Roots & Shoots

Bethany's Extension Extras

It's already June in Alabama, and I am sure many of you are way ahead of me, but I am just now getting my garden planted. We still have time to plant many of our garden favorites, and some are just now ready to go into the ground. Squash, corn, cantaloupe, pumpkins and watermelon can all be started from seed this month. Okra can be planted till June 30th. Some of my choice varieties include Clemson Spineless, Emerald, Lee, and Burgundy. Field peas can also be started from seed this month. Some popular varieties include Pinkeye Purple Hull, Mississippi Purple, Mississippi Silver, and Zipper Cream. Now is also a good time to add additional mulch to your gardens and flowerbeds to conserve water and minimize weed growth.

The 2023 Master Gardener interns have officially finished the in-class portion of the course. They are currently working on acquiring volunteer hours towards their certification and I cannot be prouder of this fantastic group! They really hit the ground running on their group project at The Lovelady Center. Interns spent time planning, prepping and revitalizing raised beds located on the rooftop of the center for women and children. The group worked hard to get many of the vegetables, soil and flower transplants donated from various groups across the state. Several of the rooftop gardens are flourishing, including a newly installed sensory garden for the residents. Other highlights from this year's intern group include several guest speakers, a plant propagation lab, a native plant presentation, guided tours through the Botanical Gardens and Aldridge Gardens, and a fieldtrip to Petals from the Past. If you haven't already, please take the opportunity to introduce yourselves to our interns at the monthly meetings. This is a passionate and eager group, and their membership in JCMGA will be a huge benefit.

The weather changes can be a bit drastic around this time of year in Alabama. While we've enjoyed a relatively wet spring, just remember the dog days of summer are just ahead. Watering efficiently, keeping an eye out for diseases and keeping those pesky weeds and insects under control will be my primary focus in the garden right now. I will do my part, and hopefully, my garden will return the favor!