



## **The BCLS Landscape Services Guide to Planting and Caring for Perennials**

### **ADVANTAGES OF CONTAINER-GROWN PERENNIALS:**

Your Rosedale Perennials are planted using the finest available, #1 rootstocks, and are container-grown in specially formulated soil mixtures. This produces a healthy, well-rooted and vigorous plant, which will give you years of colorful blooms and enjoyment. Our potted Perennials cost about the same as bare root plants ordered from the better quality mail order firms, but enjoy a headstart that gives them important advantages for this season and years to come. In addition, unlike bare-root plants, our container-grown plants can be planted at any time during the growing season - spring, summer, and fall. Remember to water container plants every 1-2 days before planting. (Plants in containers dry out more quickly than established, in-ground plants).

**SOIL PREPARATION:** Prior to planting, the bed area should be cleared of saplings, grass, weeds, and large stones. Next, the soil should be loosened thoroughly to a minimum depth of 8-12", using a spade, handfork or rototiller. For larger beds, spread 1 bale (4 cu.ft.) of Peat Moss or Compost and 10 lbs. of 5-10-5 or Plantone for about every 80-120 sq. ft. of plant bed. Use about 1 cu. ft. Peat Moss or Compost, and 2-1/2 lbs. of 5-10-5 or Bulbtone (4-10-6), for areas of about 20-25 sq. ft. Mix thoroughly with the soil, and then rake smooth.

**PLANTING:** Before planting the bed, set the Perennials in the desired locations and space as appropriate. (A rough rule of thumb is 1 plant per 1-2 sq. ft., for smaller-growing varieties, 1 plant for every 2-4 sq. ft. for larger varieties). Next, dig the holes to a depth of the pot. Remove the plants from the pots by placing your hands on the soil around the crown of the plant; then invert the pot and tap. Set the plants gently but firmly into the holes.

**Note:** For best results, the top of the soil from the pot should be level with the grade of the surrounding soil. Avoid planting Perennials too deeply. If the bed was not previously fertilized (see above), add about 3 tablespoons of Bulbtone (4-10-6) for each plant to the excavated soil to be backfilled, and then fill in the rest of the hole. Tamp the backfilled soil gently but firmly with your hands. Water the plants gently but thoroughly, then check to make sure plants are still set firmly upright. Spread mulch evenly around the plants to a depth of 1-2 inches with Buckwheat Hulls, Salt Hay, regular Pine Bark, or another fine-textured mulch.

**WATERING:** Continue watering the plants as needed until established. Generally, watering twice per week is sufficient, depending on the weather. In the case of recently-planted Perennials, it may be necessary to water plants in full sun three times per week during very hot, dry weather.

**CARING FOR PERENNIALS:** Weed the bed as needed (every 3-5 weeks) during spring and summer. Tip - it's much easier to pull out weeds while they're small. Weed again in fall. Anytime after the first killing frost in fall, remove brown Perennial foliage (cut leaves and stalks above crown). In mid-December, mulch bed with additional Buckwheat Hulls, Salt Hay or evergreen boughs to protect the plants during winter. In spring, remove the excess mulch or Salt Hay from the crowns, mulch the bed as needed, and fertilize the bed lightly with Plantone or Bulbtone Fertilizer.

**MATERIALS HELPFUL FOR PLANTING:**

Peat Moss (4 cu. ft. bale) or Compost  
Bulbtone Fertilizer  
Buckwheat Hull Mulch or another Natural Mulch  
Peony Hoops, Link Stakes, or Bamboo Stakes and Ties for any Perennials needing support or staking

**HELPFUL EQUIPMENT:**

Garden Spade  
Handfork  
Wheelbarrow  
Garden Rake  
Garden Hose  
Rototiller (for larger plantings - rent from equipment rental firm)

**SUGGESTED REFERENCES:**

*ALL ABOUT PERENNIALS* (Ortho Books)  
*HERBS AND THEIR ORNAMENTAL USES* (Brooklyn Botanic Garden)  
*PERENNIALS* (Brooklyn Botanic Garden)  
*THE WELL TENDED PERENNIAL GARDEN* (Timber Press)  
*ARMITAGIS GARDEN PERENNIALS* (Timber Press)