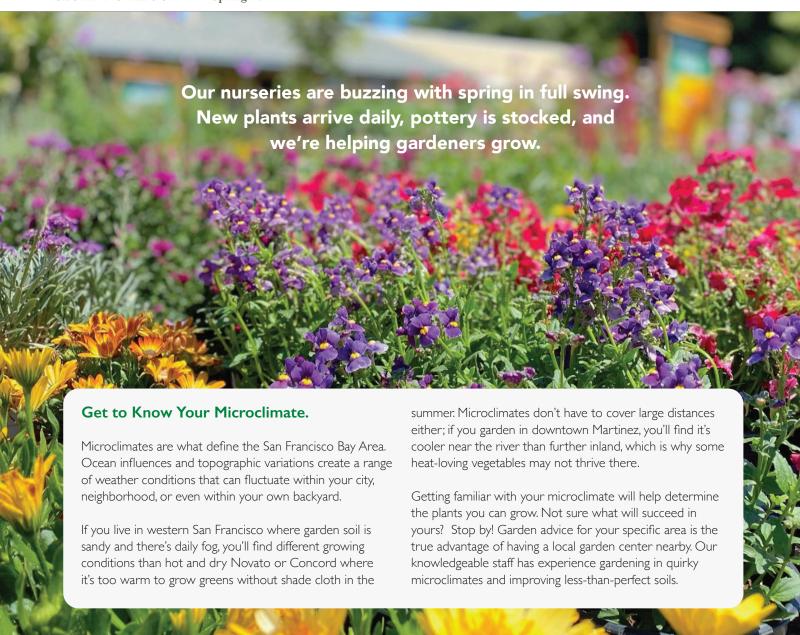






# Gardener's Notebook







# **Sloat Garden Center Soils**

Grow healthier plants with locally made soil formulated for Bay Area Gardens

# Plan before you Plant: Successful Gardens begin with the Soil

Soil is a living organism! It's full of fungi and healthy bacteria that help move nutrients toward plant roots. The fastest way to grow healthy plants is to replenish soil with organic matter. Whether you're growing in the ground or planting up a container, we stock high quality, locally made soils for every garden project.

Container Soils	Plant Needs	Best for Plant Type
Sloat Organic Potting Soil	Highest moisture retention with extra nutrient rich content. Best for container grown vegetables or filling raised beds.	Flowers, vegetables, ornamentals in containers, indoors or out.
Sloat Potting Soil	Medium moisture drainage and retention. Best for potted plants that need their soil to stay moist and rich.	Outdoor ornamental plants (Flowers and vegetables, perennials, shrubs, and vines, etc.)
Sloat  Organic Indoor  Potting Soil  Potting Soil	Highest drainage. Includes pumice to add air circulation to root systems.	Indoor plants (Succulents, Bromeliads, palms, tropical foliage plants.)
For Ground & Raised Beds	Attributes	Best for Plant Type
Sloat Organic Compost	For good soil. A great all-purpose outdoor planting amendment that will improve soil vitality in all soil types.  Does not contain manure.	For planting all vegetables, annuals, and perennials.
Sloat Organic Loam Builder	For poor to moderate soil. Breaks down quickly in native soils to provide quick nutrients. Enhances the bacterial action in the soil to improve fertility.	For annual flowers and vegetables.
Sloat Organic Planting Mix	For good soil. The organic materials help to conserve soil moisture, loosen hard soil, and improve soil porosity for better drainage.	Excellent for planting all types of ornamentals, flowers, trees, and shrubs.
Sloat Forest Mulch Plus	For poor to moderate soil. Used to enrich soil both low in organic matter and nutrient poor. Will help supply air and water to roots for improved growth and robust plants.	A general top dressing, amendment. and mulch for perennial flowers, container and ground plants.

# Our Favorite Tips for Growing Organic, Garden Fresh Food

The San Francisco Bay Area has three distinct yet interconnected vegetable growing seasons. We can grow food spring, summer, and fall, with many varieties able to thrive year-round - even through the coldest months. Vegetables are considered warm season and cool season, depending on the amount of heat they need for growth. With this in mind we've created a 12-month planting timeline (see opposite page) to help Bay Area gardeners determine the right time to get growing. Make your list with help from our chart, then stop by our stores. We have fresh, locally grown organic vegetable and herb starts and seeds that will thrive in your microclimate.

