

## Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for November



Fall leaves falling on pansies.



A colorful array of succulents adds drought and fire resistance to a garden.

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**Time to watch for rodents and skunks.** It's mating season for rodents and skunks. The recent fires have impacted wildlife movement allowing animals to migrate closer to residential development, including a plethora of rats. Vector Control Inspector Joe Cleope alerted me about the new procedures and protocols instigated in the district. Many people don't know that Vector Control is a free service. If you have a question or concern, please visit the website for assistance. <https://www.contracostamosquito.com>.

**Time to plant garlic.** Vampires may not like garlic, but foodies do! Planting just a dozen cloves will yield you a harvest of more than 120 cloves. A bulb has several cloves to break apart before planting in a sunny location in rich, well-drained soil. Put the pointy side up and the flat side down, cover the cloves with a layer of mulch, and they will multiply forming a new bulb. Harvesting will be late summer when the tops have yellowed. You can then tie or braid the stalks or cut the leaves above the bulb. Always save a large bulb for the next year of planting.

**Time to harvest and eat pineapple guavas.** Called feijoa, the fruit is self-harvesting. It falls from the tree when ripe, however, you can also pick the fruit. When cut, a fully ripened feijoa will have clear-colored jellied sections. If not ripe, put in a brown paper bag for

a few days with an apple. Scoop out the sweet/tart jelly and eat raw or make jams, sauces, glazes, or add to salads. The perfume from the fruit is as delicious as the fruit!

**Time to cut hydrangea blossoms.** If you enjoy drying the flowers of hydrangeas, November is a perfect month to do so. If not, once the flowers fade, cut back the stems to encourage new growth.

**Time to plant succulents.** Succulents are drought and fire-resistant. Many boast beautiful flowers, unique shapes, and striped striations. Planting a selection in one designated area presents a bigger impact of form, texture and color.

**Time to pick grapes.** The crops of grapes have come to season's end. If you still have bunches hanging on the vine, take the opportunity to cut them to refrigerate or dehydrate. Use the red-hued leaves in your autumn decorations and place settings.

**Time to give thanks.** We all have so much for which to be grateful. As Thanksgiving nears, take time to express your appreciation for the blessings and gifts you have received. Remember the people in your life that have been there for you on all occasions ... the good, the bad, and the ugly.

To everything there is a season and now is the time to turn, turn, turn.

Happy gardening. Happy growing.