

# GARDENING TIPS FOR TEXAS HOT SUMMERS



# WAITING FOR RAIN

Summer droughts and temperatures of 100 degrees or more are becoming more frequent.

How can we adapt our gardens and landscapes to drought and water restrictions?





## Waiting On Rain: Texas Gardeners Prioritize Watering

*Texas A&M AgriLife Extension's September Gardening Guide offers tips to survive heat and drought.*

By Susan Himes, Texas A&M AgriLife Marketing and Communications • SEPTEMBER 12, 2023

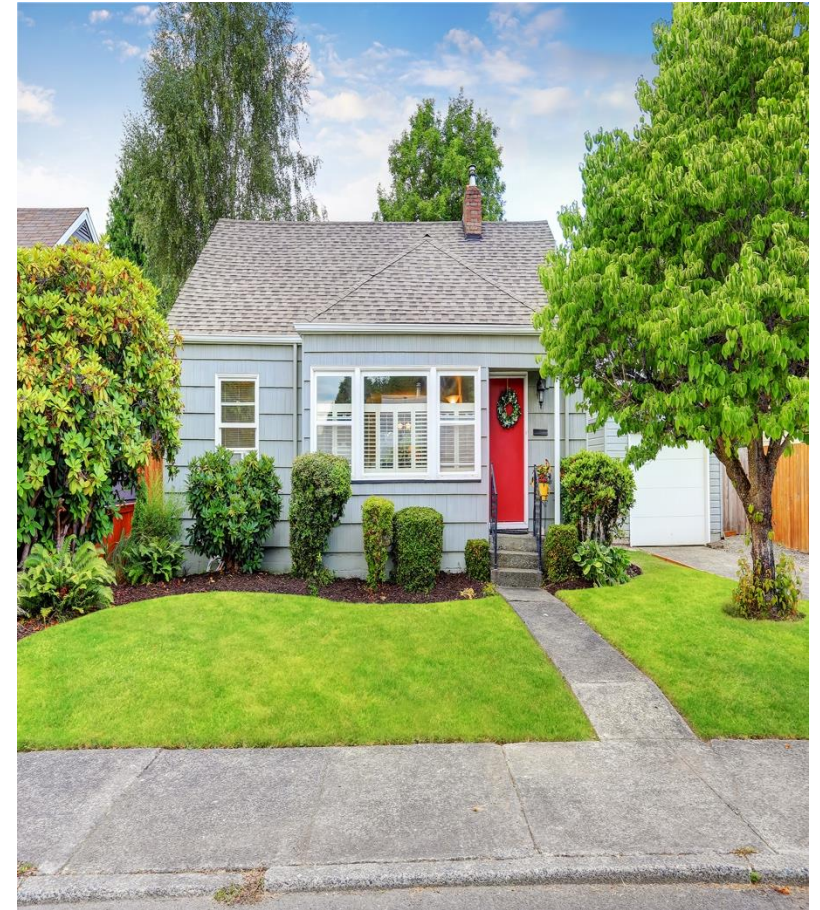
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Whether you are dealing with water restrictions or lack of rain, you will probably have to choose **where** to put available water and **how** to best conserve it.

# THE SOLUTION

- By creating a water efficient garden, your plants can thrive despite the water restrictions placed by the city or the drought.
- Developing a low water garden is a more effective way to preserve and not wasting water.
- Think creatively about how to conserve water and how you are going to take care of your garden during dry times.
- Rethink what you consider a beautiful yard and landscape. It can still be stunning.
- Everyone should do their part to help save water.



# ASSESS THE SITUATION WHAT DO YOU HAVE?

Trees, shrubs, flowers, vegetables?

Plants; tropical, adapted or natives?

Flowers; annuals or perennials?

What plants are doing well and what plants are struggling?

What is your financial investment?

How much of your property dedicated to lawn?

What gardens or areas of your property are most important to you? Which areas are of the least importance?