# Bring Nature Closer to your Door

Limited space? A wine barrel on the patio, a planter box beneath a window, a glazed pot or hanging basket on a balcony can turn plant-free spots into portable and versatile leafy havens. Keep in mind: Container plants will need an especially rich growing medium (we use Sloat Organic Potting Soil) as well as consistent watering and feeding.



These barrels once held wine...now they'll hold plants! Our repurposed wine barrels are deep and roomy with plenty of space for veggies and flowers.

# Give Plants a Boost!

All plants need a steady supply of nutrients throughout their life cycle. Though some are present in soil, water, and air, other nutrients need to be supplemented and replenished with plant food for healthy growth. E.B. Stone Organics Sure Start is blended with humic acid and beneficial soil microbes to help plant roots utilize available nutrients. We recommend using

it at planting time to give all plants the early boost they need. This plant food is gentle, organic, and easy to use.



"It means the world to me to pick fresh broccoli that I grew myself."

-Tim Nash, Sloat Pleasant Hill Manager



View our 65+ Food Gardening Guides



At our Danville, Diablo Rd. location, Manager Brad Sheehan has a successful recipe for raised beds and containers. Each spring he amends the store's large raised demonstration bed with this mix.

"We start out with Sloat Organic Potting Soil as the base because it's going to hold moisture well. Then we top it off with Sloat Organic Compost as a top layer, and then blend them together. So many gardeners come back with positive stories using this blend — it's a shoe-in to succeed!" Your vegetable plants need support as they grow. Use our smaller 33"cages to support peppers, eggplants, peas, and beans.

Provide support for larger plants like tomatoes, squash, and cucumbers using our 54" heavy gauge wire cages or sturdy inverted step cages. All our cages are made in the U.S. with American steel.

Support your Veggies!



#### Warm Weather Vegetables: Best Time to Plant

Warm weather vegetables want both warm soil and very warm temperatures.

\* Will not thrive in cool areas

Crop	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Basil				•	•	•	•					
Beans				•	•	•	•	•				
Corn				•	•	•	•					
Cucumber				•	•	•						
Eggplant *				•	•	•	•					
Melon *					•	•						
Peppers *					•	•						
Pumpkins					•	•						
Squash, summer				•	•	•	•					
Squash, winter					•	•						
Tomatoes				•	•	•						

#### **Cool Weather Vegetables: Best Time to Plant**

Cool weather vegetables are most successful if matured when temperatures are mild and cool. If temps are very warm or hot, these veggies become bitter and can "bolt" (go to seed) rather than produce edible parts. Note: if you live in the East Bay, Brussels Sprouts, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Cabbage, and Kohlrabi should be planted in the Fall.

Crop	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Beets		•	•	•	•	•	•	•				
Broccoli *		•	•	•			•	•	•			
Brussels Sprouts*		•			•	•	•	•				
Cabbage *		•	•	•				•	•			
Carrots		•	•	•				•	•	•		
Cauliflower *		•	•	•				•	•			
Celery		•	•	•			•	•	•			
Chard & Kale		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Cilantro & Parsley		•	•	•	•			•	•	•		
Lettuce		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Onions, bulbing	•	•	•									
Parsnips				•	•			•	•			
Peas		•	•	•				•	•	•		
Potatoes		•	•	•	•	•		•				
Radishes		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			
Rutabagas		•	•					•	•			
Spinach	•	•	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•

\* Wait for fall to plant in the East Bay

# Organic Plant Food from the Ocean

We've selected three new plant foods to help you grow large, delicious, high-producing food crops this year. PNW Organics ocean-based plant foods are harvested in the cold waters of Crescent City, CA. The formulations are organic and extremely high in fast-acting micro-nutrients. They can be mixed and applied together!

Fish On: An all-purpose water-soluble concentrated fish emulsion-based plant food for all plants, flowers, vegetables, and trees.

Ocean Gold: An all-purpose water-soluble concentrated plant food for all plants, flowers, vegetables (especially Brassicas!), and trees. Helps stimulate microbial action and increases plant mineral levels.

Kelp Help: Made from kelp that stimulates microbial activity to improve germination, growth, yields, and flavor.



