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COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK
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FALL PLANTING OF BULBS FOR SPRING BLOOM.
By the Department of Horticulture.

In proportion to cost and care bulbs offer a maximum attraction. A gorgeous display of striking color contrasts may be provided next spring for flower beds and shrub borders by planting suitable bulbs this fall. Too often people forget all about it until they see them in their neighbor's garden. Bulbs may be planted any time between the first of September until the ground is frozen, the earlier the better.

Fall bulbs include those early spring flowering plants such as tulips, hyacinths, narcissus, jonquils, crocuses, scillas and lilies. They may be planted in formal beds, in borders near the house, or in the perennial shrub border.

Formal Beds

For formal beds and working out geometrical designs, tulips and hyacinths are especially valuable. The shape and size of the beds must be determined by the individual taste of the planter. No matter what the shape is to be it must be borne in mind to plant varieties which bloom at the same time, are of the same height and whose colors harmonize. Good contrasting colors should be used and so arranged as to accentuate the adjoining colors.

Tulips

Beds of solid color are very effective. When tulips are to be used for the formal beds in a location exposed to winds, the short stemmed early flowering varieties are recommended such as Artus (scarlet) Chrysolora (yellow) Cottage Maid, (soft pink) Keizerkroon (brilliant red with golden yellow border) La Reine (white). These are all single tulips. If double tulips are desired a choice may be made from the following,-- Couronne d'or (golden yellow) Imperator Ruborum (scarlet) La Candeur (white) Murillo (light pink).

In protected locations the long stemmed, large flowered, Darwin tulips are much preferred because they bloom three weeks later than the above sorts thereby missing most of the late spring frosts which the others are subject to. In addition they are much more suitable for cut flowers. The following varieties are recommended,-- Clard Butt and Massachusetts (rose and salmon) La Candeur and Painted Lady (white and light pink) Dream, Rev. Ewbank, Wm. Copeland (lavendar, violet and purple) Pride of Harlem, Europe, and Glow, (bright red and scarlet).

Hyacinths

Hyacinths lend themselves well to formal bedding because of the size, color and rigidity of their flower spikes. The following varieties are recommended,-- Gertrude (pink) La Grandesse (pure white) Czar Peter (lavender blue) King of the Blues (dark blue).

Bulbs in the Garden Border.

Bulbs may be used to advantage in the shrub and perennial border wherever there is a vacancy. They are very effective if planted at irregular intervals in large or small groups. The Darwin tulips are especially suitable for this type of planting showing off advantageously against the background of shrubbery. If cut flowers are prized this is the place to get them rather than from the formal bed where the absence of a flower or two is quite conspicuous. In the hardy border among the shrubs too, is the place for little irregular groups of narcissus, jonquils, lilies and crocus. Here they may be left year after year, to increase in numbers and each spring to bloom out in a great variety of colors.

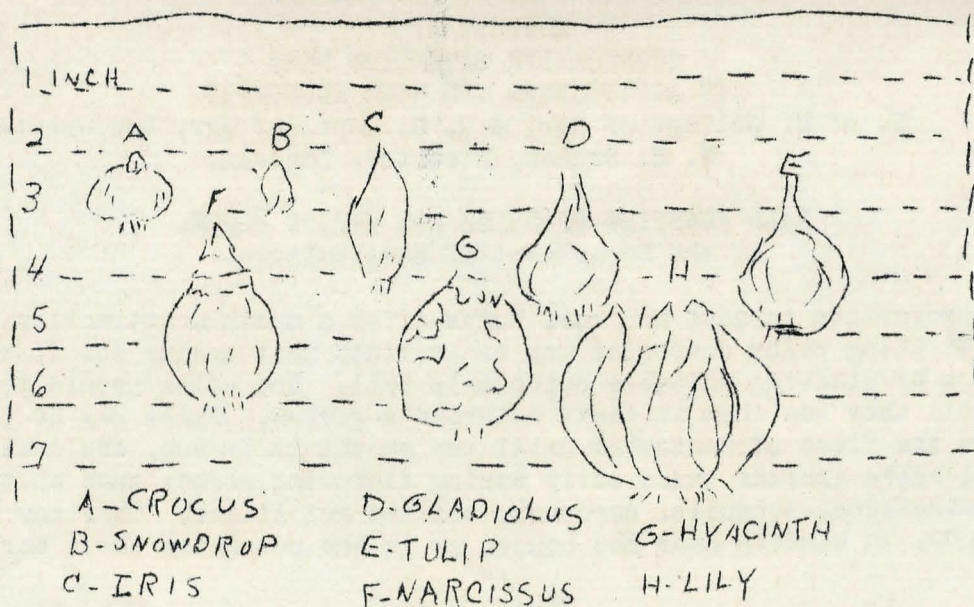
The Soil and Its Preparation.