# PRIORITIZE

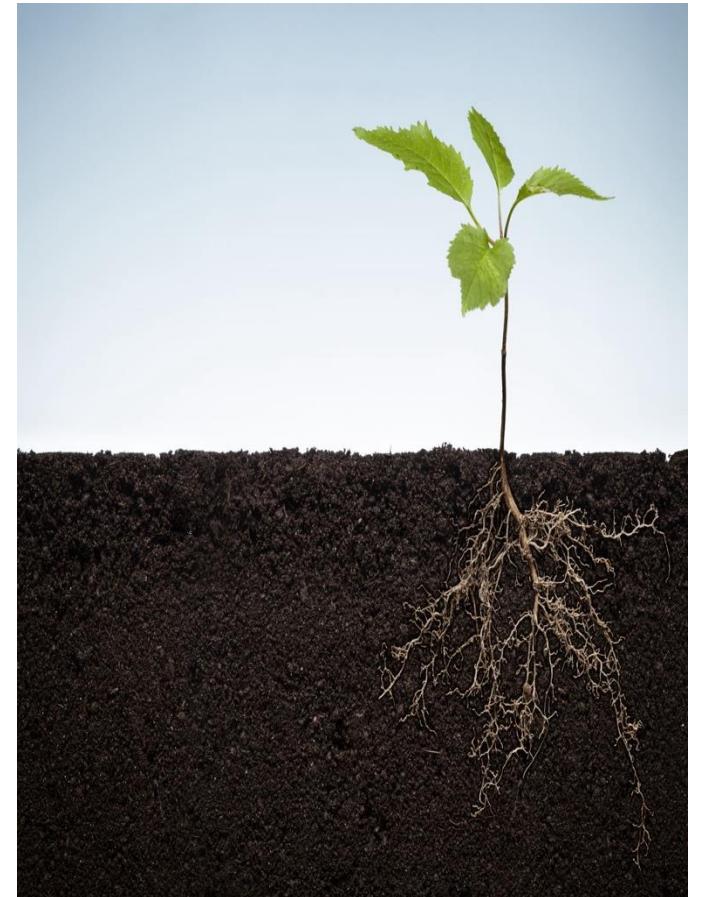
If you don't have enough water for your entire property, it is best to concentrate on the most important plants in your yard.

It's probably going to be your **trees**. Trees are important because they mitigate heat helping to cool your house and yard.

Ideally, you should water trees and shrubs by giving them at least one inch of water per week, delivered slowly, out to the drip line.

Use this formula for trees: 1-2 gallons of water per inch of trunk diameter once a week.

Lawns have typically the lowest priority but traditionally get the most water.



# SUN SCALD



# STRATEGIES – Best Practices

- Capture water from roof runoff
- Mulch, Mulch, Mulch
- Water early morning or VERY late
- Use drip irrigation or soaker hoses



# NATIVE PLANTS ARE TYPICALLY DROUGHT RESISTANT AND REQUIRE LESS CARE

**Blackfoot, Four Nerve Daisies, Obedient Plant**



**Salvias, Lantana, Mexican Feather Grass, some adaptive plants**



# HOW CITIES PREPARE FOR SEVERE SUMMERS

## Heat Island Cooling Strategies

When it comes to heat mitigation, the aim is to cool cities, neighborhoods and heat-vulnerable locations.

This is accomplished through land-use planning, urban design, urban greening and waste-heat reduction.

Climate Mitigation Action plans are a part of urban planning. They reduce impacts to help save lives, protect infrastructure, reduce energy demands and improve work productivity and community comfort. They are preventative measures.

Strategies include:

- Trees and Vegetation – lower surface and air temps, reduce stormwater runoff

- Green Roofs – rooftop gardens

- Cool Roofs – reflect light and heat away from a building

- Cool Pavement – paving materials that stay cooler or are permeable

- Smart Growth protect the natural environment-

- Shade - one of the most effective ways to keep people cool

# HEAT MITIGATION STRATEGIES

## Reduce Concrete

- Create permeable surfaces with pavers, mulch, crushed granite, pavers
- Less concrete reduces the “heat island” effect and allows water to drain through to the soil
- Less runoff to street and culverts – more water to our aquifers
- Temperature drop 10 -20 degrees when plants moved from concrete surfaces to ground and shade.



# HEAT MITIGATION STRATEGIES - SHADE

- Create shade
- Relocate plants to shady areas
- Block the afternoon sun with canvas, tents, fencing
- Deciduous trees on west side



Remove pots from the sun and concrete surfaces to cooler areas of your yard



# GRAY WATER RECYCLING

## A Tip from your Grandmother

- DEFINITION OF GRAY WATER RECYCLING – REUSING WATER FROM YOUR HOUSEHOLD FOR YOUR GARDEN
- THIS WATER COMES FROM SOURCES LIKE YOUR SHOWER, SINK, OR WASHING MACHINE.
- USE BIODEGRADABLE AND NOT TOXIC SOAPS AND DETERGENTS - ESPECIALLY IF WATERING VEGETABLE GARDEN.





