

PLANTING & CARE OF POTTED PLANTS



PRAIRIE MOON NURSERY®



IMMEDIATE CARE: Remove plants from the box as soon as you receive them. Completely water all plants to the saturation point and allow free drainage. This will rehydrate and resettle the contents. Best results are achieved by planting as soon as possible. If you cannot plant right away, check for drying at the same time every day and keep in a semi-shady location with adequate air circulation. Monitor all plant types and sizes if you have a mixed tray because water needs may vary. A short interval to allow some drying will prevent over watering.

ATTENTION:

Due to the challenges of growing many different species of plants to ship out together at the same time, some species may have been cut back to reduce the size of the top growth. This reduction in size allows the plant to be boxed without damaging top growth and reduces water loss so that larger plants will not dry out as quickly. It is not harmful to the plants.

PLANTING BASICS: Thoroughly water pots or trays before moving them to the planting site. Size your planting holes roughly two to three times the size of the root mass. Overly rich soil or heavy fertilization is not necessary to achieve good results. Soil amendments such as compost or peat are not needed if your chosen plants are a good match for

the soil type, but they may be used if desired to encourage more rapid establishment. Combine amendments into each hole or apply in advance over the entire surface of the site. If adding organic material, only use moderate amounts and mix thoroughly with existing soil. Do not create a pocket of soil around the roots that is markedly different from the surrounding original soil.



2.5" x 3.5"
plant from 3-pack




2" x 5"
deep-root
plug from tray

After the planting holes are prepared, remove plants from the pre-moistened container. **DO NOT pull on top growth before firmly squeezing the pot sides and pushing up through the bottom holes.** Once the mass is loose, continue to squeeze sides and gently wiggle the plant to release the root ball intact. Hold the plant so that the top of the soil around the plant is at the same level as the surrounding soil. Firm in place, forming a slight dish to hold water. Watering gently but deeply will settle the soil around the roots and allow new, and deeper root formation. We suggest marking the location of any new plant with a sturdy tag that will stay in place through the establishment phase. This will help to ensure that the plant receives the early care that it might require. It can also ensure that a desirable plant is not mistaken for a weed.

WEED MANAGEMENT: A native naturalized garden can become low-maintenance with time but for the first couple of years, fast-growing weeds can overwhelm any planting. Hand-weeding will be required a few times a year for the first two seasons.

MULCH: There are several products available to use as mulch. Most are made of wood or shredded bark. Availability, cost, and aesthetics can inform your choice. Weed-free composts can also function as mulch. About two to four inches of such material will help keep weeds from germinating as profusely. Leave a small, mulch-free area where stems and leaves emerge from the ground. Weeds will still occur, but the mulch will make it easier to pull them out. Mulch will also maintain moisture and buffer rapid temperature changes in the soil. If your goal is for the native plants to fill in by re-seeding and vegetative spreading, you may not need to re-apply mulch on an annual basis. Some gardeners use paper underneath the mulch to reinforce the weed barrier. Put down several layers of newspaper in strips that fit between the plants and then top-dress with mulch or compost.

WATERING: Initial watering when planting is very important. Water deeply to allow the formation of deep drought- and frost-resistant roots. Make sure the plants do not go through significant drought for the first three to six weeks. Plants will be most vulnerable during their first growing season when they are working on growing and expanding hardy root systems. Once established, most native plants should be able to withstand extreme weather conditions.

CONSIDERATIONS: Knowing your site's sun exposure and soil moisture-holding capacity, as well as the sun and soil preference of the plants, will help you place them to their best growing advantage. 



CONSIDERATIONS CONTINUED:

- Be aware of the eventual height of each plant. A common planting convention is to plant the taller species in the back or center, depending on viewing orientation.
- Place species indicated for wetter soil in the portion of the planting where the soil may be the wettest. In a rain garden (pictured above), this would be the lowest part of the depression.
- Bloom time can influence plant placement. Consider whether you want certain plants with similar bloom times adjacent to each other or a distance apart in your garden

PLANTING LAYOUT SUGGESTIONS FOR GARDEN KITS AND MIX & MATCH TRAYS:

Our trays of 38-50 plants in the Garden Kit or Mix & Match trays will start a garden of approximately 75-150 square feet. For a smaller planting such as this (or even up to a couple hundred square feet), here are some basic design concepts to consider...

DISPERSED: By trying to evenly disperse each plant species across the site, you will maximize the visual interplay between plants and allow some room for mature growth or inter-planting with individual species.

GROUPS AND DRIFTS: If you desire a more immediate, intentional style to your planting, try grouping each species in its own sector, perhaps elongating each group to form loose lines. Our "Garden Kits" can be augmented with a "Mix & Match" tray to create larger groupings of your favorite species.

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