

Front yard plans

As you may remember, we had to remove a diseased, old avocado tree in our front yard last year ([RIP Avocado](#)). Since the avocado was removed we have had some pretty hot, dry and wet (summer rains!?) weather. Needless to say, the loss of the tree has had a big impact on the front yard. Most of the plants on the east side of the yard have really crisped in the heat - and no amount of water seems to help. In fact, water makes it worse since these are CA natives. I think that the coffeeberry (*Frangula californica*), front foundation shrubs, will fill out again - hoping anyway. Ditto with the wild strawberry groundcover and the coral bells.

The loss of the tree gave me a nice sunny spot to grow [tomatoes](#) and they were very [tasty](#). But tomatoes are not a beautiful landscape plant and the front yard looks pretty sparse and dry, especially with the tomato plants gone.

In addition to the front yard problem, the forecast of the rainiest El Niño in forever is making me a bit nervous. There isn't a whole lot I can do but I do want to try to divert some of the runoff from our roof into garden rather than having it rush out to the street. I know that the area I am thinking of using as a rain basin is small, but I think it may be pretty and I will feel better anyway. So, enter the backyard former raised vegetable garden.

I know it doesn't look like much, but digging out the soil and moving to the front yard where the avocado tree roots and wood chips are decomposing is a bit of a job. So I decided to enlist the help of people with younger, stronger backs.

Maybe this is not such a good idea. Well, after discussing it with my husband, he suggested I do something that is always hard for me - hire someone! My biggest problem with this is that I rarely plan anything very carefully. Things kind of unfold - not the ideal way to design a landscape. But this is a fairly big job for me so I got out some paper and made a plan.