

SUPER SHRUBS

It's time to give your shrubs a little TLC. And if your landscape could use some sprucing up, then get to plantin' a few more. Here are my plantin' and feedin' tips for the healthiest shrubs in town.

Prime For Plantin'

When soil is very wet, it will form clumps that won't break apart and won't get good contact with the roots. Wait a couple of days after a hard rain to give the soil time to dry.

On the other hand, very dry soil isn't good,

either—it's hard to dig in, and it makes planting very difficult. Water dry soil very deeply a couple of days before planting to make it easier to cultivate.



Super Shrub Soil Mix

2 bushels of compost,
1/2 cup of Epsom salts,
1/2 cup of bonemeal, and
1 tbsp. of medicated baby powder.

Mix all of the ingredients together in a container, and work the mixture into each planting hole when you plant your shrubs.

To set your shrubs in their new homes, start by digging the planting holes big—at least 3 times wider than the container and at least 14" deep (they'll need to be planted at the same depth they were at in their containers). Then add 3 to 4" of my **Super Shrub Soil Mix** to each.

Before you set each plant into its hole, untangle the outer roots with your hand, or use a sharp knife to make shallow cuts in the bottom third of the root mass. This encourages new roots to grow outward, and helps the plant become established more quickly.

Give newly planted shrubs a daily dose of water for 3 or 4 days to keep 'em on their feet. For best results, use a soaker hose, or poke holes in an old hose and lay it out on the ground among the plants.

Fantastic Feeding

Once shrubs mature, feed 'em well once a year—early spring is the perfect time to fertilize shrubs that bloom in summer or fall. Give 'em a dose of any good, dry fertilizer, and watch 'em grow.

For the most robust flower-producing shrubs around, feed 'em a dose of my **Super Shrub Tonic** once every 3 weeks throughout the entire growing season.

Super Shrub Tonic

1 can of beer,
1 cup of Fish Fertilizer+,
1 cup of ammonia,
1/2 cup of baby shampoo, and
2 tbsp. of hydrogen peroxide.

Mix all of these ingredients in a 20 gallon hose-end sprayer, and spray your shrubs to the point of run-off.

And, to give your acid-loving shrubs something to grow on, sprinkle those leftover coffee grounds on the soil around 'em. Believe you me, you'll have the healthiest, most vigorous shrubs in the neighborhood—and when they bloom, they'll bloom big time!