

## Episode 130 show notes and advice

### Episode description

This week's episode is all about maintaining a super healthy and productive garden whilst you're away on holiday and in the hot summer heat. Listen and learn as Sarah, and Head Gardener at Perch Hill, Josie Lewis, share their top tips and most helpful hints.

### In this episode, discover:

- How to keep your plants hydrated for longer
- Drought-tolerant plants to try in your garden
- Advice for keeping your garden going into the late summer

## episode 130 advice sheet

### **The bigger the container the easier is it to keep the compost hydrated (02:00)**

Sarah says that a lot of people who attend her courses are used to keeping tomatoes in grow bags or large pots. Instead, try growing them in ex-animal water troughs. The metal exterior and larger surface lock in a lot of moisture, which will keep your plants hydrated for longer.

Josie adds, if you're using a metal trough, don't forget to line the sunny side with something to stop the roots from making contact with the metal, as it can get quite hot.

### **Plan pots that can withstand heat and neglect (4:36)**

If you know you're going to be away in the heat of June, July, or August, Josie suggests planning pots that you know can withstand some of the harsher summer conditions. This is particularly helpful if no one will be around to water your pots in the summer holidays.

Josie finds that Mediterranean plants fare particularly well. Pelargoniums in particular and other South African plants are also used to the baking heat, so are worthy additions.

### **Irrigation systems (5:50)**

Sarah recommends installing an irrigation system in your garden to keep your plants properly hydrated over the summer. Sarah says they have a simple and inexpensive system in the greenhouse at Perch Hill with a timer that performs an essential role.

Instead of twice a day, two or three minutes here and there might be more effective for retaining moisture in the compost.

Last summer, they performed a trial with mini terracotta spikes at Perch Hill, which were designed to retain and distribute water. Sarah says these are excellent for people who are going away for a weekend or a short three-day break.

### **Capillary matting (9:52)**

Following a similar theme of water-saving tactics, placing your pots on capillary matting is good for keeping the wet and humid. Don't forget to water the capillary matting too, this will it to retain essential moisture and drop the temperature in the greenhouse.

### **Tips for hanging baskets (15:35)**

Josie suggests finding the deepest hanging basket that you can for better root formation, and of course, lining it well. Top tip - Josie likes to add anything with a cotton texture for moisture retention within the hanging basket.

Similarly, Sarah suggests taking the hanging basket down when you go away and placing it over a bucket of water. Even though the basket and the water shouldn't touch, the water that evaporates will keep the root systems of the plants moist.

### **Hoeing weeds and mulching (17:40)**

Gently hoe your weeds, leave them to dry, and rake them up. Once this has been done, water your borders and mulch. Mulch is a heavy weed suppressant and a moisture rich, essential for improving soil texture.

### **Caring for house plants (22:12)**

If you're planning on going away, take all your house plants down and place them in the bathtub. Shower them down so they are wet and use capillary matting to lock in extra moisture. Sarah also suggests having a bucket of water in the room for added hydration too.