favorites to late-spring vegetables, here is a look at some crops that can be planted now for a productive summer harvest. There is a great selection of vegetable starts and if you have the time, many more varieties in seed.

### Tomatoes

Plant tomatoes deeply to encourage extensive root development.

When selecting varieties, consider both your growing conditions and culinary preferences. Heritage varieties like 'Cherokee Purple' offer incredible flavor with their deep, smoky sweetness, while smaller types like 'Sun Gold' produce abundant harvests of sweet orange



cherry tomatoes. If garden space is limited, tomatoes grow beautifully in containers, making them accessible for patio gardeners as well. Just ensure your container is at least 5 gallons in size with excellent drainage. Be sure to install support structures like cages or stakes at planting time.

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## Let's Grow Strawberries

By Melanie Potter



Monrovia

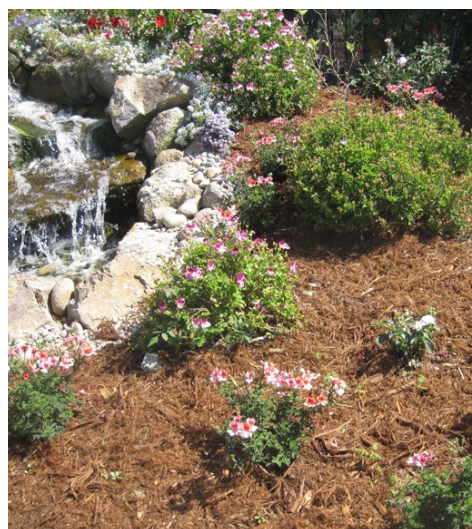
Photo: Brandon Friend-Solis

Strawberries are at the nursery, some are blooming and many have ripe fruit. I would know because there are times when I've sampled one or two. Strawberries can be 'ever-bearing' or June-bearing varieties that produce a mass of fruit over a short

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## Demystifying Mulching Dilemmas

By WAN Staff



Mulch is a layer of just about anything that covers the soil. Effective mulches can be organic, such as compost, wood chips, newspaper or grass clippings, or inorganic, such as plastic, gravel, weed cloth, or the newer recycled plastic or rubber materials. These mulches serve as extra gardeners, on duty 24/7, keeping weeds down, reducing erosion and runoff, preventing the soil from baking and drying out, and allowing us to water less often.

Wood chips, or bark is the most commonly used mulch and is

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## What To Plant Now continued from p1

### Peppers

Peppers are true heat-lovers that require warm soil to germinate and establish properly.

When selecting pepper varieties, consider your growing season length. Hot pepper enthusiasts should try habaneros or scotch bonnets, which thrive in the warmest conditions. For all-purpose cooking, classic sweet bell peppers are popular.

### Cucumbers

Cucumbers can be grown in containers or in the ground. Don't make the mistake of not installing a trellis or cage when you plant. Vertical growing not only saves space but dramatically reduces pest and disease issues by improving air circulation and keeping fruits clean. Water deeply but infrequently to encourage deep root development, and consider mulching around plants to maintain consistent soil moisture. Water fluctuations can lead to bitter fruits.

### Zucchini

Zucchini develops a taproot that doesn't appreciate disturbance, and they are cold sensitive. When selecting varieties, consider both your space constraints and culinary preferences. 'Black Beauty' remains popular for its reliable production, while 'Gold Rush' offers vibrant yellow zucchini that stands out in the garden and on the plate. For small spaces, bush varieties that produce round fruits on compact plants won't take over your garden. Check zucchini daily because what looks like a baby fruit one day grows to the size of a small club within a few more.

### Squash

Winter squash needs a long growing season, but can be stored for months after harvest.

While many gardeners have already

planted summer squash varieties like zucchini, now is also the perfect time to plant winter squash for fall harvests and winter storage. These nutritional powerhouses, including butternut and pumpkins, need a long growing season. Space 4-6 feet apart, as these plants need room to sprawl. For smaller gardens, consider training vines vertically on sturdy trellises, though the largest varieties may be too heavy for this approach.

