

Ten Locations in San Francisco, Marin, San Mateo and Contra Costa

Richmond District
327 3rd Avenue btwn
Geary & Clement
(415) 752-1614

Marina District
3237 Pierce Street
Chestnut & Lombard
(415) 440-1000

San Rafael
1580 Lincoln Ave. just off
Hwy. 101
(415) 453-3977

Kentfield
700 Sir Francis Drake Blvd.
at Wolfe Grade
(415) 454-0262

San Bruno
675 El Camino Real
(650) 869-6000
3 blocks south of I-380

Sunset District
2700 Sloat Blvd.
46th & Sloat Blvd.
(415) 566-4415

Novato
2000 Novato Blvd. at
Wilson
(415) 897-2169

Mill Valley
657 E. Blithedale at Lomita
(415) 388-0102
401 Miller Ave. at La Goma
(415) 388-0365

Danville
828 Diablo Road at El Cerro
(925) 743-0288
M-Sat hours: 8 to 5:30pm
Sun hours: 9 to 5

Garden Design Department
401 Miller, Mill Valley
(415) 388-3754

Visit Sloat on the Web: www.sloatgardens.com



Main office: 420 Coloma Street
Sausalito, CA 94965-1428



Great plants and great advice to help them grow!

8 SLOAT NOTEBOOK October/November 2008

October & November Gardening Guide

Plant

☞ Plant it Now! Now is the best time to plant **foxglove**, **canterbury bells** and other biennials. Look to plant **cyclamen** in late October/early November. It's also a great time to plant ground covers and sweet peas.

☞ Think fall & winter color: **Violas** and **pansies** are perfect for creating mass color in containers or flowerbeds. Available in a variety of hues, they are perfect as a ground cover for spring bulbs. **Iceland poppies** are a wonderfully vibrant option this fall, along with **snapdragons** for fall containers.

☞ For a hardy alternative, consider planting **ornamental grasses**. Grasses require little upkeep and can create a beautiful screening effect against the house or fence.



☞ Plant container shrubs, perennials and trees. Winter rains will help develop a strong root system.

☞ Decorate for fall! We have **pumpkins**, **gourds** and **mums** to set the stage.

☞ Select and plant **maples** for fall color.

☞ Select bulbs for spring bloom and winter forcing. Begin chilling bulbs that need an artificial winter; **Tulips**, **freesia**, **crocus** and **hyacinth** need 4-6 weeks of refrigeration before planting.

Fertilize

☞ Apply a lawn fertilizer and pre-emergent to control annual bluegrass and other weeds in your lawn and flower beds. Also, aerate and fertilize the lawn with **E.B. Stone Nature's Green**.

☞ Top-dress perennial beds, azaleas,

camellias, and rhododendrons with **Sloat Forest Mulch Plus** and feed with 0-10-10 fertilizer monthly until bloom (**E.B. Stone Organics**).



Prune/Maintain

☞ Prepare planting beds for winter. Clear weeds and rocks.

Till soil and add soil amendments.

☞ Divide the roots and rhizomes of perennials such as agapanthus, yarrow and dianthus. You may dig up summer blooming bulbs, including gladiolus and dahlias. Lift and store begonias after they bloom in peat moss.

☞ Lightly prune Japanese maples while still in leaf.

☞ It's time to fill your bird feeders for winter. You can also try a suet feeder!

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About this Newsletter: The Gardener's Notebook is published 4 times per year by Sloat Garden Center for the education and enjoyment of Bay Area gardeners. Information is collected from Sloat's expert staff, current horticultural publications and Sunset's Western Garden Book. Send address corrections to: 420 Coloma Street, Sausalito, CA 94965. or online at www.sloatgardens.com/notebook/update



Gardener's Notebook

Volume 22, No. 3

News, Advice & Special Offers for Bay Area Gardeners

October/November 2008



Waves of color at your doorstep this fall



The transition from summer to fall marks a grand change in the garden every year. From pastel colors and bright textures, to warm palettes of undulating yellow, brown and red. Out go the sunflowers and cosmos, which are at the end of their growth cycles, and in come the stock, snapdragons, ornamental kale, Iceland poppies, pansies and violas. For many gardeners this change is refreshing as the

days become cooler and shorter.

