

June Plant Auction – Preparing Plants for Auction

Becky has prepared the following time honored tips for dividing and potting plants for the June 20 Auction:

DON'T DELAY

Plants should be divided before they have put on a lot of new growth. For example, hostas can be most easily divided when their little pointed noses have emerged, but the leaves have not unfurled. If your plants have already put on substantial growth, don't be shy about cutting back some of the foliage. The goal is to have divisions with a good balance between the roots and the growth above ground. Cutting back foliage reduces stress. Similarly, don't hesitate to trim the roots. First remove any dead or non-vigorous roots, then cut back the healthy roots to encourage new growth.

WATCH THE WEATHER

Try not to dig and divide on a hot, sunny, windy day. The best weather is cool and overcast with showers or light rain forecast. If you can't summon up that perfect weather, protect your newly potted divisions from the sun and wind. Some ideas are to place them on the north side of your house, cover them with a bushel basket, shield them with a beach or patio umbrella.

HYDRATE

Water is important. After digging your plant soak it for several hours or overnight in a pail or tub of water. I have had good luck adding a couple of drops of Super Thrive to the water. The soaking will hydrate the plant and make division easier.

GROUP OR BURY

Keeping your potted divisions watered can be a challenge. The task is easier if you can keep your plants grouped closely together near your water supply. Plants will also not dry out as quickly if you can bury the pots in a free space in your garden. They will grow happily until you are ready to pop them out.

A FINAL PLEA

Use potting mixtures that do not contain peat. Not only is peat difficult to hydrate, our planet needs those peat bogs to act as carbon sinks. You can make compost in a few months; peat bogs take thousands of years to form.

Our auctioneer will appreciate the following information on your plant(s): the name, the variety, maturity size, the bloom color, shade or sun. If your plant is a bloomer but not in bloom for the auction, it's helpful to add a photo of the plant in bloom.