#### Organic Vegetable Garden Checklist

- ☐ Soil: Use Sloat Loam Builder to mix into garden beds and Sloat Organic Potting Soil straight in containers.
- ☐ Get plants started by feeding them with E.B. Stone Organics Sure Start.
- ☐ Companion planting is effective: Plant Marigolds, Alyssum and Nasturtiums along with your vegetables to repel insects and attract pollinators.
- ☐ Feed growing veggies throughout the season with E.B. Stone Organics Tomato & Vegetable Food. Supplement with PNW liquid nutrients (see left for details!).

# Choose WaterWise for a Healthy & Beautiful Garden

Yes, you CAN create a stunning landscape that's also WaterWise. Conserving water through better irrigation practices and appropriate plant choices will create an inviting garden that requires fewer resources and less effort. Commit to WaterWise gardening in 2022!



## Our Best WaterWise Tips

- Water less often but more deeply to encourage deep root systems that can better tolerate dry periods.
- Consider replacing declining plants with a species better suited to our climate. We have a wonderful variety of WaterWise choices in our nurseries. Look for California native plants or Mediterranean climate native plants.
- Use Dramm One Touch 16" and 30" watering wands to help put water where you want it.
- Group plants with similar water needs to make watering easier and more efficient. Place pots and thirsty plants near a water source where you can keep an eye on them. Plant CA native or Mediterranean plants in farther away areas since they'll need less water once established.
- Mulch is often the unsung hero of the garden! It locks in moisture and builds healthy soil as it breaks down. Mulch also prevents soil compaction! You'll be amazed by the difference mulch makes in reducing moisture loss, moderating soil temperatures to keep roots cool, controlling weeds, and returning
- nutrients to the soil as it de-composes. We recommend Redi Gro Bark Mulch and Sloat Forest Mulch Plus.
- Keep up with weeding because weeds compete for water. Both weed cloth and mulch help prevent weeds from taking root.
- When you're planting new plants in containers, consider using water-holding polymers such as Soil Moist. The non-toxic granules will hold water longer than soil alone, thus minimizing moisture loss due to evaporation.

# Plant up your own Indoor Oasis this spring with plants, soil, and colorful pottery





# **April Garden Checklist**

"There's nothing like picking an amazing tomato from the garden. Plant them in April!"

- Brad Sheehan, Danville, Diablo Rd. Manager

#### Plant

- Grow your own organic groceries this summer. Now is the time to plant tomatoes, herbs, zucchini and berries. Use a soaker hose and mulch to conserve water in your vegetable garden.
- □ Start planning your summer flower garden and bouquets. Great summer annuals for the Bay Area are: Lobelia, Begonia, Impatiens, Marigolds, Cosmos, Petunias, Snapdragon, and Alyssum. Perennials: Penstemon, Salvia, Dahlia, Argyranthemum.

#### Prune/Maintain

- ☐ Prune back perennials like Salvia to promote bushiness.
- Prevent powdery mildew and rust on roses and other plants with Bonide Neem Oil. Already have a powdery mildew problem? Treat it with Monterey Complete Disease Control.
- ☐ Stop aphids with Bonide Neem Oil.
- ☐ Snails and slugs are hatching in your garden right now. Use Non-toxic Sluggo or Sluggo Plus to control them.
- Release ladybugs, praying mantis, and other beneficial insects to help control aphids, mites, whiteflies, and other garden pests. If you release beneficial insects, don't spray for garden pests.

#### **Fertilize**

Replenish your stock of fertilizers from E.B. Stone (they're locally made for the Bay Area!). The "Naturals" and "Organics" lines are pet and environmentally safe choices to help each specific plant group in your garden thrive.

# **Tomato Growing Tips:**

Homegrown, organic tomatoes offer generous rewards for every gardener; sliced and eaten fresh, blended into salsa, or cooked up in sauces - the possibilities are endless!

- Plan before you plant: we stock all the ingredients you need to grow delicious tomatoes (soil, tomoato plants, fertilizer, tomato cages, ties, twine, and containers).
- Live in a hot microclimate? Your tomatoes may need protection from the sun to produce large yields. We recommend shade cloth and mulch to protect tomato blossoms and young fruits from overly hot temperatures. Mulch helps all plants handle water stress.
- Growing tomatoes in a foggy area? Choose cool weather varieties that need fewer growth days such as Sun Gold, Cherokee Purple, Early Girl, and more!



