

PLANTING & MAINTENANCE INSTRUCTIONS

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The following instructions will help you successfully plant your new plant material. Following these simple guidelines and providing proper watering, maintenance, and fertilization is the key to success!

Before you start - It is essential for you to realize that a plant is only as good as its own root system. The "bottom makes the top", as we like to say. A healthy root system must be established <u>first</u> in order to develop healthy branches, leaves and blooms.

Soil: The most important factor in promoting a healthy root system is soil with proper balance of:

aeration fertilit porosity pH.

If even one of these essentials is missing or wrong, the plant will never thrive! Therefore, we highly recommend you evaluate your soil, and properly amend it, before you even begin planting. We recommend combining the following amendments with your existing soil to achieve optimum root growth & plant health.

What you'll need

- ✓ Sphagnum Peat Moss-1 cu. ft. peat moss per 12 shrubs (or each B&B tree)
- ✓ 100% Composted Manure-1 40# bag of manure per 6 shrubs (or 2 per B&B tree)
- ✓ Transplant Root Stimulator -1 pound Transplant per bag of manure (approx. ¼ cup per shrub)
- ✓ Osmocote Plus 15-9-12 North + Minors-1/2 pound Osmocote per bag of manure (approx. 1/8 cup/shrub)

Digging your holes

- Always dig your holes at least 50% wider and the same depth (or shallower) as the pot or root ball.
- Place the soil in a wheelbarrow, or in a pile, so you can amend some of it later & for filling the hole.

Placing your plants

♣ Potted plants -

- Angle the pot so that you can gently slide the plant out of the pot and into the hole. Be extremely careful to keep the root ball intact! If there are many roots circling the root ball, cut the roots vertically from top to bottom, ½" deep, in three locations evenly spaced around the root ball.
- Make sure all plants are even with or even slightly higher than the existing soil in your yard. If you will be mulching around the plants, place them 2" higher than existing grade to accommodate 3-4" of mulch.
- ♣ B&B (balled in burlap) plants, DO NOT REMOVE THE WIRE BASKET OR BURLAP!
 - Carefully roll the root ball to the edge of the hole so that it gently slides in. Be extremely careful to keep the root ball intact!

Filling the holes

- Take up to ½ of your existing soil and mix it evenly with the recommended amendments. Using ⅓ to ½ of your existing soil is to acclimate the roots to the native soil. If you use only amendments, the roots might begin to circle the hole and may eventually girdle themselves.
- After thoroughly mixing the amendments with your native soil, fill the holes.
- Soak the plants until thoroughly moist. This will evenly settle the soil and eliminate any air-pockets. Check to see that the plants are still straight and at the correct level.
- ♣ For B&B plants, fill the hole 2/3rds full with amended soil, soak plants with water till moist, check that the plant is still straight. Now is the time to cut all twine or rope from the top of the root ball and peel back the burlap. Remove the burlap from the top of the root ball only and bend the wire loops over backwards if they stick up. Make sure you don't leave any twine around the trunk! Fill the hole the rest of the way with your amended soil and slightly slope the soil away from the root ball so that water doesn't puddle around the plants.

Watering

- Thoroughly water your plants the next day after planting. Use a medium running hose and spray around and within the root ball area until saturated.
- You should repeat this procedure every 3 days for one week and then 2-4 times per month thereafter. BE CAREFUL NOT TO OVER WATER IN CLAY SOILS!
- The vast majority of plantings fail because of too much water, not too little. **Always check the soil around the plants prior to watering.** If the soil feels moist, don't water yet. Be aware that it is common for plants to wilt for some time after planting due to *transplant shock*. During the first year after planting, we recommend checking the soil around your plants once a week for moisture requirements.