

## Planting Seasons in the South

By: Melinda Sperl

Spring is no doubt the busiest season for landscaping. It is also my personal favorite time of year. I simply love watching the landscape change from winter brown to green and seeing all my new flowers budding out. Since I am not a winter lover, I can say good-bye to the cold with a huge smile on my face too!

We live in the South though and are blessed with 11.5 months of planting seasons but we don't plant when it is freezing. Many customers have *informed* me that I have to get their plants in the ground by April as it is the only time to plant in Houston. If that were the case I would be out of business by May and looking for another job.

The reality is that for most plants, the best time to plant is before fall. Right after the heat of summer is over and before the cold of winter hits. In the cooler season the plant can focus all its energy on growing roots and not blooming. Then it will be well established in the ground before the cold of winter and be ready for the next spring blooming season. Plants put in the ground in the spring have barely recovered from the blooming season to go right into the heat of the summer. It is very stressful on the plants which makes them require a lot of water to recover. If they were to have been planted in the fall they would have had an established deep roots system that would assist them through this time.

This is especially true of trees as they are very tender after transplanted. They seldom show wilting and need a lot of water in the heat of the summer. A tree actually takes 5-10 to recover from damage done to it which include trimming and transplanting. We usually recommend a Bubbler watering system that is attached to the irrigation system for new or established trees to help them to develop deeper stabilization root systems. This will also help it recover from transplantation at a much faster rate.

Water is the friend of every plant in your landscape. After planting we recommend watering well immediately after.. Then water every day after that for the next two weeks, every other day for the next two weeks. By following this schedule plants will survive just fine any time of the year.

Go ahead and plant. Spring is too long to wait for a beautiful yard

Happy Gardening!

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