

PERENNIALS

Hollandia Nurseries Care Sheet

Perennials: Planting & Caring

Many perennials tolerate various light and soil conditions. They can even be ignored for months and survive drought without a sprinkle from the hose. Your perennials will flourish and be far more beautiful, however, when they are not stressed.

Plant Selection:

Buy plants after you have selected the planting site. Then, you can match plants to the site's soil and light conditions. To determine the light condition, find out how many hours of sun the area receives and at what time of day. (Morning light is weaker than afternoon sun.) See if the soil is wet or dry, pale or dark, sandy or clumped by clay. With this information, Hollandia staff can help you select the right perennials.

Good Soil:

Generally, perennials like a well-drained loamy soil. Before planting, amend the soil with compost and Gro-Mix. Peat moss and dehydrated cow manure can be used, but they are more acidic than the other two. To host the broadest array of plants, a neutral soil is desired. Some plants like the soil acidic, others, alkaline. Most soils in Connecticut are already acidic, so add some lime to neutralize the soil. Also, add Plantone fertilizer to provide necessary nutrients. For more specific instructions, see Hollandia's caresheet: How to Create a Flowerbed.

Planting:

Perennials grown in containers, like ours, can be planted throughout the growing season. There is an advantage to planting in early spring and fall, due to the rains and the cool weather. When weather is hot, avoid planting mid-day. When planting in late fall, provide mulch to prevent damage from winter heaving. If working in a pre-dug bed, dig a hole the size of the plant's container. If you

do not want to bother digging a bed, dig a hole that is much larger than the container. Amend the backfill with compost and/or Gro-Mix plus Plantone. Fill the hole to the size of the container. When planting, make sure the top of the plant is even with - NOT BELOW - the soil level. Many new gardeners plant too deep, causing the crown to rot. Scratch in some Plantone around the plant if it is not already in the soil. Water thoroughly before and after planting.

Watering:

Many gardeners overwater perennials. For the first few weeks, pay close attention and provide an evenly moist soil. Check the soil before watering, and when you do water, water deeply. Sometimes new plants wilt because of heat, not because of dry soil. After a few weeks, less vigilance is needed. Water only during a dry spell. The roots need to be encouraged to grow deeply to find moisture. They will not do that if they are watered constantly, and they will be more vulnerable in drought. Water established perennials only in severe conditions.

Long-term Care:

Fertilize once or twice a year with an all-purpose granular fertilizer such as Plantone. Scratch it into the surface in early spring. A second application can be applied in early summer. A light mulch is helpful for retaining moisture and suppressing weeds. A thick mulch can damage plants and encourage rodents to nest there. Ensure the mulch is not directly on the plant. Hollandia strongly encourages deadheading and pruning during the season to encourage plants to rebloom. In the fall, most perennials should be pruned back to the ground. Some plants, like ornamental grasses, can remain up for winter interest. Prune them back in March.



Hollandia
NURSERIES



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