



HOSTA GROWER SHEET

For the past several years, hostas have been the top selling perennial throughout North America and are a significant part of today's landscapes.

Soil Requirements: Hostas prefer a pH range of about 5.8 to 6.5. They do best in high organic composted soil mix. A bark-based, well-drained soil mix is ideal.

Transplanting: Bare root divisions should be planted in a well-drained potting medium. Most growers use a bark-based mix, which provides adequate drainage for long periods of time. It is not uncommon for bare root divisions to develop a surface mold on them before they are planted. This mold is rarely a concern and should not be detrimental to crop production. Whether a mold is present or not, it is a good practice to apply a preventative fungicide drench after planting.

When to plant: Generally, the later the division is planted, the fewer the roots (if any) it makes and the lower the winter survival rate. In many cases, hostas will over-winter without a root system and flush top growth in the spring yet, still not generate any new roots. Each cultivar varies slightly, but generally it is best to schedule your hosta plantings to be completed by late August.

Container sizes recommendation: 2-3 eye = 1 gallon. 3-5 eye = 2 & 3 gallon.

Planting depth: The division should be planted so the "eyes" or the growing points are at or just below the soil surface.

Exposure: When hostas are being produced for container sales, it is best to produce them in an area that receives at least partial shade. Many growers use a 30-percent shade cloth over the production area to reduce the exposure to direct sunlight. Container production provides more stressful conditions such as higher root zone temperatures and more dramatic swings in the moisture level surrounding the roots than when plants are grown in the ground. These stresses make even sun-loving hosta varieties more sensitive to exposure to high light levels and prone to sunscald on their leaves.

Moisture: The best root development occurs when the plants are allowed to dry out slightly between waterings. It is best to water in the morning and also important not to over-feed or to over-water. Also, a hosta in dormant state will not use as much water.

Fertilizing: Hostas are light to moderate feeders requiring the modest amounts of fertilizer. Although liquid fertilization programs providing 100 ppm nitrates are adequate to produce hostas, due to the longevity of this crop, it is generally better to deliver nutrition to hostas using controlled-release fertilizers. For plants potted in the late summer for the following spring's sales, using a controlled-release fertilizer with at least an eight-month release pattern is ideal. If possible, incorporate the time-release fertilizer into the growing medium prior to planting at a rate equivalent to 1 lb. elemental nitrogen per yard.



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Temperature: Hostas will naturally become dormant in the fall as the daylength shortens. A cold period of at least six weeks at 40° F is recommended to reinitiate growth. Following the cold treatment, hosta can be flushed at temperatures between 60 and 70° F.

Pest and Diseases: Hostas are relatively free of problems except for slugs. Application of bait will usually resolve this issue. Aphids, spider mites and thrips may also be observed feeding on hostas, but they rarely become problematic. **Hosta virus x (HVX):** A viral disease that causes mottled leaf, cells collapsing, and ink bleeding on Hosta leaves. Principle route of infection is spread of sap from an infected plant to a healthy one by contaminated hands or tools. At present, there is not sufficient evidence that disease is transmitted by insects however rabbits, deer or slugs could potentially vector infected plant sap from plant to plant. Currently there is no cure for HVX.