# Vegetable Gardening

Grow vegetables closer together or with companion plants to create shade

# SOME GARDENS THAT SURVIVED THE TEXAS SUMMER



Beth  
Rainwater's  
gardens



Pathways  
and  
sitting  
areas  
created  
among  
grouping  
of trees



Ground  
cover  
includes  
ferns,  
ajuga,  
oxalis







Daylilies  
Iris,  
Salvias,  
Cannas

Gordon  
Ramsey's  
Landscaped  
yard





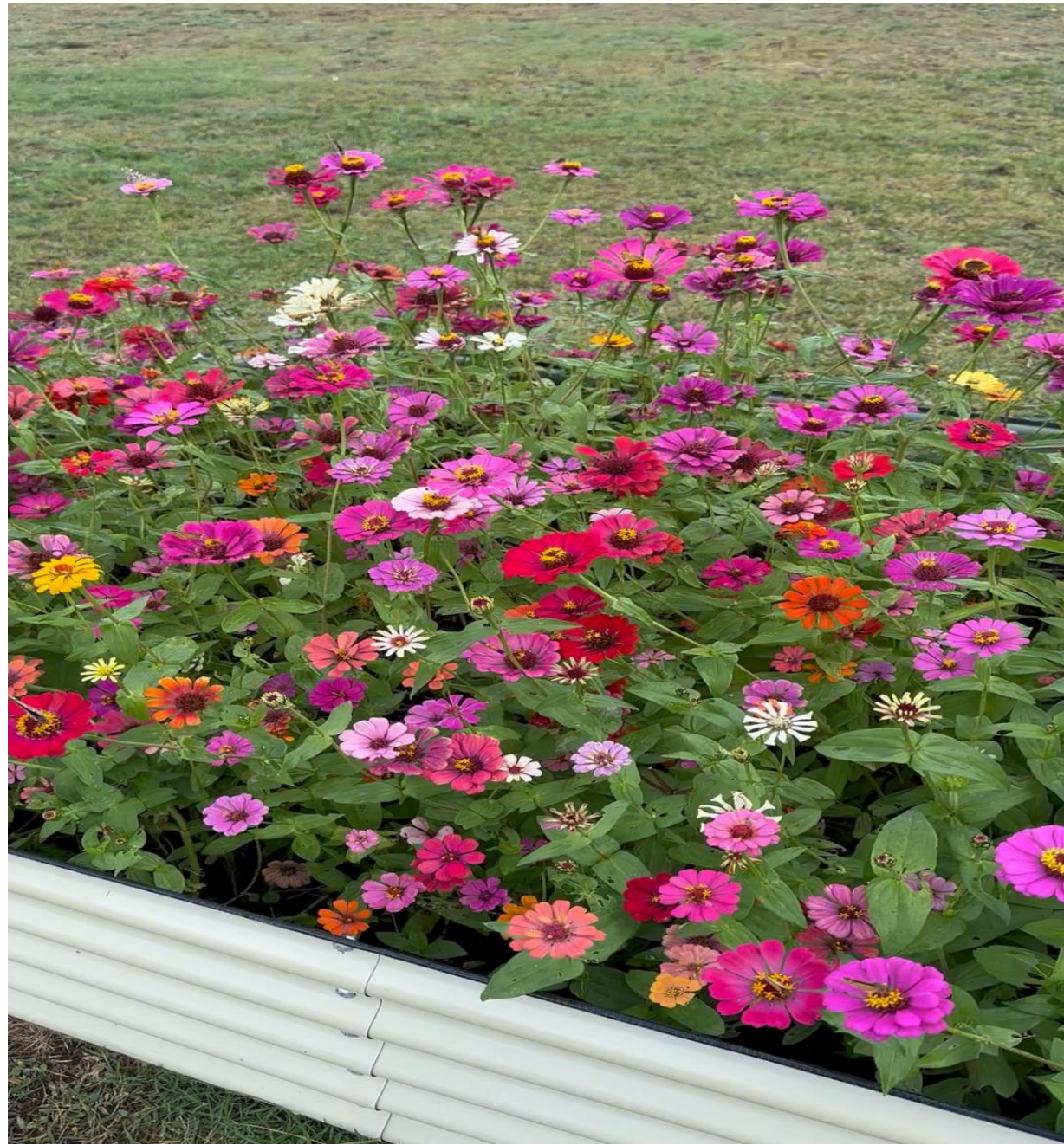
Shady lawn  
with  
understory  
trees and  
expanded  
flowerbeds,





Salvias,  
liriope, small  
shrubs,  
pentas and  
lantana for  
color





## Three Take Aways

- Drought and water restrictions are going to happen. Get prepared.
- You may need to rethink your landscape.
- Get creative about how you use water and still have a stunning garden