

John's

TIP OF THE MONTH

December 2015



Make Magic with Bulbs

With winter closing fast upon us, the tasks in the garden – and the temperate days drawing consumers into their yards – are becoming fewer and fewer. Last month's tip regarding protection in and around the home is ongoing until spring flowers appear. This month, the garden is ready right now for planting some spring color while the ground is still workable. We're referring to the magic of spring bulbs.

You may know that most of today's bulbs come from the Netherlands, a country famous for their tulips, but did you know that bulbs didn't originate there? Bulbs were originally imported from Turkey in the mid-1500s and steadily grew in popularity. Today, more than nine billion bulbs are produced in the Netherlands each year.

In the U.S., retail bulb sales have slipped over the past 20 years, likely due in part to less exposure from mail-order catalogs sent to the home. However, consumers are quick to notice flowering bulbs as the earliest color to appear when spring arrives! Homeowners often inquire about bulbs around Easter, not knowing they needed to start such plantings back in the fall. Herein lies a big opportunity to educate your customers and drive off-peak sales!

How can you maximize this opportunity and create a bulb display that excites?

First, it doesn't have to be exotic. Gardeners like the basics: daffodils, tulips and crocuses. These are sold both in bulk bags and individually by variety. Many garden centers don't have the staff resources to sell individual bulbs and rely solely on bagged product. Either or both is okay!

Pair your offering with signage or display plantings to get the ideas flowing. Color and contrast, size of plant bulb and seasonal timing are huge considerations when planning a bulb garden. Bulbs planted in mass areas offer the best head-turning results, but make sure your customers know: These beds don't need to be meticulously planned by a professional designer. Some of the best color comes from simply tossing the bulbs in the air and planting them where they land to create a naturalized look.

Educate your customers on the proper planting depth, usually 2½ times the size of the bulb. The most common consumer mistake is planting the bulb upside down! Create some simple signage or have an example on hand to illustrate the proper orientation.

The key to consumer interest is to display vertically and expand the color as much as possible. Include natural wood planters and crates into your display. Remember, consumers browse up and down, from right to left versus shopping in circles where they might miss products along the floor.

A strong bulb department needs some accessories at the point of decision or nearby. Consider bulb planters, bulb food or bone meal, and garden gloves as the basics to get you started. You can offer more! Think success for the project itself: Protect bulbs from dogs, cats and critters with repellents, bulb dust and wire hex netting.

How about a promotion to sweeten the offer? Run a contest for best bulb display with a \$20 minimum purchase. Winner receives a \$50 gift certificate. Remind customers that bulbs add beauty to their landscapes, provide color for many years and are mostly goof-proof.

Build your bulb display for late fall plantings and keep these products handy for popular spring bulb sales like iris, canna, amaryllis and elephant ears. Make some magic of your own to generate interest and profitable returns: Prepare an area at your store to plant remaining bulbs that didn't sell. You can do this in advance of the ground freezing solid by covering the planting beds with salt hay or a layer of mulch. Your bone meal or Espoma Bulb-Tone® can be applied in advance of your planting by gently incorporating it into the top 2-3 inches of soil. It's never too late... until the ground freezes solid.

Good Selling!

John



Consider These Great Additions for Your Bulb Department



YARD BUTLER™ GARDEN KNEELER & SEAT

Two-sided design provides a sturdy, portable bench seat on one side, or flip it over for a comfortable kneeling pad with handles for leverage when rising from a kneeling position.



Item #	UPC	Vendor	Case	UOS	Retail
80740005 - 3377	072868131301	M130	6	6	\$3.99



CLASSIC BULB PLANTER

Heavy-gauge, chrome-plated steel. Lightweight and easy to handle.



Item #	UPC	Vendor	Case	UOS	Retail
80340033 - 271	035355195095	9509	12	12	\$4.49



BULB-TONE® 3-5-3 ORGANIC

Rich in bone meal and other organics. 3-5-3 fertilizer helps add vigor to all types of bulb plants.



Item #	UPC	Vendor	Case	UOS	Retail
4 lb					
80030015 - 455	050197006040	BT4	12	12	\$7.59
18 lb					
80030112 - 1187	050197006187	BT18	1	1	\$18.99



3.5 LB BONE MEAL 4-12-0 - ORGANIC

Promotes superior plant growth and beautiful blooms. Slow-release nitrogen feeding for all bulbs, flowering shrubs and perennials.



Item #	UPC	Vendor	Case	UOS	Retail
80070053 - 534	071605202038	20203	12	12	\$8.99



WONDER GRIP®

Features a double-coated textured latex palm and a tough 13-gauge nylon knit.



Item #	UPC	Vendor	Case	UOS	Retail
Small					
80090030 - 362	639751400410	WG310S	12	12	\$5.99
Medium					
80090029 - 362	639751400427	WG310M	12	12	\$5.99
Large					
80090028 - 362	639751400434	WG310L	12	12	\$5.99



MEGA ROLL GALVANIZED HEX NETTING

Handyroll galvanized hex netting. Made of 20-gauge steel wire. Long lasting and weather resistant. Hex netting with 1" openings.



Item #	UPC	Vendor	Case	UOS	Retail
36" x 50'					
80720096 - 2228	651082183657	163650	4	4	\$36.99
48" x 50'					
80720097 - 2979	651082184852	164850	4	4	\$48.99



Consider These Great Additions for Your Bulb Department



REPELS-ALL® GRANULES – ORGANIC

A convenient granular formulation of the all-natural and popular Repels-All® liquid. Triggers genetically and biologically ingrained fear and flight responses in a multitude of animal intruders – without harm. Lasts up to two months. Protects plants and property – year-round. Organic and biodegradable.



2.5 LB DOG & CAT REPELLENT

Keeps dogs and cats out of the garden. Easy to use, repels by scent and taste. Not harmful to animals when used as directed. Odor is not objectionable to people.



Item #	UPC	Vendor	Case	UOS	Retail
1 ¼ lb - Granular					
80100014 - 707	037321023609	2360	12	12	\$10.99
6 lb - Granular					
80100016 - 1929	037321023623	2362	4	4	\$29.99

Item #	UPC	Vendor	Case	UOS	Retail
80070082 - 548	071605401035	40103	12	12	\$8.99