### Bush Beans / Pole Beans

So many to choose from! Roma II, Blue Lake, Fin De Bagnol, Black Valentine and Japanese Long Beans.

### Watermelon

Heat lovers and vines grow 10 to 15 feet in all directions. If garden space is limited, look for compact varieties like 'Sugar Baby', which produces small (8-10 pound) melons with exceptionally sweet, deep red flesh on more manageable vines. You'll also find 'Crimson Sweet'.

### Cantaloupe / Melons

To plant for successful harvest, create soil mounds enriched with compost, spaced about 3-4 feet apart. Mulch around plants to maintain soil moisture and prevent weeds.

For sweeter melons, reduce watering during the final two weeks before harvest. This concentrates sugars in the fruit. You'll know a cantaloupe is perfectly ripe when it easily slips from the vine and has a sweet fragrance at the blossom end. We have Hale's Best' musk melon and 'Early Honeymoon' honeydew.

### Basil

As true heat-lovers from the Mediterranean region, basil plants need consistently warm temperatures to thrive. Thai basil, with its anise notes and purple stems, adds distinctive flavor to



## Strawberries

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*Seascape by Monrovia*

period during spring, some earlier, and some later. 'Ever-bearing' varieties produce less fruit at one time, but over a much longer period, often into fall. June-bearing varieties typically grow more vigorously with more runners; ever-bearing varieties spread less vigorously with fewer runners.

### **Here's a look at what is in stock:**

**Albion**—The perfect dessert strawberry due to its high sugar content. Bursting with sweetness, this newer everbearing selection has firm texture and superior flavor. It is high yielding, tolerates heat and has excellent disease resistance.

**Chandler**—Popular with home growers because of its intense strawberry flavor. It offers distinct flavor and sweetness, unlike other varieties that have traded taste for greater disease resistance or increased yields. Inside is red and juicy.

**Eversweet**—Perfect for patio gardens. This everbearing plant produces sweet, long,

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## What To Plant Now continued from p2

Asian dishes, while 'Purple Petra' provides stunning visual contrast in both the garden and on the plate. For something truly different, lemon basil offers bright citrus notes perfect for seafood dishes and summer drinks. Basil appreciates rich, well-draining soil and consistent moisture, though overwatering can lead to root issues. The key to an abundant harvest is regular pruning.

Once plants reach six inches tall, pinch the central growing tip to encourage bushier growth. This prompts the plant to produce side shoots, significantly increasing your harvest. Continue harvesting regularly throughout summer, never taking more than one-third of the plant at once for sustained production. •

## Mulching continued from p1



available in mini, small, medium and large grade chunks. Fir bark is better for your soil as it decomposes, and can be used to transplant your orchids as well. Remember, the organisms that break down the bark, steal nitrogen from your soil, so fertilize your plants a little more often to compensate and keep them green. Since it does break down, annual refreshing may be needed to maintain its effectiveness.

Composts, such as redwood compost, planting mix, worm castings, or homegrown compost enhances the soil more quickly because they are already partially broken down and feed all the beneficial organisms in the soil. Non composted materials such as grass clippings or chipped leaves and twigs help keep down weeds and will keep your soil cool and moist, but take longer to break down and enhance your soil.

Plastic, especially when combined with gravel or bark, does an exceptional job of preventing weeds and preventing evaporation, but remember to leave some place for water to get through the plastic if there are plants nearby.

Gravel does a great job of preventing weeds and insulating the soil, but does not break down, so it does not enhance the soil. However, it doesn't require annual refreshing either. Recycled rubber or plastics work well too and don't require regular refreshing.

In addition to all the functional benefits of mulch, an even greater benefit to mulch is aesthetic. Mulches give your garden a beautiful, finished look. They cover exposed dirt, and really change the appearance for the better. •



## Strawberries

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cone-shaped fruit. It will continue producing even when temperatures exceed 80 degrees F. Ripens in summer and continues to fruit into fall.

**Sequoia**—A hybrid berry developed for coastal California. It fruits early and continuously over a three month or longer period of time. Offers a balance of sweetness and acidity

**Camarosa**—This hybrid strawberry was developed and released by the University of California, Davis in 1994. Fruit will grow up to 2 inches long. It is the primary variety grown in California and shipped to supermarkets all over the country. Camarosa is among one of the earliest June-bearers ready for harvest. Popular as a Pick Your Own variety at farms.

