

INSTALLING YOUR BARE-ROOT PLANTS



 PRAIRIE MOON NURSERY®

Our experience shows that plants transplant most successfully when they are dormant. Accordingly, we dig our plants from outdoor beds and ship them during optimal transplanting season: spring (April/May), fall (Oct), and summer (July-Aug) for some ephemeral species.

Most of our plants are at least one growing season old. Many are two years or older. We are among the few still employing this production method, which is labor-intensive but plant-friendly.

All our plants are grown for sale, never wild-dug. Since digging of wild plants can deplete and destroy local native plant populations, it is important to be aware of the origin of commercially sold plants.

Arrival of Shipment: Our plants come to you dormant. The bare-root will be packed in slightly moist peat moss. They should be planted as soon as possible. Unlike greenhouse-grown plants, bare root plants can be planted during cold weather or any time the soil is not frozen.

Storage Until Planting: If you are unable to plant right away, it is important to keep your plants cool and slightly moist (not wet) like the peat moss they arrived in. Store spring and fall plants in a refrigerator (34-38° F) or in a cool, shady spot before planting. **Exception: If you have received a summer dormant root, it should not be refrigerated; keep it at room temperature before planting.**

Mark Your Plants: We suggest marking the location of any new plant in a garden with a garden tag on a sturdy stake 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 garden plant is not mistaken for a weed. We sell Permanent Garden Tags which include a wire fastener and can be embossed with a pen. We have found these tags to be the best product to keep important information recorded for plants in the garden.



prairiemoon.com/permanent-garden-tags

Site Preparation & Planning: Remove all unwanted weeds and vegetation. Existing weeds will compete with new plants for water, sun and nutrients. A more natural appearance will be achieved if plants are grouped by species or scattered randomly. We have plant spacing recommendations in our catalog and on our website.

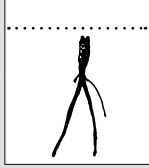
Growth in the Bag: If you are receiving your plants later in the spring, they may have some new growth, which will straighten out as the plant matures. Follow the recommended planting depths.

Root Photos: Most of our bare-root plants will arrive with a root photo printed on the bag label. These photos illustrate the optimal depth and orientation for planting your roots, and can also be found at prairiemoon.com on each species page. If a photo is not available, then choose from the five categories specified in "ROOT EXAMPLES" section of this instruction sheet.

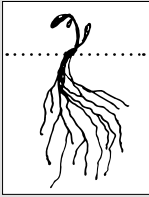
ROOT EXAMPLES

Our plants are divided into categories with slightly different planting needs.

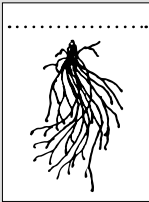
Tap Root - Plants with tap roots have a long, tapering central root system with few branches. The growing top or “crown” on tap-rooted plants should be planted no less than 1” below the soil surface. It is better to plant a little too deep than too shallow.



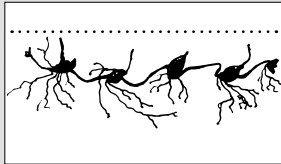
Fibrous Root with crown at soil surface - These plants are usually identified by the presence of last year’s top growth and should be planted with this old growth right at the soil surface. If no leaves are present, then cover about ½’ to 1”.



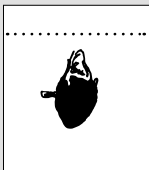
Fibrous Root with crown below soil surface - Most of our plants that do not keep top growth should be planted with their growing buds about 1/2 to 1” below the soil surface. Again, it is better to plant too deep than too shallow.



Rhizomatous - Plants that are propagated by rhizomes should be planted with these “runners” spread horizontally, approximately 1” below the soil surface.



Bulbous Root - These plants produce fleshy, underground storage organs, much like a potato or tulip, and should be planted at a depth of about 3x the diameter of the bulb. Some exceptions are: Wild Hyacinth - bottom of bulb 4” deep; Blazing Stars – depth of 2x the diameter.



Ferns - All ferns should be planted shallowly, approximately 1/2” below soil surface, except for the Ostrich Fern, which keeps its scaly growing top above the soil surface. Keep ferns well-watered the first year.

Cacti - We sell unrooted pads, which should be planted with the cut end inserted into the soil, buried up to about 1/2 of the length of the pad.

Trees, Shrubs and Vines - These should be planted at the same depth as they were grown in the nursery. The soil level is usually indicated on the stem where the color changes from a lighter brown to a darker brown.

Grasses, Sedges and Rushes - Most are planted with the crown just below the soil surface.



The root photo on each package label illustrates optimal depth and orientation for planting.

SEASONAL SPECIFICS:

SPRING: Follow 'Planting' and 'Watering' advice, below. Try to plant on a cool, overcast day, if possible. While planting, keep the plants shaded and in a bucket with some water. This is especially important for fibrous roots and for all roots on sunny days. Soaking tree and shrub roots for up to 12 hours before planting can be beneficial.

SUMMER: The dormant state of these early spring-bloomers/ephemerals makes them easy to plant in summer. Next spring, they will resume growth at their usual time. Plant your roots upon arrival or keep at room temperatures (not refrigerated) for a short time until you are able to plant. Follow 'Planting' and 'Watering' advice, below.

FALL: Moderate weather conditions and warm soils make fall a good time for transplanting. Most new transplants will start new root growth even into October. Follow "Planting" and "Watering" advice, below.

The onset of winter weather creates alternate cycles of freezing and thawing, which can cause frost-heaving and root damage during the long winter and spring extremes. To discourage this temperature change in the top layer of soil, cover the planting area to hold in winter cold and moisture. To do this, wait for the ground to freeze, with night temperatures of 32° F or lower. Our roots arrive to you in October, so this will likely be many weeks after your initial fall transplanting. Covering too early, on unfrozen ground, may allow rodents to dig down and consume roots. Apply a 2-6" layer of what you have available: leaf litter, straw, wood mulch, etc. Cover close to the plant base. In early-spring, after freeze-thaw cycles have passed, remove the winter cover. Spring growth may be inhibited if your plant is not uncovered.

Planting: For a small area, prepare the soil by loosening it with a fork, spade, or roto-tiller. Make a planting hole wider and deeper than the largest root. Hold the transplant at the proper depth (see **ROOT EXAMPLES** or root photos included with your order) and backfill hole with dirt, packing firmly as you do.

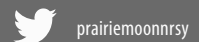
Watering: Water your transplants thoroughly as soon as possible after planting. If you are planting into a large area, stop periodically to water what you've already planted. This is especially important on warm, sunny or windy days.

(Watering continued): If planting in moist soil in the fall or early spring, continued watering may not be necessary unless drought conditions follow. Late spring plantings may need to be watered throughout the first summer. Consider setting up an irrigation system or drip hose. Mulching can enhance retention of soil moisture. Be sure to leave an opening in the mulch for the plant's crown to emerge. Your plants will overcome transplant shock more readily if they are **watered thoroughly** at frequent intervals for the first few weeks.

Further Care: Keep your plants well weeded. Shade or partially shade any plants that continue to wilt after being watered. Providing shade or partial shade for a couple weeks after planting is helpful for early growing species, especially if they have new leaves when you receive them. Once established, and barring any unusual weather patterns, your plants will need no further care if you have chosen the proper plants for your habitat. Some plants may benefit from being divided after 3-4 years.



SHARE YOUR NATIVE GARDEN PHOTOS WITH US!



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