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From the Nursery to Your Landscape

Congratulations, it's a plant! Now do you know what to do? Raising a good plant isn't as intimidating as it seems. Here are a few pointers:

Transport:

A new plant needs special care in order to thrive in your landscape. That special care starts with the transportation process. Never pick up a plant by its leaves or by its trunk, this places excessive stress on the roots and shoots and can result in serious root damage or fractured stems. Carry the plant by the container or lift it from underneath the root ball.

Severe leaf damage can occur during a ride home in the back of a pick-up truck or on an open trailer. The leaves are exposed to high winds, which results in leaf burn. In serious cases it will cause all the leaves to drop off within two days. A simple tarp will prevent damage from occurring.

Selecting a Site:

Light and moisture requirements are very important factors to consider when selecting the planting site. A plant placed in the wrong conditions will never realize its full potential.

Planting:

Determining the depth of the hole is the most important part of the planting process. The top of the root ball should be at, or *slightly above* (1"), ground level. A plant that is planted too deeply in the soil becomes very disease/pest prone and is at risk of suffocation. The diameter of the hole is less critical, it should be approximately 12 inches larger in diameter than the root ball of the plant. The edges of the hole should not be smooth, rough them up a bit with the blade of a shovel. We do not recommend amending the soil at the time of planting unless an entire bed is done. We do recommend using a product called **Mycor™ TreeSaver®**, a biostimulant and mycorrhizal inoculant, when planting trees or shrubs (Azaleas and Rhododendrons being exempt).

Watering:

Watering should be done regularly every five days for the first few months after planting. The method of watering is critical. A quick spray of water to the surface of the soil will do more harm than good. A slow, thorough soaking is required. Five to ten gallons of water (depending on plant size), down through the roots, is what it takes to keep the plant healthy. After the initial few months the plant should be watered every week during the rest of the growing season.

Care:

Aside from watering little special care is needed during the first growing season. Avoid using high nitrogen fertilizers or doing any serious pruning during the first year.

Watch out for any diseases or pests that might attack your plant. The plant will be most vulnerable when it is under stress, such as times of drought, lack of sunlight, or extreme humidity.

Fertilization can begin after the first growing season. We recommend using an organic-based product that has been supplemented with inorganic fertilizer. Some plants require specialized fertilizers, be sure double check the compatibility before application.

Don't hesitate to contact us with any questions regarding the care of your plants.

Sources

This sheet has been compiled from experience and information from the Pennsylvania Certified Horticulturist Reference Guide