**Seascape**—This produces very large, firm fruit which have good color and flavor when picked ripe. This popular variety has flexibility in planting dates and areas. •

## What's In Your Holster?

By Ken Andersen



For most of my 40 plus year career in the nursery and garden center business, I avoided carrying gardening tools with me while I was working. If I needed a tool I would trek to my desk and collect the item and head back to the task. I would then return them to my desk when

done. When Covid hit and we were deemed essential and unable to close down, we were so busy that I had to rethink that inefficient strategy. Not wanting to wear a bulky apron or multiple things on my belt, I started looking for a solution.

At Rockler Woodworking, I found a clip-on pouch called a Measuring Pouch (sku49657) that is designed to carry a tape measure marking tools, pencils, and other items. I ordered one online (they also have a store in Kearny Mesa) and here is a list of what I now carry at the nursery. Felco #9 shears (left-handed), Felco #322 shears for light pruning and cutting, box cutter, Victrinox grafting knife, Felco 905 sharpening and repair tool, fine and regular point Sharpie for labeling work, and an assortment of regular pens. The clip on the outside of the pouch works perfectly for the 2-way radios we carry here at the store too. The pouch holds everything neatly and within easy reach. You can find them online at [rockler.com](http://rockler.com). •

## Holiday Closing

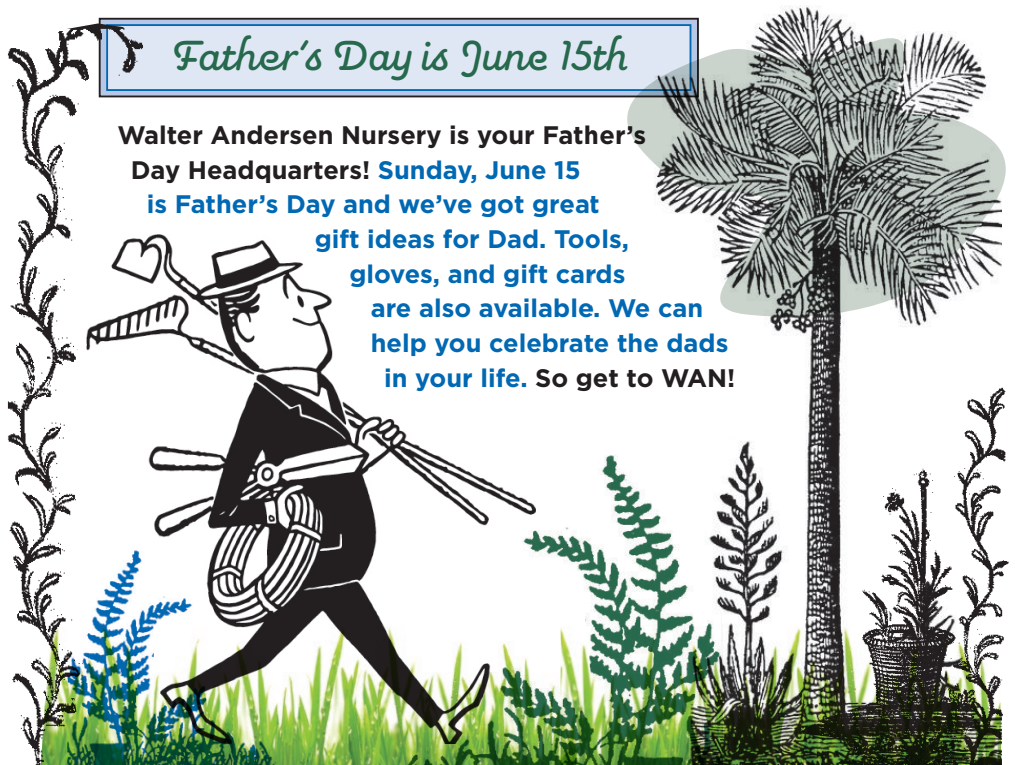
### July 4th!

