



Dahlia

PLANTING / GROWING INSTRUCTIONS

Thank you for ordering your dahlia tubers from Fields' Folly Farm!

STORING

1. Open and inspect your tubers immediately upon arrival. Any issues must be reported within 5 days.
2. Store dahlias in garage or home, keeping in the bags of vermiculite they shipped in. They will begin to show active eyes (where the sprouts come from). ***Do not allow them to freeze.**
3. Check your tubers weekly until planted. If they begin to look shriveled, then they need to be kept in a higher humidity environment.

PLANTING

1. Dahlias require full sun (at least 8 hours daily) to thrive & bloom abundantly. Southern growers might need to provide plants with afternoon shade if summer temperatures are extreme. Dahlias are cold-sensitive and should not be planted until the soil has warmed to above 60°F and all danger of frost has passed.
2. Select a sunny garden spot with well-draining soil and prepare it thoroughly before planting. Amend beds with 2-4 inches of high-quality compost and a balanced organic fertilizer. Mix all ingredients into the soil to distribute evenly.
3. To plant, dig a hole 6 inches deep and place the tuber on its side horizontally, with the growing eye facing up. Once in place, refill the hole with soil. Dahlia plants get quite large, so plant tubers at least 12 inches apart.
4. Cover with weed fabric, cutting holes for the plants to grow through.
5. Dahlias require consistent water throughout the growing season, so install drip irrigation with a nozzle for each plant. Dahlias should **not** be watered until you see green and plants are 6" tall; overwatering before they're ready can lead to tuber rot. Spring rain will take care of most of the initial moisture needed as the plant gets established. Once you begin to water, it will need done every 2-3 days, unless weather is very hot, in which case water daily.
6. After plants reach 1 foot tall and have 2 sets of leaves, pinch the center node above the 2 sets of leaves to encourage larger plant growth and increased flower production.
7. Slugs and snails damage young plants, and earwigs ruin the flowers. Put down bait at planting time and periodically throughout the season. Sluggo Plus is an organic option that's safe for both children and pets, and works well against all three pests.
8. By mid-summer, you'll need to stake tall plants to keep them from falling over. Place metal t-posts every 10 ft around perimeter of dahlia area, wrapping in twine from post to post, 2-3 levels high.
9. Cut flowers in the morning or evening. Since dahlias don't open much after they've been harvested, it's important to cut them almost fully open, but not overly ripe. Check the back of each flower head, looking for firm and lush petals; papery or slightly dehydrated petals are a sign of age.