

Your Garden

Experts Say Fall Is the Time to Plant Perennials

(NAPSA)—Perennial plants are a gardener's dream: They add color to borders and beds, and are relatively easy to maintain. Perennials can also be used to add fragrance and texture to gardens, as well as attract beneficial wildlife such as butterflies and hummingbirds. Planting perennials in the fall is like making a long-term investment—one that pays dividends the next year.

Herbaceous perennials are plants that die back to the ground in cold weather but resume growing in spring. This feature offers gardeners a wide selection of plant sizes, flower colors and forms, and seasons of bloom to choose from.

Expert Advice

Explains flower specialist Venelin Dimitrov, "Fall is the ideal time to plant perennials because the cold winter months that follow are very important for dormancy. Many beautiful plants from temperate climates must experience a period of low winter temperature to initiate and accelerate flowering, which is known as vernalization. This process establishes the plant, so it starts growing earlier the next spring and produces brighter and bolder colors."

Dimitrov suggests that for most gardeners, border perennials are probably most useful in a mixed border, interplanted with low-growing shrubs that may or may not lose their foliage in winter. Mixed borders allow woody plants to add structure, height, texture and yearlong interest to the garden.

Make A Plan

When determining which perennials to use, it's important to



Fall perennials contribute lasting, beautiful color to spring gardens.

consider the overall size of a garden, the amount of sun it gets, and the climate.

To create continuity of interest, choose plants that bloom at different times during a season. Height is an important factor. Dimitrov suggests using taller plants at the back of a border or bed, with the lowest perennials at the front. In shade-challenged beds, consider using drought-tolerant plants, or those with low water requirements.

For a dynamic sweep of color every spring, plant snowdrop, crocus, tulip and daffodil bulbs when the ground has cooled sufficiently.

Add edible interest by planting perennial fruits such as blackberries, raspberries and strawberries. Garlic is also easy to grow, richly flavored and will keep up to 10 months after harvest.

Free, Helpful App

To make it easier to plant in specific garden regions, W. Atlee Burpee & Co. created a free Garden Time planning app. To download the app, access helpful how-to articles and videos, and order perennial plants, visit www.burpee.com or call (800) 888-1447.