Any good garden soil will grow bulbs if it is well drained. Hyacinths and tulips should be given a richer soil than narcissus, if that is possible. Narcissus bulbs may rot if the soil is loaded up with manure even tho the manure be well rotted. Deep spading is always advisable, from 10-12 inches at least. In addition the soil should be thoroughly pulverized. If there is a lack of fertility the entire bed may be covered with a heavy application of well rotted cow manure after the bulbs are set.

Planting of Bulbs.

Time of Planting:-- As previously mentioned, bulbs should be planted as early as possible in the fall. The reason for this is that the root systems may become thoroughly established before severe weather sets in. If it is desired to plant lilies, the plade prepared for them may be covered with straw or manure to prevent the soil from freezing and the bulbs planted as soon as they can be secured. It is frequently impossible to secure lily bulbs until the latter part of November.

Surface of Ground



Depth of Planting:- A common rule regarding the depth of planting for bulbs is to set them $2\frac{1}{2}$ times as deep as their diameter. The diagram herewith shown will be useful as a guide. The depths shown are not "hard and fast". They may be a little greater in a light soil or one that is exposed to northerly winds, and in heavy soils or protected places they may be a little less. In making a formal bed care must be used to get all of the bulbs at the same depth so that all will bloom at the same time. One way of doing this is to place a mark on the dibble or trowel to show the proper depth and plant accordingly. Another way is to remove 4 inches of soil from the bed level the surface and set the bulbs about level with the surface. Then the soil that has been removed is replaced evenly over the bed.

Distance between Bulbs:- Narcissi, Crocuses and other small flowered plants are set close together 2-3 inches apart whereas the large flowered sorts are set 4-8 inches apart.

Treatment after Flowering:- Where used informally in the shrub border or perennial border, the bulbous plants are allowed to shift for themselves except that they are mulched in November or December with straw or manure. Usually, however, the formal type of bed is to be used thru summer for growing other flowering or foliage plants and it is necessary to remove the bulbs. But it is not necessary to throw them away. If lifted carefully with their roots the bulbs may be transplanted into the garden and in the fall replaced in the original bed or in another place.

Growing Bulbs Indoors

Hyacinths, Paper white Narcissi, Chinese sacred lilies and even tulips may be grown indoors with a fair degree of success. They may be grown either in water or in dirt. To grow the bulbs in water, the bowl or vase should be partly filled with gravel, pebbles, coal, together with a small amount of crushed oyster shell. Then the bulbs are placed firmly among the stones, etc., partly covered with water and removed to a cool, dark part of the cellar while the roots are forming. They should be left there about 6-8 weeks, the water being changed every week. At the end of this period they are brought into the light and into a heated room to flower. The bulbs may be grown in pots also, a 6 inch pot being suitable for 3 bulbs. The pot is filled with garden soil in which a cupful of sand has been mixed and a little well rotted manure. The bulbs are set just beneath the surface of the soil, watered and removed to a cool dark moist place such as a cave or out of doors under a covering of dirt, straw, or ashes. Here they are left for 6-8 weeks and then gradually introduced to heat.