October and November becomes a time when the emphasis is on decorating front doors and porches. Keep your doorstep colorful with these ideas:

- ★ Welcome fall with a beautiful potted chrysanthemum. From vibrant yellow to elegant bronze to the deepest red, mums provide bursts of color during autumn.

- ★ Plant ornamental cabbage. The attractive

pink, green and yellow leaves add soft color to any container or bed.

- ★ Plant pottery or beds with orange mums and pansies to celebrate Halloween.

- ★ Plant a carved or uncarved pumpkin with mums and violas. (Take your pumpkin, scoop out the insides, fill with soil and plant!)



Bulbs for spring

Holiday preview

Camellia care

Plant it now

A colorful spring starts with bulbs right now...and it's easy



Easy: create a blooming bulb planter for spring. All you need are bulbs, a container and Sloat Potting Soil.

Bulbs are easy for even inexperienced gardeners to grow successfully. By following a few simple rules, you can grow a spectacular display of spring blooming bulbs.

SELECTING & GROWING

Sloat Garden Center offers packaged bulbs for your ease and convenience as well as bulk bulbs so that you can individually select the colors and mixes you want. We select our bulbs for the best grade and size. None of our bulbs are harvested from the wild.

CHOOSE bulbs that are firm and large. Look for “double noses” on daffodils. The quantity of flowers and the quality of the blooms are the result of the bulbs you select this fall. Fall is the time to purchase and plant your spring blooming bulbs.

OCTOBER is ideal for planting those bulbs that don't require prechilling. Soil temperatures are cooling and winter rains are around the corner. Most bulbs can be planted directly in the ground using Sloat Forest Mulch Plus, or in pots using Sloat Potting Soil. There are a few exceptions in our mild winter climate.

CHILLING is required for tulips, hyacinths, crocus and freesia in order for their stems to elongate sufficiently. Place these bulbs in the refrigerator for 4 to 6 weeks (not the freezer). Be sure they are not stored with apples which release ethylene that inhibits sprouting! Plant them the same day you remove them from the refrigerator. Paperwhite Narcissus do not require chilling but can be “stalled” with refrigeration.

LATE NOVEMBER or December is a great time to plant chilled bulbs but even January is not too late.

PREPARE your soil to ensure good drainage. Use plenty of Sloat Planting Mix or Forest Mulch Plus. Add Bone Meal or E.B. Stone Bulb Food to supply extra nutrition.

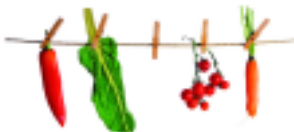
PLANT bulbs with their “points” up (Ranunculus are planted “toes” down). If you can't tell which end should be up, bulbs planted on their sides still come up. A good rule of thumb is to plant at a depth equal to twice the bulbs height.

IN CONTAINERS, plant as shallow as possible to allow for good root growth. Bulbs should be close together but not touching. Tulips should be planted so that the “flat” side is facing the edge of the pot.



Let our staff guide you on how to mix bulbs with different bloom times and growing characteristics.

3 terrific reasons to grow your own organic produce this winter



grow your own

When you think about growing your own vegetables, do you think beyond summer tomatoes to the bounty of foods you can grow all winter long? Here are three reasons to get into the garden this month and start planting.

1. Growing your own vegetables and herbs makes sense. You can grow organic food for a fraction of the cost of supermarket vegetables, plus save gas on trips to the market.

2. Here in the Bay Area we are truly fortunate that we can take advantage of mild winters that produce some of the sweetest, most succulent winter fruits and vegetables this side of the Mississippi.

3. If you plant this month, you can harvest the following vegetables and herbs before spring: **salad greens, kale, spinach, cabbage, mustard greens, parsley, sage and thyme.**

Pumpkins!

This fall our pumpkin patch is stocked with a great selection of:

- Howden carving pumpkins*
- Assorted gourds*
- Miniature pumpkins*
- White and Blue pumpkins*

Stop in and see!

Company Spotlight: Gardeneer is eco-friendly



If you regularly try to deter pests (like blueberry loving birds) from your garden, while at the same time work to avoid chemicals, **Gardeneer** is for you!

Gardeneer, a brand of **Dalen**, is a family owned business started in 1975 by owner Neal Caldwell. As a mechanical engineer, Neal wanted to combine his intense interest in gardening and inventing to develop innovative items for the home gardener.

