



# ***Unique Garden Centre***

## **AMARYLLIS**

**Amaryllis** are handsome, bold plants with large showy, lily like flowers. Long, strap-shaped leaves grow directly from the bulb usually after the flowering. Large bulbs will produce two stems of flowers. Plants can be purchased as bulbs ready to plant or potted ready to bloom in early winter.



Amaryllis should be potted in a pot large enough to leave 1" of soil around the bulb and with proper drainage holes. The potting mix should be a blend of equal parts packaged potting soil, peat moss and perlite. One third of the bulb should be exposed above the soil line. Water well when potted, and then sparingly until root growth has started. Temperatures for growing of 16 – 20°C (60-70°F) are suitable, producing flowering in 6-8 weeks. Cooler temperatures of 7-10°C (45-50°F) can be used to delay flowering.

When your amaryllis is in bloom but before foliage develop, display in any desirable location indoors. However, as foliage develops, move plants to a bright window. Direct sunlight can shorten the life and color intensity of the flowers, but after flowering is completed, give plants a bright southern exposure with plenty of winter and spring sunlight. Keep the soil evenly moist and fed with a well balanced fertilizer every two weeks at the recommended rate for that frequency. Keep bloom stalks from excessive stretching and to increase duration of bloom, keep plants in a cool room at night. If this is not possible, stakes may be necessary to keep the bloom stalk upright.

**Re-blooming:** Despite its relative short flowering period, amaryllis can be brought back to rebloom quite easily. After flowering, maintain in a healthy growing condition to ensure the build-up of reserves for next season's flowering. Bulbs, left in their pots, may be set outdoors in a spot with afternoon shade after all danger of frost. Remember to condition the plant for sun by gradually moving them to the partly sunny location. If garden space is available, sink pots to the rim. Keep plants actively growing for the summer. Continue to water and fertilize until the beginning of August. Before danger of frost, lift amaryllis, pots and all and move to a cool (7-10°C, 45-50°F) location and withhold water until foliage dies down. Light is not important. Move indoors before danger of frost remove dead foliage and maintain in a cool dark location for two to three months.

In early November, repot bulbs in a fresh soil mix, begin watering lightly and place in a sunny window. Flower stalks should again appear for blooming at Christmas. Bulbs that had four or more healthy leaves through the summer should be large enough to flower, those with less foliage may not flower, but with proper care non flowering bulbs can be redeveloped for blooming in future years.

Success for year after year flowering is very dependant on maintaining care after blooming and the minimum two month dormant period.

### **Why did it not Bloom?**

Complete failure of the plant to flower, small flowers or poorly formed flowers, may result from several conditions:

- Excessive use of high nitrogen fertilizers. Use a balanced fertilizer or one with slightly higher phosphorus (middle number)
- Rich or highly fertile soil used for potting or planting beds in the garden. Soil needs to be able to drain excess moisture off easily. Use a mix like the one listed above.
- Diseases such as red blotch or leaf scorch. Discard bulbs that have disease.
- Digging and resetting bulbs before they have matured. Maturity may be indicated when the foliage has yellowed and begins to droop.
- Excess shade may result in small flowers of poor color. Excess sun may cause bleaching of the flowers in the southern part of the state.
- Poor soil drainage and aeration.