# Kitchen Garden Ideas: Plant up a Good Bug Tub







Even in a small kitchen garden, planting up a container of herbs and flowers to appeal to beneficial insects will help keep pests under control and plants healthier. This is biological pest control at its finest! Make your own Good Bug Tub with plants that attract, feed, and shelter beneficial insects. Stop in and choose your Good Bug Tub plants!



# A Weedy Dilemma

Weeds are unwelcome garden guests that compete for precious water and nutrients. Fortunately, there are non-toxic, organic weed management solutions to lend a hand. First a bit about weeds:

There are two types of weeds and they're a bit different from each other: cool weather (fall/winter germination) and warm weather (mid-spring germination).



Examples of cool weather weeds: Dandelion, chickweed, shepherd's purse, curly dock, catchweed, annual bluegrass, sow thistle (wild lettuce). Speedwell, red leafed sorrel/oxalis (what are often mistakenly called clover). Most cool weather weeds need their deeper growing roots pulled or dug out with a weeder or trowel.

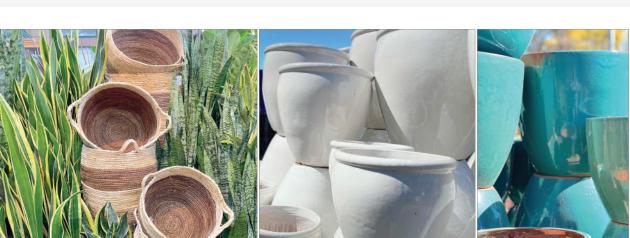
Examples of warm weather weeds: knotweed, purslane, thistle, foxtail grass, pigweed, green leafed sorrel, crabgrass, prostrate spurge. Most warm weather weeds are easily removed with a hoe because they have shallower roots than cool season weeds.

# Choose less toxic herbicides. We recommend these products approved for organic gardening:

- Bonide Lawn Weed Brew RTS selectively kills weeds. Derived from Iron, it controls weeds, disease, moss, algae, and lichens. Just attach it to the hose and spray lawn areas an added benefit is that the iron will green up the lawn.
- Pulverize Weed Killer (non-selective) -- the active ingredient is herbicidal soap which provides fast top kill.
- Pulverize Vine & Brush for tough woody and deep-rooted invasive plants. (Contains malic acid which prevents regrowth).



- Herbicidal Vinegar (non-selective & strong). With 20% acetic acid.
- Mulch is an excellent way to handle weeds before they sprout. Mulch does many wonderful things in the garden and weed control is just one of them!



Sloat Garden Center is the largest independent pottery importer in the U.S. For decades we've connected international pottery makers with independent garden centers throughout North America.



# Join the Pepper Party

Save garden space in May because we're having a pepper party and you're invited to grow along with us! From sweet to hot peppers, these members of the nightshade family have a long botanical and culinary history.

Peppers need warm temperatures to blossom and fruit. When the soil has warmed and all danger of frost has passed, peppers can be planted (May and June are ideal). In general, hot peppers grow most successfully in warmer areas, whereas sweet peppers are able to grow in cooler, foggier regions.

"We're growing peppers from seed in our store demonstration bed this year," explains Brad, pepper aficionado and manager of our Diablo Rd. location. "We've chosen a few varieties from Sandia Seed Co. They carry the famous Hatch green chili seeds and also, Komodo Dragon, a 1.4 million Scoville unit pepper.

# Plants for Modern Spaces



Have a modern, low-maintenance landscape in mind? We're stocked up on architecturally interesting plants where foliage is the star. All are dramatic and perfectly suited for containers. Some ideas:

Aeonium, Acacia 'Cousin Itt', Lomandra, Fatsia, Canna, Aloe, Fatsia, Myers Asparagus (Foxtail Fern), Alpinia (Shell Ginger), Cordyline, Phormium, Yucca, Ophiopogon nigrescens.



