

# Miller Farms

"The flowers of late winter and early spring occupy places in our hearts well out of proportion to their size." - Gertrude S.

## Weedin's

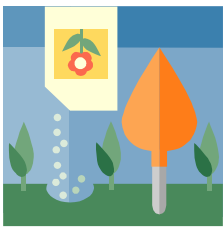
January 2009

### Summer Blooming Bulbs

have arrived! we have a large selection of dahlias in all shapes and colors as well as freesia, gladiolas, lilies and much more.

### Prune Clematis

Not all clematis are pruned this time of year, just the varieties that bloom during the summer months. These can be pruned all the way back to just 3-4 buds. Spring blooming clematis such as 'Montana Rubens' and evergreen types can be pruned after they are done blooming. We will talk more about this at the Pruning Workshop later this month.



### Early Start

Late this month and early next are good times to start seeds indoors for summer annuals, perennials, herbs and vegetables. Use a good sterilized soil. Choose a warm, bright spot in which to start them. Don't forget seed starting trays, heat mats, soil, and labels.



### February is National Bird Feeding Month.

Did you know that birds spend most of their waking hours searching for food. Many birds love the high energy suet that we carry in cake form. You can also make your own with twice rendered beef fat or lard. Customize your creations with peanut butter, raisins, and bird seed. Birds are very susceptible to the Salmonella bacteria. Choose birdfeeders that are easy to clean with a 10% bleach solution at least once per week. This also applies to bird baths.

### February Veggies

Plant artichokes, asparagus, rhubarb and even horseradish now.

### Disease-B-Gone

Dormant spray deciduous trees and shrubs. A combination of Lime

sulfur and oil will kill any overwintering fungus on your apples and pears. Spray peach trees with copper sulfate (Micro-cop) to combat peach leaf curl. **Dr. Earth** now has a natural dormant spray called **3 Controls** and consists primarily of Clove Oil.

### Soggy Soils

Though it might be tempting to start preparing your garden beds, try not to dig up soggy soil, it will just get compacted. You could cover your beds with plastic to dry them out and even warm them up.

This is also the time to winter prune your fruit trees and many shrubs. If you are not sure what to do, we offering a pruning workshop this month. We will demonstrate how to prune and talk about what needs to be pruned and when. Give us a call at 839-0278 to pre-register. This is a free class.



### Bareroot Fruit and Flowering Trees are here!

Have you been noticing all the flowering plums in bloom around town? They are first of the flowering trees to bloom and they are a welcome sign of approaching spring. After the flowering plums, the hawthorns, then cherries and crabapples all have their season in the sun. We have many of these in our bareroot bins.

Don't forget to plant your fruit tree. The sooner you get them planted the sooner they can start fruiting. It generally takes about 3-5 years for a fruit tree to begin producing. We have a great selection right now. So hurry on in.

## Winter Pruning

This is a great time to prune your trees and shrubs. You just need to keep a few things in mind before you start:



-Always use sharp tools. Dull tools can cause rough cuts that will encourage disease.

-Know the type of tree or shrub you are pruning. Spring blooming varieties bloom on old wood and should not be pruned until after they bloom (rhodies, azaleas, Camellias, Forsythia, and Weigela to mention a few). Summer bloomers bloom on new wood and can be pruned now (roses, fuchsias, some spiraea, and buddlea...).

-Try not to prune on a rainy day, this will allow the fresh cuts to dry.

-Start by removing any dead or diseased wood (if diseased sterilize your tools every few cuts (use Isopropyl Alcohol).

-Prune crossing branches keeping the one that is growing in desired direction.

-Step back and view your work often, looking for balance and missed branches.

-Burn or dispose of diseased branches instead of putting them in the compost.

## What's Growing On?

**Primroses** are just gorgeous this month. Their bright colors really brighten up these rainy, wintery days.



**Grevillea lavandulacea 'Penola'** is another one of the wonderful winter blooming Grevilleas. They have of deep red blooms over a long period of time. They grow 4-5ft tall and 6-8ft wide and can handle coastal conditions.



**Hardenbergia violacea** (a.k.a Lilac Vine) is in full purple bloom. Small sprays of purple pea like flowers appear in late fall and winter. A fast growing vine that needs a least 6 hours of sun.



The Winter Daphne is starting to pop and they are so fragrant! Daphne can grow here on the coast but you **must** drain extremely well. Protect from hot afternoon sun, but do give them some exposure. Morning and late afternoon would work well. Daphne also does not like acid soil. A pH of about 7.0 is the best. Test your soil with one of our pH test kits and then amend with Dolomite Lime or Supersweet as needed. Don't miss out on some of the most amazing fragrance.

It's Hellebore time and we have just brought in some beauties that are beginning to pop. Hellebores work well in a partially shaded area under trees or next to the house. Another great winter bloomer to get us excited about spring. Here's a few of the varieties we have on hand.