With landscape fabric (which reduces or eliminates the need for chemical weed killers), scarecrow devices and netting products (protects crops from birds in a safe and humane way), the company caters to gardeners looking to avoid chemicals.

Just a few of the Gardeneer products we carry



Trellis

Heavy-duty nylon netting is ideal for growing tomatoes, peas and all vine crops



Weed shield

The ultimate porous landscape fabric for permanent applications. Rated #1 for stopping weeds by eight university studies. Patented dual-layer material with a 20-year weed-free guarantee. Use around trees, shrubs, swimming pools, permanent landscaping and gardens, under patios, decks, walkways, paths

Owl

The safe and humane way to protect gardens! This realistic owl (a natural enemy to most birds) bobs and turns in gentle breezes to startle birds; provides maximum garden protection. 18" tall imposing presence; hand-painted. Use in gardens, decks, boat docks, rafters, barns, open porches, patios.



What a story!

Gardeneer actually began producing scarecrow devices (like the owl) by accident.

"We fell into the Natural Enemy® Pest Repeller business when an employee's father-in-law put a section of hose into his cherry tree to fool birds into thinking it was a snake. He harvested cherries for the first time in 20 years," explains Senior Director of Marketing Eric Peterson.

"We then made an inflatable snake that did the same thing, but better, and followed that up with an inflatable owl (whose protection extended over the whole garden, rather than just a tree or bush). After that we developed an owl with a rigid and rotating head -- and it works, as long as you are faithful in moving the owl every few days as instructed."

"Our line of scarecrow owls have been used in areas outside of their original purpose including multiple movies (like Lemony Snicket), photography, websites, restaurants and television shows."

Fall clean up helpers. Our favorites:



Vibrant **Atlas Nitrile Touch** gloves feature a breathable nylon coating that is completely washable -- these gloves are a must-have for fall clean up.



The **Garden Works TubTrug** is a versatile bendy tote for gardeners. It's incredibly strong and flexible, which makes hauling rocks, leaves and debris or pouring water a breeze. Available in 5 bright colors and 2 sizes (5.5 and 9 gallon).



Get the lawn ready
Produce a thick green lawn the natural way with Nature's Green Lawn Food. This blend of organic ingredients is formulated for use on all types of green lawns.



Wilcox Trowel and Wilcox Weeder.
The trowel features a measuring scale on the blade (which is a great way to guarantee bulbs are planted at the correct depth). Both are made of stainless steel and have a comfortable grip handle.

Home composting: compost lovers take note



The Tumbleweed Compost Maker

Gardeners have long known the benefits of adding rich organic nutrients to the soil by composting. Here's an easy way to quickly and cleanly make compost at home, whether you live in a garden apartment or in a house with a large yard.

The **Tumbleweed Compost Maker** is an above-ground tumbling bin that puts your kitchen, lawn and garden scraps to work. With a daily spin, it produces up to 8 cubic feet of earthy, dark brown compost in as little as 21 days. The dual-end, twist lock, animal-resistant vented lid allows for easy filling and emptying, while producing maximum aeration (tips from top to bottom).

At least four loads of compost can be produced in the time it takes traditional composter bins to produce one.

Constructed of UV-protected polypropylene plastic, assembled Tumbleweed stands 46" high, 26" wide, 34" inches deep, and weighs 22 lbs. (assembles in about 15 minutes). Available at most Sloat Garden Centers.



Already have a compost bin?

Then try **E.B. Stone Compost Maker**, a blend of organic ingredients designed to supplement the needs of the home

composter. Besides providing nitrogen for proper composting, Compost Maker helps to enrich finished compost by supplying additional nutrients. It is ideal to use when making compost with large amounts of dry, brown materials that are high in carbon.

Gorgeous, pre-lit permanent trees

Every year they just keep getting better! Back by popular demand is our selection of high-quality, permanent trees. Last year we heard from customers about the quality of these trees - they look lush and beautiful, but are also practical for busy families.

Winward Silks uses patented Permalit light technology along with Soft Tip construction so the lights won't burn out as quickly and they stay lit even if multiple lights burn out. Also, Permalit's cooler burning light bulbs are safer for children, and all Winward Christmas trees are easy to set up and flame retardant.

