

Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for September

Aw shucks!

By Cynthia Brian

"Plough thorough and deep, while sluggards sleep, and you shall have corn to sell or to keep" – Poor Richard



Plucking red cherry tomatoes straight from the vine.

Photos Cynthia Brian

In August, there are few things better than eating freshly picked corn or nibbling juicy ripe tomatoes right from the vine. This month our vegetables and herbs are at their prime when shucking corn becomes a family activity. I like to pull back the husks, remove the silk, and wash the cobs, allowing them to soak in clean water for an hour or so. I then proceed to slather the kernels with a mixture of butter, garlic, basil, cilantro and red peppers. Finally, I wrap the husks onto the corn to grill on the barbecue. Delicious.

I dine and dash through my vegetable garden, nibbling on basil, arugula, and cherry tomatoes, only the eggplant, peppers, kale, potatoes, and basket of mixed herbs make it to the kitchen. With the heavenly herb harvest, I dry as many varieties as possible and make gift packets for people who buy any of my eight books. (Yes, I'm excited to announce that my third book in the Be the Star You Are!® series, "Be the Star You Are!® Millennials to Boomers Celebrating Positive Voices in a Changing Digital World" has been published. Buy your autographed copies at <http://www.CynthiaBrian.com/online-store>.)

This month is also a great time to divide your bearded iris. These rugged and reliable bloomers are not attractive to deer. With a shovel, cut rhizomes and plant where

you want another patch of colorful flags. Did you know that the Greek goddess of the rainbow was named Iris?

In this hot month, continue to water deeply and prevent evaporation through mulching. Other advantages of mulching include eliminating weeds, which reduces the need for cultivation and reduces injury to shallow rooted plants. Buckwheat hulls, coffee grounds, shredded corn stalks, peat moss, pine needles (around acid-loving plants), tree bark of cedar, fir, oak and redwood, and wood chips are all excellent materials to use.

I recently wrote an article titled "The Language of Trees" (<https://www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue1204/Digging-Deep-with-Cynthia-Brian-The-language-of-trees.html>) with research proving that trees talk and support one another. When I returned from Ireland, I witnessed a once very erect pine tree reaching out with one of its branches to "hug" a neighboring pine 20 feet away. That pine was bending to reach yet another pine. Because of the volatility of this year's fire season, I will need to cut this lonely limb. Keep your trees trimmed to a minimum of six feet above ground level, remove brush, and dead limbs from around the perimeter of your home. Since we all live in a fire zone, put together an emergency supply kit for your family and pets.

Suggestions for an emergency supply kit

In the midst of the many disasters last fall, I encouraged clients to put together an emergency "go bag." I would like to share this safety measure with you. Whatever the calamity, it will behoove you to have an emergency supply kit in every vehicle and a larger one in your home. Make sure you know where all of your important documents are located. Make copies and put a reminder note on your bag to grab any necessities that aren't already packed. Sometimes, as is the case with our California wildfires, a matter of minutes was the difference between life and death. Make copies of your passport, driver's license, credit cards, and have some small bills available. Know where your chargers are for phones, tablets and computers. Back up your computers and keep files in the cloud or offsite. Make a plan for your pets and animals and have a bag ready for them as well. Most of all, remember that saving your life and that of your family is the most important thing. Everything else can be replaced.

Fill a backpack or small case with the following:

First Aid kit	Protein bars
Work gloves	Personal hygiene kit with a
Towelettes	toothbrush, soap, medications
Small towel	Matches
Bottled water (1 gallon per person per day)	Candle
Blanket	Flashlight with extra batteries
Walking shoes	Eating utensils
Peanut butter	Breathing masks (Niosh-N95)
Honey	Clothing change

I hope that we never have to use these emergency kits, but it's best to be prepared. Most of the schools are back in session. Drive safely and be aware.

Days are getting slowly shorter. Savor those golden sunsets and enjoy shucking summer's white and yellow corn.

