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FALL BULBS FOR SPRING BLOOMS

Presented by Bud Hervey, Van Bloem Gardens

FOR SPRING COLOR, BULBS MUST BE PLANTED IN THE FALL

Purchasing:

- 1) Purchase bulbs in late September and October when the selection is best.
- 2) Plan your beds, plant bright colors (yellows, oranges, whites) to the outside to enlarge the overall appearance of your beds.
- 3) Plant Tulips, Hyacinth, and Daffodils in groups of 15 to 25 bulbs, it provides support from the wind and a better “drive by appearance.”
- 4) To extend bloom times, plant early, mid, and late blooming varieties together. Look on the packages or box pictures for bloom times.
- 5) When purchasing, make note of bloom heights....you wouldn't want to plant taller varieties in front of shorter varieties.
- 6) Plant fragrant varieties by your front entrance to provide a nice fragrance for company.

Storage:

- 1) Tulips and Hyacinth need 6-7 weeks of cooling prior to planting. After purchase, place bulbs in well ventilated bags and place in your fridge, away from ripening fruit. Planting time should be around mid December, so place in fridge mid Oct to 1st Nov.
- 2) Place in a cool dry place before pre-cooling; avoid storing bulbs in full sun. Heat is a bulb's worst enemy.
- 3) Irregular scars and even small amounts of Penicillin won't damage bulbs. Plant only firm bulbs.
- 4) Daffodils and other smaller bulbs don't require cooling to bloom, but 3-4 weeks will enhance the overall planting, and won't hurt them.

- 5) Extended cooling won't hurt the bulbs. If you're late planting, plant anyway. Although mid December is optimum, plantings in mid January will still come up and bloom.

Planting:

- 1) General rule is to plant bulbs at a depth equal to 2.5 times their width.
Example: For 2" wide bulbs, the hole you dig to place bulbs in should be 5" deep.
- 2) Plant in well drained areas; raised beds are great.
- 3) To ensure the success of your bulbs, plant in good soil that is rich with organic matter. Amend clay soil with compost and expanded shale. Expanded shale aerates the clay soil, makes it easier to work and improves drainage. Add these amendments separately, or use a premixed product such as Covington's Soil Builder.
- 4) Space Tulips, Daffodils, and Hyacinths on approximately 5" centers, and smaller bulbs on 1-2" centers.
- 5) If you're trying to naturalize bulbs, it's best not to plant in full sun.
- 6) Heat and wind have a direct impact on bloom length, try and pick an area that is protected from afternoon sun with some wind protection to get optimum bloom length. If that is impossible, don't let it detour you, you can still have a great show.
- 7) My suggestion is to dig up the entire area you are planting a couple of inches deeper than required, fill in to the required planting depth, then place the bulbs in the area, then cover to ground level.
- 8) After planting spread a commercial bulb food per instructions, water in, and wait for your spring show. If the winter is dry, water occasionally, but beware of overwatering.

Traditional Bloom Time:

Tulips Early Bloomers--Single Early, Double Early, Fosteriana, Kaufmannian

Tulips Mid Bloomers--Darwin Hybrids, Triumphs, Gregii, Species

Tulips Late Bloomers--Single late, Parrot type, Bouquet, Double Late, Lily Flowering & Fringed

Daffodils--Read the package, they're all over the board

Hyacinths--Early