

# how to grow BULBS



## CHOOSING THE RIGHT VARIETY

Bulbs are a gardener's best friend, they are easy to grow and need very little attention, yet flower readily giving your spring garden a burst of colour and fragrance after a long winter.

A good tip to growing successful bulbs is to choose healthy well sized bulbs and to purchase them early in the season whilst there is a good selection. It's a good idea to check bulbs carefully, if there are many in a packet try and get a good look at each of them. Avoid any bulbs that are soft, small, shriveled, or discoloured.

There are many different bulb flowers to choose from, below is a list of some of the main varieties which are available throughout New Zealand.

ANEMOMES  
NERINES  
CROCUS  
RANUNCULUS  
DAFFODILS  
TULIPS  
FREISHAS  
WATSONIA  
IXIA  
HYACINTHS  
JONQUIL  
TULIPS  
LACHENALIA  
IRISES  
MUSCARI



## REGIONAL TIPS

When growing Tulips in Auckland it's a good idea to treat them as annuals and remove them after flowering and replace them the following season with new bulbs.

To utilise space and keep year round flowers, plant winter potted colour on top of your bulbs. This will keep your garden looking bright and beautiful throughout winter. The bulbs will grow underneath and the potted colour will have finished by the time the bulbs shoots emerge.

## PLANTING

Bulbs look beautiful grown in the garden or in containers and are best planted in groups for maximum colour impact.

When planting bulbs in the garden it is important to mark the area clearly so you know where the bulbs are when they are dormant over winter – it saves bulbs being accidentally dug up or damaged. **Daltons Premium Bulb Mix** and **Daltons Premium Bulb Fertiliser** are specially formulated for growing bulbs in either containers or outdoor in your garden.

If you want lush colourful blooms come springtime, then the best time to plant new bulbs or re-plant existing ones is from April/ May and choose a nice sunny well drained site. Before planting always check the bulbs growing instructions/label first.

### PLANTING BULBS IN THE garden

- 1 Choose where you are going to plant in the garden – the ideal spot is one that gets lots of sun and has soil that drains well.
- 2 Prepare the site by removing weeds, particularly any perennial weeds which can make it difficult for bulbs to push up through.
- 3 Cultivate a wide area to a depth of no greater than 10cm. Prepare soil by thoroughly mixing in generous amounts of **Daltons Premium Bulb Mix** and **Daltons Premium Garden Mix**.
- 4 Plant bulbs with the pointed end up, and twice as deep as the length of the bulb, and cover with soil. Make sure you plant them 10-15cm apart to give enough room for growth. After planting, water them well.



## GROWING BULBS IN *pots*

The beauty of growing bulbs in pots is that they are portable. You can keep them at the bottom of the garden over winter, and transport them back to your porch or indoors when they begin flowering. Every 3-5 years you will need to refresh the soil in pots; remove the bulbs and break up the big bulbs, and where necessary throw away any misshapen or old bulbs and replace with new ones.

- 1 Plant them as you would in the ground (*see planting bulbs in the garden point 4*) using **Daltons Premium Bulb Mix**.
- 2 Make sure the pot is at least 15-20cm deep (*depending on bulb size*), ensure there is reasonable depth and good drainage via holes at the bottom of the pot.
- 3 After flowering fertilise them to ensure they bulk up for next year's flowers.

## AFTER *flowering*

At the end of the season once the flowers have finished, leave the foliage (*leaves*) to brown and die down naturally to protect the plant and ensure maximum nutrients have been stored for the next seasons flowering. You can leave the bulbs in the ground for next season, (*mark clearly so you remember what and where you planted them*) or dig the bulb out and store in a cool dry place until next autumn.

## PESTS AND DISEASES

Bulbs in general are typically free of pests and diseases. However when buying, always check them for any rotten, misshapen or soft bulbs. If you dig up your bulbs or repot, discard any diseased or soft bulbs.

## FEEDING AND WATERING

**Bulbs are remarkably self sustaining and do not need any special watering, but in the event of a severe drought give bulbs a thorough soaking once a week.**

When green foliage starts to push through the soil, feed your bulbs by applying **Daltons Premium Bulb Fertiliser** – this also applies to bulbs grown in pots. Dig the fertiliser in lightly and always water in well.

After your bulbs have finished flowering, apply **Daltons Premium Bulb Fertiliser** once again to support them in bulking up their stores for next season.



### PROFESSIONAL TIPS WITH XANTHE WHITE

“Remember this season’s care is next season’s flowers. In containers or in the ground you can plant different bulbs to give variations in height and colour.”

*Xanthe White*

## GARDENING TERMS EXPLAINED

- ▶ FOLIAGE – Green plant leaves.
- ▶ CULTIVATE – Break up soil in preparation for planting.



## PRODUCTS TO TRY

Daltons Premium Bulb Mix | Daltons Premium Garden Mix  
Daltons Premium Bulb Fertiliser | Daltons Organic Bio-Fungicide Granules