Both stores will be closed Friday, July 4 for the holiday.



## Father's Day is June 15th

Walter Andersen Nursery is your Father's Day Headquarters! **Sunday, June 15 is Father's Day** and we've got great gift ideas for Dad. Tools, gloves, and gift cards are also available. We can help you celebrate the dads in your life. So get to WAN!





## Candied Citrus Wheels

By Amanda MacArthur  
Food Gardening Network



Candied citrus wheels are a sweet and zesty recipe that transforms simple citrus slices into sparkling, sugary garnishes perfect for elevating your favorite mocktails and cocktails.

### INGREDIENTS

- **Thinly-sliced citrus** (orange, lemon, lime, grapefruit). Carefully use a mandolin (if you have one) for perfect slices

- **1 cup water**

- **1 cup sugar**

### INSTRUCTIONS

- Combine sugar and water over low heat to make a simple syrup.

- Simmer citrus slices in syrup for 30 minutes.

- Dry on a rack for 24 hours.

- Store up to 2 weeks.

**Editor's Note:** Someone at WAN is going to make these and will try freezing leftovers for future use. How handy would it be to have this clever garnish frozen and ready to use?! •

## To Do List: June



Plant shrubs



Fertilize lawns



Dead head roses



Look for Hydrangeas

### Plant

- > Bedding plants
- > Bougainvillea, Hibiscus & tropicals
- > Fruit trees & shrubs
- > Look for Jacaranda, Magnolias, Hydrangeas, Star Jasmine, Dipladenias, Plumeria, Fuchsias, & roses
- > Summer vegetables & annuals

### Pest Control

Look for **slugs** and **snails**; apply Sluggo or Sluggo Plus. Watch for **mildew**, **rust** and **rose slug** on roses; spray with Bio-Advanced 3 in 1 Insect Disease and Mite Control, or Neem. Eliminate **sowbugs**, **earwigs**, **cutworms**, **slugs** and **snails** in

vegetable gardens with Sluggo Plus. Keep flies around trash cans under control by using **fly traps** that can catch them before they invade your trash.

### Fertilize

- > For **lawns**, use Marathon Fertilizer.
- > Use E.B. Stone or Dr. Earth to feed **ornamentals**, **vegetables**, **citrus**, **Avocado**, **fruit trees**, **palms** and **tropicals**.

### Prune

- > Ornamentals for shape
- > Dead head roses, dahlias & other flowering plants
- > Prune stone fruits after harvest •







**Garden Talk**  
RADIO

Listen to the WAN Experts  
Saturdays 6am-7am  
AM 1170 & 1210 | FM 96.1 & 106.1

Or Listen Anytime on our Podcasts Page

### Shows This Month:

6/7 – Ken, George & John

6/14 – Ken, George & John  
are joined by Greg Rubin  
of California's Own Native  
Landscape Design

6/21 – Ken, George & John

6/28 – Ken, George &  
John are joined by Chuck  
McClung; gardening mentor,  
landscaping consultant,  
and author

Guests subject to change  
without notice



[walterandersen.com](http://walterandersen.com)

## Garden Classes: June

Saturday classes are **FREE** and last about an hour. Complimentary coffee is served. During inclement weather, classes are held indoors in San Diego and on the covered, heated patio in Poway. Topics are subject to change. See the full schedule at <https://www.walterandersen.com/classes-events/>.

### SAN DIEGO

9:00AM

Classes TBD  
Call the store for details

### POWAY

9:30AM

6/7  
Native Plants & Firewise  
Planting  
with Greg Rubin

6/14  
Organic Gardening  
with Randy Ritchie of  
Malibu Compost

6/21  
Water Plants  
with John Clements

6/28  
Plumerias  
with Mike Atkinson



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## Visit Our 2 Locations

### SAN DIEGO

3642 Enterprise Street  
San Diego, California 92110  
**619-224-8271**  
Open 8am-5pm | 7 Days-A-Week

### POWAY

12755 Danielson Court  
Poway, California 92064  
**858-513-4900**  
Open 9am-5pm | 7 Days-A-Week

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