This year's gorgeous pre-lit permanent trees are:

- Beautiful, with a natural, multi-toned color.
- Crush resistant for years of appreciation.
- Built with heavy gauge branches for shaping & hanging strength.
- Built with strong hinged branches for fast and easy setup.
- Produced using Permalit light technology.
- Created with evenly distributed light-spacing for optimum illumination.
- Built to avoid unsightly wires.
- Stable, with a fully welded stand & protective powder coated finish.
- Sold with a 10 year warranty, including the lights.



Exquisite and easy-to-care for permanent trees will be in most Sloat locations in early November. See www.sloatgardens.com for details!



The freshest wreaths around

Our premium wreaths and fresh cut Christmas trees will be available starting Thanksgiving weekend. Check www.sloatgardens.com first for the latest in availability.

Our ornament picks for 2008

This year we present a selection of rich, shiny colors for tree trimming. Take a look!



Available at select Sloat Garden Center locations

Holiday 2008 Special Wreath Workshop

Wednesday, December 3rd at Sloat Blvd., 5:30pm. Make your own beautiful holiday wreath with City College Floristry Design Instructor Jennifer Tabarracci. We will supply various festive materials to create a welcoming wreath for your doorway. Workshop fee: \$35 for a small wreath, \$45 for a medium wreath. Space is limited to 20. Call ahead to reserve a seat.



**Locally
owned for
50 years!**

EST. 1958



Save the Date...

**Sloat Garden Center's
50 Year Anniversary**

Fall Planting SALE

October 10th to 19th

at all locations

It all started here... 50 years ago on Sloat Boulevard

With the San Francisco Zoo across the street and just blocks from the ocean, our Sloat Boulevard store is a landmark in San Francisco's Sunset District.

In 1958, the original owner (Dave Geller) started Sloat Garden Center out of an old building at the corner of 45th Avenue and Sloat Boulevard. In 1968 the business moved down the block to a larger location. There it served thousands of gardeners until 1999 when the building went through a complete renovation. It opened a year later to critical acclaim.

The store's growth and community popularity over these last five decades is directly related to the commitment, experience and knowledge of the staff. So who exactly works here?

"Our staff is made up of gardeners who love plants, people and finding greener solutions for horticultural challenges," reflects longtime Manager Kat Catton. "A delight in learning and experimenting with Bay Area gardening are common to all of our staff. Every team member is an absolute plant geek."

Catton has been with Sloat Garden Center for over a decade and over the years has seen multiple generations shop with their families.

"I literally see adults who originally came in with their parents coming in with their own kids," says Catton. "The gardening knowledge is being passed down through the generations. I've had folks come in and say, 'I'm in here with my kids now because I remember when I was little and my mom brought me here. I remember being poked by cactus, I remember smelling the mint, and now I want to pass that on.' For Sloat Garden Center to be a part of the generations and the community like that is amazing."



The original Garden Shop.



The current location serves gardeners throughout the Sunset district.



With years of experience, Assistant Managers Molly Congdon and Gerry O'Donoghue know what will grow in the area's coastal microclimate. They can help gardeners imagine and create beautiful garden spaces.

SLOAT SEMINARS October/November 2008

Attendance is limited. Please call ahead to the seminar location to reserve a seat.
Seminar fee is \$5.
(Gardener's Reward Program members are free.)

Plant It Now, Plant It Wisely

Lora Kellner, CCN Pro and Jen Strobel, garden designer, discuss techniques for successful fall & winter planting in the Bay Area.

Oct. 1 – S.F. (Sloat Blvd), Kellner, Wed., 6:30 pm

Oct. 4 - Kentfield, Strobel, Sat., 10 am

Oct. 18- Mill Valley, (Miller Ave.), Strobel, Sat., 10 am

Winter Veggie Basics

Dinah Sims, CCN Pro, demonstrates how to grow your own fresh produce for the winter months.

Oct. 5 – Novato, Sun., 10 am

Oct. 11 – San Rafael, Sat., 10 am

Oct. 26 – Mill Valley (Miller Ave.), Sun., 10 am

Brighten Up Your Winter

Tom Bressan, from the Urban Farmer store, shows how easy it is to install your own path lighting and much more.

Oct. 5 – Mill Valley (Miller Ave.), Sun. 10 am

Oct. 22 – S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), Wed., 5:30

Oct. 25 – Kentfield, Sat., 11 am

Fire-Resistant Gardening

Leila Sirk, Marin Master Gardener, discuss plants and garden design to reduce fire danger.

