



PLANTING TECHNIQUES

Planting techniques focus on the plant, site conditions, planting procedures and maintenance during establishment.

Plant refers to the stock type such as bare-root, balled and burlapped, container and mechanical tree-spade. Each stock type has potential artifacts associated with production, harvesting or handling that should be addressed when detailing steps in planting.

Bare-root plants as the name implies are harvested, processed, stored, shipped, handled and planted without soils or other media attached to the roots.

Container plants refer to any plant produced and sold in a container with intact soil or growing media.

Balled and burlapped (B&B) plants are grown in field soils and harvested with an intact soil ball wrapped in burlap or other mesh material. B&B harvesting is typically associated with trees and large shrubs.

Mechanical tree spade transplanting usually focuses on semi-mature trees or mature shrubs.

Site conditions refer to the soil type (sand, loam, clay) and drainage. Adequate drainage is essential for survival of most plants either newly planted or established. Any soil that does not readily drain should be examined to determine the cause. Clay soils can be conditioned and aerated by adding sufficient amounts of organic matter. Soils with a high water table may need to be drained by installing a subsurface drainage tile to carry off excess soil moisture. Raising the planting level with several inches of friable soil may be necessary in some locations to provide a porous soil condition necessary for good growth.

Planting procedures include: the planting hole; positioning the plan; fertilizing if necessary; backfilling the hole; staking; mulching and watering.

Maintenance during establishment primarily focuses on watering. There is no specific timetable for watering in any soil type. An indication of a plant's water needs can be attained by carefully checking for soil moisture 6-8" deep in the root-zone. If soil is moist leave it alone and check every day or two until soil begins to feel dry. Then, water thoroughly with a small stream as was done when planting. Water again only when soil begins to feel dry at this 6-8" depth or if wilting occurs on the plant's foliage. Maintain this watering practice for the first growing season.

Understanding variations within stock or plant type and site conditions aid in tailoring planting practices to encourage plant establishment.

The reverse side of this fact sheet outlines planting procedures for: **Annuals, Perennials and Ground Covers**

Annuals, Perennials and Ground Covers

Notes:

1. The following specification is recommended when planting plugs, plants from cell packs or quarts on 6", 8", 10" or 12" spacing. Larger container sizes such as 1 gallon containers would be planted as described for container shrubs.
2. Check the plants for plug/cell moisture. If necessary, water the plants in their containers to insure adequate plug/cell moisture prior to planting. Remove the plants from their containers; disrupt, tease or loosen the roots of container bound plants.
3. Apply soil amendments (if applicable) and nutrients (based on a soil test), to

- the surface of the planting area at the appropriate rates. Till the entire area, loosening the soil and incorporating amendments and nutrients to a depth of 6 - 8".
4. Level/smooth the soil to finished grade. Apply mulch (if applicable) evenly over the planting area at a depth of 1 - 1 1/2".
5. With a hand trowel or other appropriate tool, plant through the mulch layer so that the roots are entirely covered with soil. Roots should not be in contact with the mulch layer.
6. Water the planting area so that plugs/cells and soil are adequately moist.

