**Second Season**

*In our area September is the official kick off to what I like to call Second Season – the next chance to plan and plant your garden. Spring blooming bulbs are arriving in the garden center, there are still plenty of perennials and trees available, all the new conifers are arriving and it is time to plant again in the veggie garden. Cool season and overwintering crops such as kale, spinach, peas, onions and garlic can be planted now as well as cover crops for empty areas of the veggie garden. Remember planting three zucchini plants instead of the recommended one in May that are now taking over half the garden and producing baseball sized fruit every time you turn your back on them? Now is also the time to send them, along with other finished crops, to the compost pile and plant a cover crop. Check our web site for information on all the different types of cover crops we carry.*

*This is a great time to look over your yard and decide where you want to add something. Perennials on sale at the garden center may be past bloom but, along with trees and shrubs, they will root in and establish themselves this fall giving them a head start on next year’s growth. A more established root system in the spring will mean a less stressed plant and more vigorous growth. Don’t forget to keep them watered in until the fall rains begin. It is also best to hold off fertilizing until the spring. Consider filling some of the spaces with spring blooming bulbs. Bulbs look better planted in groups instead of just one or two here and there. I like to plant daffodils and tulips in groups of five to seven or a whole border in front of my beds for color impact in the spring. I also save some bulbs to fill large containers that have been blooming all summer with annuals and are now ready to be cleared out for the season. Add a few fall pansies and they will look fresh again thru the fall. When the spring bulbs are finished blooming they can be planted out in the garden and the container is ready for its summer plantings. Crocuses are my other go to bulbs for potting up – I plant them in small bonsai pots and store them in my garden shed for the winter. They make great last minute gifts and once all the holiday decorations come down I bring them in a few at a time for a preview of spring. Make sure they have rooted in before you bring them indoors.*

*Second Season can be filled with as much activity as Spring, but don’t forget to spend time with your family enjoying some of our many local festivals that occur this time of the year like the Oregon State Fair, Movies in the Park, Corn Maze on Sauvie Island and, my personal favorite, Gourmet Apple Tasting at Portland Nursery.*