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SPRING BLOOMING BULB PLANTING TIPS

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- 1) Plant bulbs the designated depth in the ground for better longevity. A good general rule is to plant the bulb at least twice as deep as the bulb is tall. This means that daffodils and some tulips should be planted 6-8" deep while crocus should be planted 3-4" deep. **Plant bulbs late fall through January in this area.**
- 2) Plant where your bulbs will get the proper amount of sun and good drainage. It is a good idea to use a good bulb fertilizer and/or bone meal when you plant. Clay soil should be amended with compost or peat moss and the fertilizer should be put in the bottom of the bed for the new roots to access it easier.
- 3) What kinds to buy: The most popular bulbs for this area are tulips, daffodils (narcissus), and crocus.
 - a) Daffodils (narcissus) in general are long lived and multiply well. There are lots of choices from big cup blooms to smaller cups in an assortment of yellows, white, orange, and even pink. They are poisonous to some animals and don't taste good to most so they are a good choice for places where squirrels, deer or moles can be a problem.
 - b) Crocus are small early blooming plants that come in a wide variety of colors. They are excellent naturalizers like daffodils but they can be plagued by deer, squirrels, moles, and other wildlife.
 - c) Tulips are also an excellent choice for spring color as they come in an array of colors and types so that tulips can be blooming in your spring garden for several months. Unfortunately, they can also be attacked by the wildlife.
 - d) There are many other kinds of bulbs – if you see something you want to try, do it. That is the fun of gardening.

Helpful Ideas:

- 1) Be sure to clean up all 'trash' after planting your bulbs. Any pieces of bulbs, etc. send a beacon to animals that you have planted something that they might want to eat. Also consider pouring a repellent or red pepper over the area to mask the scent of the freshly planted bulbs.
- 2) Don't cut the foliage off spent bulbs until the foliage is mostly brown. This time period after blooming is when the bulbs store energy for next year.
- 3) The best time to fertilize established bulb beds is after blooming.
- 4) Moles or squirrels eating/digging up bulbs – If there is a history of these pesky animals doing damage in your garden, consider doing some preventative maintenance before you plant your bulb garden. Dig the soil up and lay down chicken wire or similar type wire followed by a thin covering of soil. Then place your bulbs on top of wire and cover with soil. Lay another piece of wire on top and overlap on the edges with the bottom layer. Cover with the appropriate amount of soil depending on type of bulb you just planted. This works well for small areas and is very effective against both animals. Remember that the bulbs have to sprout through the holes in the wire and don't use a wire that will interfere. You can also make a little wire enclosure around each bulb if you are not digging up an area. You should still break up the soil underneath the bulb to help get it started.
- 5) Try planting narcissus (daffodils) in amongst or around the bulbs being attacked. Since they usually repel animals, they can protect the others.