# Create a bio-diverse plant paradise that celebrates California

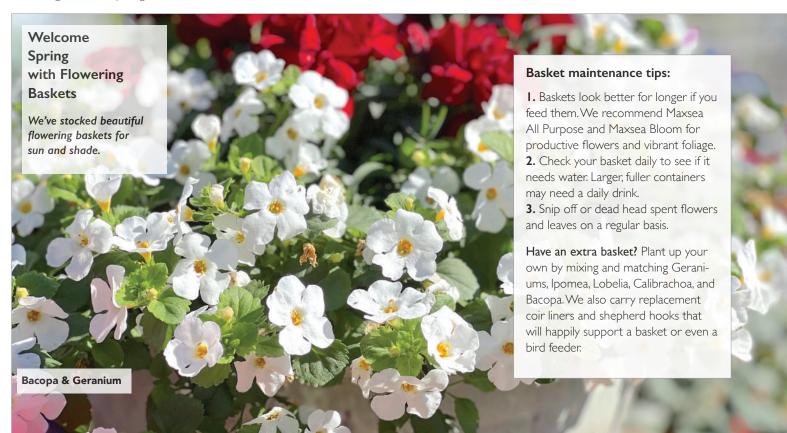
California is teeming with 6000+ native plant species that have evolved and adapted to the ecosystems in which they're found. This local biodiversity offers plants a host of defenses against drought and pests.

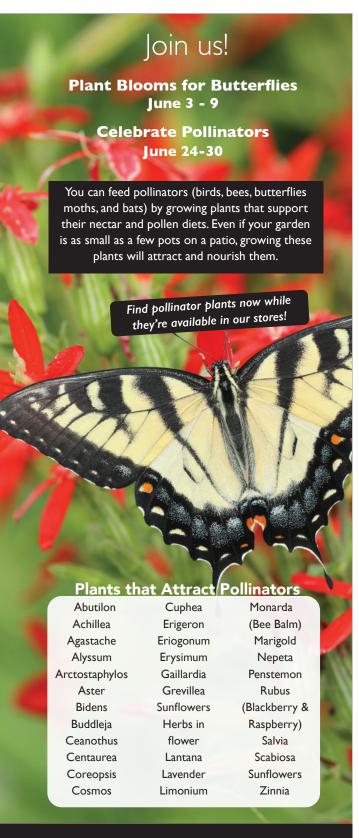
# Four Reasons to Grow Native Plants this Spring

- **I. Save Water.** Native plants are adapted to our dry summer weather. Once established, many need minimal irrigation beyond rainfall.
- **2.** Save Time. While they do best with some attention, natives generally require less water, fertilizer, pruning, and time to maintain than many other plants.
- **3.** Reduce Pesticide Use. Native plants have developed their own defenses against many pests and diseases. Since most pesticide sprays kill indiscriminately, beneficial insects become secondary targets. Reducing or eliminating pesticides allow natural controls to take over and additionally, keeps them out of creeks and watersheds. Choose organic remedies if spraying is necessary.
- **4.** Support Local Ecology. Native plants, hummingbirds, butterflies and other beneficial insects are "made for each other." Botanical research tells us that native wildlife prefer native plants. California's wealth of insect pollinators can improve fruit set in your garden, while a variety of native insects and birds will help keep your landscape free of mosquitoes and plant-eating bugs. California native plants also help provide an important bridge to nearby wild areas.



Get acquainted with the Bay Area's native plants by visiting the San Francisco Botanical Garden, UC Berkeley Botanical Garden, and Ruth Bancroft Garden, or by exploring their natural habitats around Tilden Regional Park, Mt. Tam, and Mt. Diablo. Learn more about the diverse world of California native plants at CNPS.org and Calscape.org.





## A bit about feeding pollinators:

Some plants provide nectar for adult butterflies (like Salvia and Nepeta), while others are food for their larvae: caterpillars (like flowering fennel, dill, and parsley). Milkweed does double duty: the leaves are an important food source for caterpillars and its flowers are nectar rich for butterflies. Learn more about supporting these amazing creatures at sfbaywildlife.info.

## **June Garden Checklist**

Choices abound this month! It's so gorgeous in our stores in June that it's easy to make good plant choices.

Stop by and see what's growing!

