

## **Dutch Mill Bulbs, Inc. Spring Planting Guide**

On behalf of Dutch Mill Bulbs and the group you are supporting with your bulb purchases, thanks very much! The bulbs and plants you have selected were obtained from reputable growers in Holland and the United States of America. By following these few easy steps, you can't go wrong!

### **Care Upon Arrival**

With the exception of caladiums (Item C, see separate handling instructions), it's advisable to plant soon as possible. The timing of your shipment is based on the proper planting time for your area, but if the weather is unseasonably cold, delay planting for a day or two. Open the bags and store in a cool, dry, adequately ventilated environment until conditions are suitable.

### **Soil Preparation**

Loosen soil to a depth of approximately 10." If available, add compost or other organic matter, which contain essential nutrients and improve water retention and drainage. These simple steps greatly enhance plant performance.

### **Planting**

Remember, pointed end up. Even rounded bulbs have tapered (up) and flat (down) sides. When in doubt (irregular-shaped bulbs), plant sideways. Follow the depth, placement (i.e. sun, shade, etc.), and spacing instructions found printed on each package.

### **Watering**

Water thoroughly after planting. Water twice weekly for the first two-three weeks, and once weekly thereafter. During extremely hot or dry spells, additional watering will reduce plant stress and promote growth.

### **Fertilizing**

To promote healthy foliage and long-lasting blooms, supplement the soil with *Fast Action Fertilizer Tablets* or other slow-release commercially available fertilizer (i.e. Miracle Grow, Bulb Booster, etc.). One application is normally sufficient.

### **Surface Protection**

A two-inch cover of mulch not only helps maintain moisture and even soil temperature, but also serves to suppress weeds.

### **“Potting Up” Bulbs**

It's as easy to grow bulbs in containers, as it is to grow them in the garden. Containers should have drainage holes to avoid root rot. If not, add several inches of drainage material to the bottom of the pot. Use a “light” potting mix consisting of potting soil, peat, and vermiculite. Do not over-water and be careful not to let the container “dry up.” Treat twice monthly with a liquid fertilizer.

### **“Hardy” vs. “Not Hardy”**

Bulbs labeled as hardy survive if left in the ground over winter. Non-hardy bulbs must be dug and stored until spring. Prior to the first frost, dig the plants or bulbs, remove excess soil, and allow them to dry. Storage technique varies for each plant or bulb. Please refer to the following instructions:

**Anemone DeCaen** (8” to 12” tall) – The versatile vibrant colored anemone are perfect for borders, groundcover, and cut flowers. Soaking the bulbs in lukewarm water overnight prior to planting will help stimulate growth. Plant in full to partial sun, 3” deep and 3” to 4” apart. Place these flat, irregular shaped bulbs into the ground sideways. Prior to winter’s cold, cover with a 2” layer of mulch.

**Begonia** (6” to 8” tall) – Be patient! These slow starters are worth the wait! Although begonias are to be planted in shade, the ideal area also receives some morning sun. Plant 3” deep and 6” to 12” apart with the rounded side of the bulb down. Water adequately and fertilize every 2 to 3 weeks. After the first frost, dig the bulbs and dry in a dark, frost-free area for 2 days. Once dry, remove spent foliage and excess soil. Then cover with peat moss and store in a cool, dark frost-free location. Replant in spring once the danger of frost has passed.

**Bleeding Heart** (dicentra, 24” tall) - Ideal for any partially shaded area. Plant 5” deep and 12 “ apart.

**Caladiums** (10” to 12” tall) - Can be planted only after danger of frost. Shade loving, caladiums thrive in filtered sun areas, or areas receiving morning sun. Plant 12” to 18” apart, eyes up, under 2” of high organic, moist soil. When leaves start to yellow and drop, lift from soil and dry until leaves break away. Once dry, pack in peat moss or sand. Store in a well-ventilated area with a minimum temperature of 70 degrees. Replant the following spring.

**Dahlias** (24” to 36” tall) – Plant these odd-shaped tubers with the crown (place where the “fingers” meet the stem) approximately 4” below the soil and 2 feet apart. These mid summer bloomers like full sun and adequate water. To develop a bushier, floriferous plant, pinch off the top sprout once 4 leaves have developed. In warmer climates, a 2” layer of mulch will protect the tubers from winter’s cold. In most areas of the country, it is advised to dig the tubers following fall’s first frost. Dry and remove excess soil, then store in a dry medium (sand or peat), or in a paper bag, and keep in a cool place. Replant in spring after danger of frost.

**Daylily Stella D’ Oro** (18” tall) – Because they are easy to grow and provide an appearance of continuous bloom, the Stella D’Oro’s popularity continues to surge. Cover the crown with 1” of soil and plant 12” apart in full sun.

**Gladiolus** (48” to 60” tall) – The “King of the Cut Flowers,” gladiolus can be planted in two-week successions up until early July to guarantee a long-lasting display of summer beauty. Select a sunny location, and plant (pointed side up) 4” deep and 5” apart. In warmer climates, cover with 2” of mulch for winter protection. In colder areas, dig the bulbs once the foliage begins to yellow. After drying for a few days, detach the stalks and any old roots, and store in a cool, dry place. Paper bags and discarded nylon stockings are the perfect storage medium. Replant in spring after danger of frost.

**Hosta** (8” to 36” tall) – The plant’s lush foliage and versatility make this a landscaper’s favorite. Showy early spring through fall, hosta can be planted in sun or shade. Plant 3” deep and 6” apart. Hardy.

**Blazing Stars** (liatris, 20” to 30” tall) - Great for perennial borders, indoor bouquets and dried flowers. Plant in full sun to partial shade, 5” deep and 6” apart. Hardy.

**New Tiger Lilies and Stargazer** (25” to 48” tall) – Plant upon arrival in full sun to partial shade, 4” deep and 6” apart. Hardy.

**Elf Lilies** (10” to 14” tall) – Perfect for pots and borders. Plant 4” deep and 6” apart. Hardy.

**Mini Amaryllis** (zephyranthes, 6” to 8” tall) - These low-growing, long-blooming beauties make an excellent choice for both planters and borders. Plant 2” deep and 3” apart in a sunny locale. In colder climates, lift bulbs and store indoors over winter. Once foliage begins to yellow, dig bulbs, dry, and store in paper bags. Replant in spring after danger of frost.

**Peacock Orchid** (acidanthera, 24” to 36” tall) – Multi-flowering and fragrant, Peacock Orchids should be planted 4” deep and 6” apart in sun/partial sun. In colder climates, dig the plants prior to first frost and allow to dry. Once dry, remove stalks and roots. Store bulbs in a dry, ventilated, frost-free area in paper bags. Replant in spring after danger of frost.

**Strawberry Plants** (10” tall) – Plant upon arrival, or store in the vegetable bin of your refrigerator until able. If plants have a wilted or dry appearance, soak in water prior to planting. Plant approximately 2’ apart with crown even with surface and the roots spread. Firm soil by pressing down around plants. Water regularly, especially if potted. Hardy.

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If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact us.