

MANAGING FREEZE DAMAGE

A number of people have asked us what to do about freeze damage in their yards.

First, don't do anything immediately. While a plant may look dead, many of them really aren't and they will come back. For example, esperanza will freeze to the ground but will likely come back from its roots. Many plants will drop all their leaves but new ones will come in days or even weeks.

Water often. Plants that are recovering need plenty of water.

Some experts recommend a VERY LIGHT fertilizer after three weeks. The risk is that if too much fertilizer is applied, it can shock the plant. So, we recommend that you opt for very light applications every 3 weeks for 3 applications.

Trim very carefully. Your plant needs whatever it has left that can revive so do not trim with wild abandon! Only trim off foliage that has completely wilted. Plants will drop any dead leaves naturally and at their own pace.

Tropicals and semi tropicals like vinca (periwinkle), hibiscus, bird of paradise and bougainvillea are not likely to survive. Bananas will lose the top half or so of the plant and should be cut down to within 12 to 18 inches from the ground.

Do not mow your grass until you see a mat of tips of fresh green peaking through the burned canopy. Water, water, water!

Good luck out there!