- Shannon Fitzpatrick, Assistant Manager, Sloat Pleasant Hill

## Plant

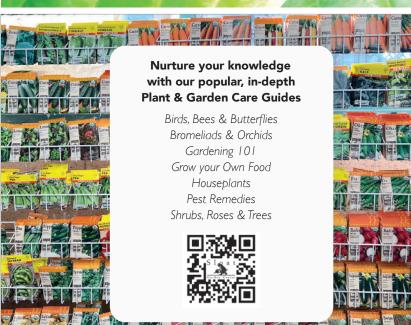
- ☐ Attract hummingbirds with plants that produce nectar: Agastache, Salvia, Penstemon, Buddleja, Fuchsia, and Abutilon. Hang hummingbird feeders on decks and patios.
- ☐ Plant organic herbs for use in the kitchen. Re-seed or plant greens, chard, and kale.

#### Prune/Maintain

- □ Don't forget to water houseplants as your attention focuses on the outdoors.
- ☐ Deadhead roses and flowers to encourage new blooms.
- ☐ Check early-bearing fruit trees for heavily laden branches. Thin fruits now to prevent branches from breaking. Thinning fruits also makes remaining fruit larger!
- ☐ Harvest vegetables to keep them producing.
- ☐ Check for standing water to keep mosquitoes from breeding. Use Mosquito Dunks or Bits to kill larvae.
- ☐ If growing tropical milkweed, be sure to cut it back at the end of the growing season so that the leaves don't form a toxin that butterflies dislike. Native milkweed dies back but tropical milkweed does not.

#### **Fertilize**

- ☐ Boost blueberries and citrus with FST or Liquinox Iron and Zinc to maintain soil acidity.
- ☐ Feed roses with Sul-Po-Mag and alfalfa meal to encourage more blooms and vibrant color.
- ☐ Make sure succulents are protected from hot afternoon sun that can burn them.
- ☐ Your spring plantings are getting hungry. Feed them with E.B. Stone Organics fertilizers or Maxsea.



# Visit our stores: Twelve Locations in San Francisco, Marin and Contra Costa

#### San Francisco

327 3rd Ave between Geary & Clement (415) 752-1614

2700 Sloat Blvd. 46th & Sloat Blvd. (415) 566-4415

3237 Pierce Street Chestnut & Lombard (415) 440-1000

Pierce: 9am-6:30pm

#### Novato

2000 Novato Blvd. (415) 897-2169

#### Kentfield

700 Sir Francis Drake Bl. (415) 454-0262

#### Mill Valley

657 E. Blithedale (415) 388-0102 401 Miller Ave. (415) 388-0365

### Pleasant Hill

2895 Contra Costa Blvd. (925) 939-9000

#### **Martinez**

6740 Alhambra Ave (925) 935-9125

#### Concord

1555 Kirker Pass Rd. (925) 681-0550

#### **Danville**

800 Camino Ramon (in the Rose Garden Center) (925) 837-9144

828 Diablo Road at El Cerro (925) 743-0288

M-Sat hours: 8am-6:30pm Sun hours: 9am-5pm

# Open 7 days a week

8:30am to 6:30pm (or as indicated above)

#### Garden Design Department

401 Miller Ave., Mill Valley (415) 388-3754

#### **Bulk Soils**

828 Diablo Road at El Cerro (925) 820-1273 (East Bay delivery only)

M-Sat hours: 8am-4pm

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We'll help you grow the plants you love!

**12** SLOAT NOTEBOOK

Spring 2022

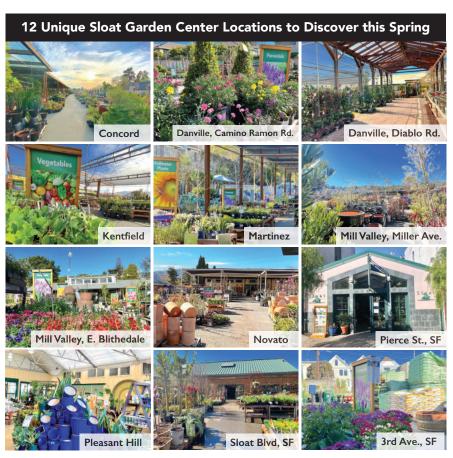


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    - Invitations to our expert gardening webinars

Get more gardening tips! Sign up for our free email newsletters:

sloatgardens.com



Our 12 locally owned and operated garden centers are as individual as the neighborhoods where they're found. Discover the unique and diverse pottery and plant treasures at each Sloat Garden Center location.