

TULIPS

Cultural Information

These hardy bulbs are native to the Mediterranean countries. Asia Minor across to China. They require an annual thermoperiodic change of a warm summer and cool-moist winter. If these conditions are fulfilled, the bulbs can last for years. They also pr

Forcing Tulips for Valentine and Easter

Storage After Arrival

Bulbs should be unpacked immediately upon arrival, ventilate if not immediately planted. Store at 58-65⁰F - do not store with fresh fruit, vegetables or other ethylene producing products.

Planting Medium/Planting Procedure

Planting medium can be any commercial soil or soil mix as long as it has good drainage and allows for undisturbed root growth. pH level should be 6-7 and soil should have a low soluble salt level. The following soil mixes have shown the best results: Fafard #2, Fafard #3-B, Fafard #4, Metro 350, Metro 360, Metro 500, Fison Sunshine #4. Plant bulbs with the flat side outside of the container and the top of the bulb should be level with the container rim. Use either clay or plastic pot but make sure good drainage is available. There should be at least 2" of growing medium under the base of the bulb to allow for a good root structure.

Cooling

Cooling is the most important step in successfully growing flower bulbs. The main rule for almost all tulips is 14-16 weeks of cool temperature at or below 48⁰F. This can be done according to the following methods:

For Valentine:

| | |
|------------|--|
| 1st | Plant bulbs immediately upon arrival - approximately mid-September - in pots or flats. Place in cooler at 48 ⁰ F. Bring into greenhouse January 5-10. OR |
| 2nd | Dry precool bulbs (not planted) at 48 ⁰ F until mid-October then plant in pots or flats and continue cooling at 48 ⁰ F. Bring into greenhouse January 5. OR |
| 3rd | Obtain "precooled" bulbs (these have received 6-8 weeks of cooling) plant in pots or flats approximately mid-October continue cooling at 48 ⁰ F. Bring into greenhouse January 5. |

For Easter

After planting, keep bulbs at 48⁰F until the roots grow out of the bottom of the container. When the roots show, drop the temperature to 41⁰F. Maintain this temperature until early January - depending on sprout development - the temperature needs to be lowered to 34⁰F and held until brought into the greenhouse. If no cooler facility is available, the bulbs can be planted outside under a 6" layer of sand and straw. This method is only recommended in the Northern states where outside soil temperature makes it possible to do this.

Greenhouse Forcing

Valentine 4 weeks at 58-68⁰F. Bring into greenhouse January 5-10.

Easter 4 weeks at 58-68⁰F. Bring into greenhouse January 5-10.

Watering/Fertilizer

Water every other day. Always make sure that watering is done directly into the pot and not over the crop. Fertilize in the greenhouse only, not in the cooler. Use calcium nitrate at a rate of 2 lbs. Per 100 gallons of water.

Height Control for Pots

The product A'Rest (ancymidol) has worked very effectively in controlling the length of the tulips in pots. However, varieties react differently at different times of the year to the same application. It is important that the forcers guide is consulted before using this product.