

Thank you for buying plants from the Stokes Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Association. The money we raised will be spent in support of our educational mission and the horticultural programs of the County Extension Service.



Tips for your Peonies:

- ✓ Peonies can be planted in the Fall or Spring (although we only ship them in the Fall). In areas with penetrating winter frost / freezing, it is suggested to have a heavy winter mulch once the ground begins to freeze to reduce the likelihood of the new plants 'heaving' in the Spring. Mulch will not be necessary in following winters once the plants are established after the first full growing season. Please note that this mulch should be removed as the ground begins to thaw early in the spring before new growth!
- ✓ Peonies grow well in USDA hardiness zones 3 - 7. As a rule of thumb, zone 8 and higher are just too warm in the winter for proper flower formation.
- ✓ Peonies prefer a neutral to slightly acidic soil - pH of 6.5-7. They will grow in almost any type of soil but if you have a good garden loam that has naturally occurring drainage that is best.
- ✓ A clump is one plant. You can divide into smaller plants if you wish, but you will add years to the time it takes them to mature back into full bearing size clumps.
- ✓ The size of mature plant approaches that of a small shrub. Plant spacing is at least 4 feet to prevent 'leggy' plants due to competing with one another for available light. Further, giving them plenty of room allows for good airflow which helps prevent occurrence and spread of certain diseases.
- ✓ Peonies should be planted in full sun in an area that gets as much cold as possible in the wintertime since cooling is vital to proper vernalization of next year's buds. If in partial shade, this will only make them 'leggy' when blooming and much more likely to topple, especially during rain.
- ✓ Peonies should be planted shallow. Once established, the 'eyes' (the shiny points which are next year's growth) will almost be at soil level when properly grown. I recommend you start by digging a hole about 30% larger than the actual plant and then backfill until the eyes are about 1" above the existing soil level when the clump is resting. Cover the plant with loose soil until you have mounded about 2" of loose soil above the eyes and then water thoroughly. Wait a few days and, if necessary, add some more dirt and repeat the watering process. Make sure that you don't end up with more than 2" of soil covering the plant.
- ✓ Peonies should be lightly fed in the Spring just after the new growth emerges and then again after flowering.



We have gardening information, links and events at www.Facebook/StokesEMGV and StokesMGV.org. StokesMGV.org/BulbSale has information on the Bulb Sale plus the informational handouts. There is a calendar of many local gardening seminars and events under Facebook's "Links + Calendar" and our website's Calendar page. You can contact us at semgva.nc@gmail.com. Happy gardening!