

## Spring Fever? By Kathy Robinson

I don't know about you but I've got Spring Fever BAD! I can't wait to get out there in my yard. This dreary weather is kill'in me. In between storms I have managed to get the leaves into the trash and I have done one spraying of Remuda (Round-up for less \$) but I'm dying to plant.....

We know the sun's coming out so here is my plan as to what to tackle first as the weather warms up. While racking leaves I noticed lots of slugs.....this means snail bait immediately so my new flowers will have a chance. Cory's Insect Bait is the best I've found because it gets sow bugs, earwigs and other creepy crawlers as well as slugs and snails. If you have areas where your pets don't roam use it but where the pets are, then I'd use Sluggo. You can also put copper strips around your pots to help deter these garden pests. Don't think though, that they can't climb, I've seen them up in trees with no problems and lots to eat.

I'm also planning on replacing soil in a lot of pots with fresh new potting soil and mulching the ground are both on the agenda. Improving the soil early makes a huge difference to the yard for the coming seasons. If the pots have plants in them carefully remove the plant, (root ball in tact) and add soil to the bottom of the pot. Place a screen or broken piece of pottery over the drain hole so the new soil won't be washed away. If there aren't any plants then start fresh, the old soil could be worked into the compost pile for use later.

I am ready to get my vegetables in as well.....Summer veggies have issues with cold soil so don't plant them too early. You will just have to do it again. But, go ahead and get in a crop of cool season veggies right now, we have a really long growing season and you can get in several crops a year here in "sunny" CA. We added a Vegetable Seminar to our schedule of classes this year and it's coming up the end of Feb. to help you with all the tricks of the trade. Don't forget to mulch with a lot of organic material. The products with "good bacteria" are really working well (Harvest Supreme or Soil Building Compost come to mind).

Next, my first wave of color is going in right away.....cool season Spring flowers can be planted now with later bloomers being added when danger of frost is over. This way you can have blooms emerging in succession, quite impressive and a lot of fun. The primrose is one of my favorite flowers for this transition. Use them right now in the sun or the shade but remember they will last longer with some afternoon protection from the sun. They are really bright and will color up a pot or bed instantly. In the shade leave them in the ground and plant summer color around them and they just might be back next year. Don't forget the snail bait, snails see them as lettuce!

Well, all this talk is forcing me to be off to the nursery to stock up.....I know, your thinking that I go there everyday, big deal. Well, today it's my day off and I'm going for me, not for work! I'm out to start curing my Spring Fever!!!!!!

Up coming classes:

Turf Seminar Feb 13 1:00 at Robby's Nursery (Free)

"Have the best Lawn in your Hood" by Robby and Dale (the Sultan of Sod)

Home Show Feb 19-21 at the Fair Grounds (Home show admission)

Healthy Living thru Gardening (Check the Bakersfield Californian for seminar times)

Vegy Seminar Feb 27 1:00 at Robby's Nursery (Free)

"Backyard Vegetable Growing" Learn the tricks of growing veggies in your own yard.