More Springtime Tasks for the Garden

By John Martin, Albany Master Gardener

As you wander around your gardens in the anticipation of increased temperatures and a new planting season here are a few more tasks you can undertake to make for a better growing season:

- Inspect shrubs and trees for winter damage and remove dead or damaged branches
- Plant cold crops once soil is workable
- Apply chemical free corn gluten to lawns to stop crabgrass and weed seeds from sprouting (Do not apply corn gluten if you plan to re-seed your lawn or plant seeds directly into your garden bed this spring, it will prevent them from germinating.)
- Pull protective mulch off of perennials and plant annuals after last frost
- Clean beds of winter debris and any weeds that start to surface (It is best to Leave the Leaves until night temperatures are 55-59 degrees for a week so that pollinators who have been overwintering in the leaf litter have a chance to emerge without being harmed.)
- Top dress gardens with compost and spread mulch to get a jump on weeds control
- Set up stakes & cages for floppy perennials before they get higher than one foot
- Divide perennials that bloom in the summer or fall
- Divide ornamental grasses in early spring
- Plant perennials early for best root growth
- Buy plants with more buds than open blooms
- If late frost threatens, cover tender plants with sheet of cardboard or frost cloth to prevent damage

I’m sure that as you wander your gardens you will find many more tasks that need to be done, but these are just a few quick hitting reminders…

Happy Gardening!