

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

February, 2016

# **What every new gardener needs to know**

## *Seven tips to starting a healthy garden*

**TORONTO, Ont.** — Whether you have just moved into your first home or you are looking for a new hobby in your old one, planting a garden is a great way to breathe new life into a unused green space.

But while planting a garden is a nice thought, it's a task that can seem a little daunting if you aren't a natural "green thumb."

"Planting a flower or vegetable garden is a great hobby that not only beautifies your home, but is also good for your health and allows you to take pride in your work every time you look out your kitchen window," says Terry Caddo, General Manager of Canada Blooms. "Even if you only have enough space for container gardening, the best way to learn is to get dirty!"

If you're new to gardening, and aren't quite sure where to start, don't worry! Canada Blooms has put together a few tips to help get you started:

### **Plants need soil**

Soil holds the water and the nutrients required for a plant to grow. If a soil doesn't have enough nutrients, the plant will fail to thrive. Potting mixes can be purchased to ensure a healthy soil for your plants, or you can fertilize.

### **Plants need food**

Plants require three main nutrients to survive: nitrogen for the leaves, phosphorus for the roots, and potassium for the flowers and fruit. It is important to have a balanced fertilizer meaning there is an even balance of these three ingredients. If so, the whole plant will be fed, and grow to be strong and healthy.

### **Plants need water**

Self explanatory, but like all living things plants need water. Not too much that they drown, but you also don't want them to dry out and wither. If you are planting in pots, but sure there are holes in the bottom to ensure proper drainage.

### **Plants need sun**

Plants harness energy from the sun using a process called photosynthesis. Therefore, most plants — especially fruits and vegetables — require a good amount of direct sunlight to grow. If your garden is looking a little shady, try researching which plants can handle less sun exposure.

### **Plants need friends**

While we may consider ladybugs and bees to be pests, to plants they are the best of friends. Ladybugs like to munch on aphids (tiny bugs that eat plant leaves) making sure your plant stays strong and uneaten. Bees on the other hand help pollinate your plants and by transferring pollen in order to produce a seed for the next year.

### **Plants need to be planted at the right time**

Most annuals can handle being planted leading up to spring, however bulbs such as tulips, daffodils, and crocuses flower in the spring requiring them to be planted before the ground freezes the year before.

### **Plants need to be pruned**

Whether it's a bush, tree or flowering annual, most plants require some kind of pruning. Cut back tall grasses and low or dead branches to make room for new growth. By removing wilted flowers from your

plant, also called deadheading, you will help the plant direct its energy into stronger leaves and roots. This will also encourage annuals to produce more flowers making your garden a colourful space.

Gardening can be fun and very rewarding but don't panic or think you failed if your garden doesn't look like it's from the pages of a fairy tale story on your first try.

"Most first time gardeners will lose a couple plants during their first season," says Caddo. "Don't let this discourage you. The best way to learn is by doing, and soon enough you will have a garden that is the envy of all your neighbours!"

For more gardening tips, visit Canada Blooms between March 11<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016, at the Enercare Centre at Exhibition Place in Toronto. The schedule for the show is available at [canadablooms.com](http://canadablooms.com)

For more information or for tickets, please visit [canadablooms.com](http://canadablooms.com). Follow Canada Blooms on Twitter @CanadaBlooms and Like it on Facebook.

### **About Canada Blooms**

Canada Blooms is an annual world-class festival that connects people to the joys and benefits of nature through experiences with gardens and flowers by promoting, educating, inspiring and celebrating all aspects of horticulture. Co-locating with the National Home show to create North America's Largest Home and Garden event, Canada Blooms is a not-for-profit organization that gives back to the community throughout the year by funding community garden projects around Ontario, Canada Blooms is also dedicated to providing the community with horticulture expertise, education and resources on an ongoing basis.

Now in its 20<sup>th</sup> year, Canada Blooms was founded by Landscape Ontario and The Garden Club of Toronto. Each year it is supported by a committed group of partners, sponsors and volunteers.

**-30-**

**For more information, please contact:**

**Courtney Charette**

*Public Relations Coordinator*



63 Church Street | Suite 203 | St. Catharines, ON, Canada | L2R 3C4

**Main:** 905.682.7203 ext. 222 **Direct:** 905.346.1231 **Cell:** 905.329.0391 **F:** 905.682.7481

**E:** [ccharette@enterprisecanada.com](mailto:ccharette@enterprisecanada.com)

**W:** [www.enterprisecanada.com](http://www.enterprisecanada.com)