Oct. 12 – Kentfield, Sun., 10 am

Trees for the San Francisco Garden

Gus Broucuret, instructor of Arboriculture at City College for 20 years, discusses how to pick the right tree and avoid common mistakes.

Oct. 15 – S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), Wed., 6:30 pm

Reblooming Orchids

Glenn Smith, Master Gardener, will discuss the conditions and type of fertilizer needed to bring orchids back in bloom.

Oct. 18 – San Bruno, Sat., 10 am

Citrus/Fruit Tree Pruning

Elizabeth Ruiz, aesthetic pruner, demonstrates when and how to prune citrus.

Oct. 25 – San Bruno, Citrus, Sat., 10 am

Nov. 1 – San Bruno, Fruit Tree, Sat., 10 am

Worm Composting

Lynn Adams, Master Composter, brings her special friends to demonstrate how to reduce and re-use our garbage.

Nov. 5 – S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), Wed., 5:30 pm

Nov. 8 – San Bruno, Sat., 10 am

Grow Your Veggies in Pots

Cindy Bonilla, CCN Pro, shows how easy it is to grow veggies in a limited space.

Nov. 9 – San Bruno, Sun., 10 am

Nov. 12 – S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), Wed., 5:30 pm

Pruning Evergreen Shrubs and Trees

Marie Miller, aesthetic pruner, demonstrates how and when to prune evergreens.

Nov. 9 – S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), Sun., 10 am

Nov. 15 – Kentfield, Sat., 10 am

Nov. 22 – Mill Valley (Miller Ave.), Sat., 10 am

Hard to Kill Houseplants

Summer LaTouf discusses plants and plant care for healthy houseplants.

Nov. 13 – S.F. (Pierce St.), Thurs., 5:30 pm

Nov. 19 – S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), Wed., 5:30 pm



Why Plant Now?

Savvy gardeners know that fall is the ideal time to get perennials, trees, vines, shrubs and cool season vegetables into the ground. Why?

Because by the time October and November roll around, the soil in your garden is warm and toasty, and that will help your plants grow. And with the fall and winter rainfall we receive in the Bay Area, planting now will create well-established roots for a much stronger, vigorous plant come springtime. Fall and winter rain mean nature does the weekly watering for you, plus most gardeners see fewer pest and disease problems in the fall.

Whatever your gardening passion...Plant it now. Plant it wisely.

What is Planting Wisely?

Planting wisely means using all the tools available to get plants established correctly so that they are robust, healthy and perform at their peak. Planting wisely means:

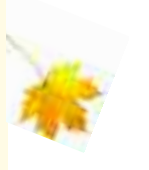
1. **Soil.** Starting off with the best base possible.
2. **Mulch.** Protecting roots from sun and evaporation.
3. **Feed.** Fertilizing in spring and fall.
4. **Choose plants wisely.** Part of planting wisely means choosing trees, shrubs and perennials that are adapted to our Mediterranean climate. Let them get established during the winter rains so they can perform well in the summertime with less watering.

Learn more with Sloat Garden Center

Plant it Now, Plant it Wisely Seminar

Getting plants established while the ground is still warm and before the winter rain arrives is the smart gardening choice. Lora Kellner, CCN Pro and Jen Strobel, garden designer, discuss techniques for successful fall & winter planting in the Bay Area.

- Oct. 1 – S.F. (Sloat Blvd.), Kellner, Wed., 6:30 pm
- Oct. 4 – Kentfield, Strobel, Sat., 10 am
- Oct. 18 – Mill Valley, (Miller Ave.), Strobel, Sat., 10 am



4 steps to planting

1. Soil.



Get off to the right start with **Sloat Organic Planting Mix**. This mix has been specifically formulated to meet the unique growing conditions found in the San Francisco Bay Area. When mixed with garden soil, the organic materials help to conserve soil moisture, loosen hard soil and increase soil porosity for improved drainage.

Sloat Organic Planting mix is ideal for establishing a healthy soil base in flower and vegetable beds.

2. Mulch.



Mulching is the #1 way to retain moisture in the soil - We have two products to recommend: **Sloat Forest Mulch Plus** will improve soil in several important ways. As a mulch it will help conserve moisture and its fir bark content will add long-lasting organic matter to the soil and help keep clay particles separated.



