

Spring planning tools

Spring is that welcome time when a gardener's imagination turns to catalogs, seeds, and transplants. Perhaps the imagination is in fact moving toward the delicious products of those seeds and transplants. Once plant catalogs went online, the choice of flowers, vegetables and fruits expanded enormously. It is now as important to screen out options as to select what should go into the garden!



Square foot gardening

brand new patch, planning is critical. That was one reason that “square foot gardening” became so popular. It turned an intimidating plot of land into a manageable, plantable grid. How many plants can grow well in a square foot? Square foot gardening, or some modification of it, became the norm for small plots. It changed the paradigm – instead of dropping seeds into one long row, putting them into a conformation that fit the needs of home vegetable production.

Even with that wonderful tool, gardening can still be daunting. When the “There’s an app for that” commercials began appearing, the last thing many of us expected was a gardening app for our cell phones. There are now quite a few apps for a gardener to choose. Search “garden planning” and you can find many.

They can be free or just a dollar or two. I do not see any need to pay more, which is why I do not subscribe to certain gardening planners, which have terrific information, but charge a monthly fee.

Some are better than others, so it is important to know how you will be using that app. If the need is simply for a set of better gardening tips, there are several. For information on a specific vegetable, some seed companies and magazines have apps with ample information. Whatever

Just because something is online, it is not necessarily ideal for every climate. That is certainly the case in our home sweet Mojave, the driest desert in North America. Many of us have found through hard experience that only a few plants can really thrive here without being given additional irrigation and fertility management. On the positive side, however, having low humidity means this region is rarely plagued by plant diseases. Things balance out.

For a spring garden, whether the site has been used in the past or if is a



the choice, do not forget that applications are generally designed to meet the needs of gardeners in locations with rainfall, frequent clouds, and a later frost date than one generally expects in Southern Nevada.

As I was reviewing apps for my smart phone, I was struck by two things. First, some of them are available either for iPhone or android only, and it is disappointing when the that seems perfect turns out to be for the other system. The other is comical: if the title includes the word “zombies” then it is probably not meant to assist a gardener, or at least not with gardening.

It is important for me to learn whether the information in these weekly articles is useful. In the next couple of weeks, I will be including a link to a survey that I hope you will complete. Thanks!

Dr. Angela O'Callaghan is the Social Horticulture Specialist for University of Nevada Cooperative Extension. Contact ocallaghana@unce.unr.edu or 702-257-5581.