



## Tips for Container Gardening

- What sun exposure will my containers have?
  - Full sun = 6 or more hours of sunshine, middle of the yard or south side of house or other structure
  - Afternoon (hot!) sun = Western side of trees, house, or other structure
  - Part sun/Part shade = 4 to 6 hours of sunshine
  - Morning (gentle) sun with afternoon shade = Eastern side of trees, house, or other structure
  - High Shade = Filtered light under tall trees
  - Shade = North side of trees, house, or other structure
- What look do I want for my containers? Is it time to update my container choices?
  - Large containers may stand alone and are excellent for symmetrical placement and design.
  - Asymmetrical groupings of 3 or 5 containers of varying sizes or materials lend themselves to mixing different plants in one container or a variety of plants each with its own pot.
  - Contrasting or blending texture as well as color can provide variety if you are limited by other factors.
  - Allowing your container to dictate your choice of plants will contribute harmony to your design.

## Planting Guidelines

- Select a sizable container with good drainage. Connect its size and scale with the chosen site and its style with the surrounding environment. Larger pots hold moisture better and allow roots to go deep and are excellent for most tropicals. Troughs or table-top planters are good choices for succulents and other shallow-rooted plants.
- Use fresh, high-quality potting mix such as *Sungro Professional Growing Mix*. To stimulate root growth and help prevent transplant shock, add *Espoma Bio-tone Starter Plus 4-3-3* at a rate of  $\frac{3}{4}$  tablespoon per dry quart.
- Moisture needs vary by plants as well as with the changing weather. Learn what your plants need and be consistent with your watering to ensure success. Develop a routine to check your plants daily and water when necessary.
- It is also important to remember that all containers will need attention even during rainy times as good rainfall in the garden does not always equal adequate moisture in a pot.
- Fertilize regularly throughout the season using a water-soluble product, either all-purpose *Nature's Source 10-4-3* or *Jack's Blossom Booster 10-30-20* for flowering plants.
- Prune selectively during the growing season to promote stronger, bushier growth. Monitor your design so that bigger plants aren't allowed to overpower or shade out the smaller or trailing plants. Deadhead regularly and clean up fallen foliage so the design continues to look its best.
- Don't hesitate to replace plants that begin to decline with summer's heat. Some of the best containers are those that evolve with the flow of the season, allowing each plant to have its time to shine.