Give **Mulch Block** a try. This compressed little block expands to 2 cubic feet once water is added. It is made from COIR – coconut husk fiber, a completely renewable resource derived from the husk of the coconut. It's light, easy to carry and will not make a mess in your trunk.



ant it wisely.

ng wisely this fall

3. Feed.



Sure Start is the quintessential starter fertilizer for fall feeding. It's a blend of natural organic ingredients formulated to help newly transplanted plants develop strong roots and sturdy growth. Plus, it's rich in natural sources of phosphorous to help plants develop a strong foundation for future growth. The gentle and non-burning formula is safe to use with even the most tender transplants.

4. Plant.

Plants adapted to a Mediterranean climate (whether they be Australian, South African, European or California native) can combine to offer year-round interest and texture with flowers, fruits and colorful foliage. Here is a partial list to help you get started.

TREES

Aesculus sp. (Buckeye)
 Albizia julibrissin (Mimosa)
 Almond
 Olea europa (Olive)
 Ceratonia siliqua (Carob)
 Pistacia chinensis (Chinese Pistache)
 Cinnimomum camphora (Camphor)
 Robinia sp. (Locust)
 Ficus carica (Fig)
 Ginkgo biloba (Maidenhair Tree)
 Lagerstroemia indica (Crape Myrtle)
 Melaleuca quinquerveria (Paperbark)
 Schinus molle (California Pepper)

SHRUBS

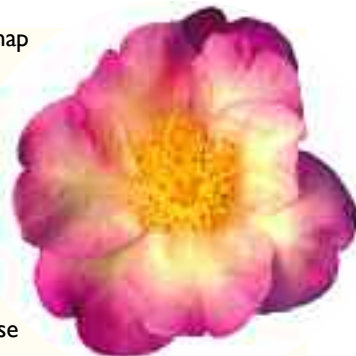
Arctostaphylos sp. (Manzanita)
 Buddleja sp. (Butterfly Bush)
 Callistemon sp. (Bottlebrush)
 Ceanothus sp (California Lilac)
 Cistus sp. (Rockrose)
 Feijoa sellowiana (Pineapple Guava)
 Grevillea sp.
 Lavandula sp. (Lavender)
 Laurus nobilis (Sweet Bay)
 Cotinus coggygria (Smoke Bush)
 Nandina domestica (Heavenly Bamboo)
 Pittosporum sp
 Pyracantha sp (Firethorn)
 Ribes sanguineum (Current)
 Vitex agnus-castus (Chaste Tree)

PERENNIALS

Agapanthus (Lily of the Nile)
 Aloysia triphylla (Lemon Verbena)
 Cactus and Succulents
 Carex
 Dietes sp. (Fortnight Lily)
 Echinops (Globe Thistle)
 Echium sp. (Pride of Madiera)
 Festuca sp.
 Erigeron sp (Fleabane)
 Oenothera (Evening Primrose)
 Origanum sp. (Oregano)
 Penstemon sp. (Beard Tongue)
 Perovskia (Russian Sage)
 Phormium (Flax)
 Sedum sp
 Stachys byzantina (Lambs Ears)

Plant it Now: Camellias!

Gardeners who love camellias snap them up early each fall and pop them into the ground quickly so they will have time for root development before flowering. Beyond the increased plant size and flower production that comes from fall planting, selecting and planting camellias now will give you a greater variety to choose from.



ABOUT: Depending on the variety, camellias will offer flowers from October to May. *Camellia sasanqua* makes a wonderful low growing hedge, terrific container plant and a useful ground cover. It grows from 4 to 15 ft and will grow in full to part sun. *Camellia Japonica's* needs are similar to rhododendrons and azaleas – they prefer a rich organic and acidic growing medium and filtered light. They even tolerate dry conditions!

Both varieties offer incredible, saturated color, interesting flower forms and easy care. You'll also discover that camellias are practically pest free. Don't wait; join your fellow gardeners and try a camellia this fall!

CARE: Feed camellias with an acid fertilizer such as **E.B. Stone Organic Azalea, Camellia and Gardenia Food**. Keep roots cool with a thick layer of mulch and maintain regular watering in order to promote nutrient uptake. For larger, more successful blooms, pinch off at least every other bud that forms on branch tips to concentrate the plant's energy into opening the remaining buds.