

## **Itching to Plant...**

After a long winter we are all so excited to get out and enjoy the beautiful weather and get our hands into the dirt. We all become like kids in the back seat of a car asking “are we there yet?” We get so excited and we just can’t wait. So, I am excited to tell you that “we are there!” Very often in the nursery business people are asking us when they can plant, or is it all right to transplant a tree or shrub to a new location. First of all planting and transplanting are two totally different things. Planting is simply taking any tree, shrub, perennial, or annual that was previously living in a container, pot, or basket and placing it in a hole and backfilling around the roots. Transplanting is digging a plant out of the ground and moving it to a new home.

Planting trees, shrubs, and perennials can be done 12 months out of the year, providing you can chip your way through the frost layer. I know that everyone just did a double take, but think about it, if a plant is hardy for our zone, it is hardy for our zone. It has a better chance in the ground than it does in a pot. I’m not trying to stimulate January tree and shrub sales, but if you want to plant, plant. As far as I’m concerned the best time to plant is fall because you don’t have to water and by spring they are well established. The exceptions are annuals, vegetables, and lawn seed. Annuals and vegetables can’t take the frost or not much of it any way so they should be planted at around the end of May. Lawn seed needs a soil temperature of about 55 degrees to germinate; so seeding too early is a waste of seed. So besides these few exceptions, you can plant about any time you want. When you do plant a new tree or shrub add some bone meal and Mykes supplements to the soil in the hole and your plant will have a great start.

Transplanting is a totally different thing. You are taking a tree, shrub, or perennial out of the ground in one location and replanting it in another location. When you remove a plant from the ground you do a lot of damage to the root system. The roots are the life support of a plant. During the spring and summer month’s plants are busy growing. Disturbing the plant during this time when it is depending heavily on this root system will likely kill the plant. Plants need time to adjust, just like people. Stressing it out during its busy season is just too much for it. Transplanting is best done in the dormant season, roughly October – March. That way when the plant breaks dormancy it will stimulate new root growth to compensate for the damaged ones.

If you have anymore questions feel free to stop by the new store and ask. We are always available to help.

