

Cool Tools

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With the summer winding down, you should be getting ready to plant your fall vegetables. I recommend planting corn, squash, melons, beans and, of course, pumpkins for your children. Unfortunately, it's still so hot that planting anything can be trying. I find the biggest problem lies in staying cool while gardening this time of year.

Luckily, some smart manufacturers have recognized the problem and made products to help keep gardeners cool. Here's a list of some of my favorite stay-cool items:

Freezer Panel Vest

This vest contains reusable gel packs that are inserted into the vest. They'll keep you cool for up to four hours. After that, just pop the gel packs into the freezer and they'll be ready for tomorrow's journey into the garden.

Cooling Ranger Hat and Cooling Collar Bandana

Soak these in water for 30 minutes before wearing them. By the magic of evaporation, they'll keep you nice and cool.

You can find these products in Gempler's Catalog, 1-800-382-8473, or by visiting <http://web.archive.org/web/20020919194246/http://www.gemplers.com/>.

Gempler's also sells some great gardening tools. You might want to try their professional 12-inch digging tool and their sawtooth shovels. Both have made my gardening chores easier.

I also found some other great gardening tools at Fry's Marketplace. The Min/Max Thermometer gives you the high, low and current daily temperatures and really helps you determine when to plant your next garden items.

If you're planting desert plants, and this is the right time of year for that chore, you probably feel like you're digging through solid concrete. A digging bar from Home Depot will not only work better than a pick, but it will save you time and spare your aching back.

Quick tip: If you have a lawn, make sure you water so it penetrates at least 6 to 8 inches. And don't forget to water your lawn every 2 to 3 days early in the morning.