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Dahlia Talk *from tubers to blooms*

June is for Growing
June 2022



Get inspired! - Video of 2020 ADS Photo Contest - Dahlia Gardens

So far this season you have been in charge. Once the tuber or cutting has been planted, Nature takes over and the gardener is just a helper. There are still some responsibilities. The list is either long or short depending on your gardening personality. Sharon (this newsletter's editor) and I know from the recent survey that our readers cover a wide spectrum of interests.

Let's start with the basics. The dahlia plant must be supported. Here in Virginia we can have windy days and heavy rain. Few dahlias will stand on their own throughout the season. If you plant low-growing container dahlias, you may get by with a little care. But most varieties grow to at least three feet and need help. I use 5-foot plastic-coated stakes and jute cord to tie the plant to the stake. Start tying when the plant is about 15". Rebar is also a great choice. Let it rust and it fits in very naturally with the plants. It also comes in tall sizes.

Some years we have little or no rain and hot temperatures. Like tomatoes and other vegetable plants, dahlia plants need to be watered. This is a matter of common gardening sense. Dahlias also grow a lot during the summer, and they depend on sun, water, and soil to create energy.

Most of us want bushy plants with lots of blooms, exhibitors excepted. This requires nipping off or "topping" the growing (terminal) tip when three to five pairs of leaves have developed. The growing tip is in middle at the top of the plant. This stimulates side stems (laterals) to develop at the junction of the leaf and stalk. As they grow taller, they also need to be tied to grow vertically. See the links below. for more instruction.

As I noted earlier there are several things you can do if you are so inclined:

- mulch helps the roots retain moisture
- periodic applications of fertilizer will stimulate growth
- slugs, mites, and insects need to be discouraged, and
- the number of lateral branches can be restricted to encourage bloom size.

The internet has more advice than you can read in a lifetime. The American Dahlia Society, www.dahlia.org, has a useful number of "knowledge pages". If you are part of a local dahlia society all you need to do is ask. Dahlia lovers love to pontificate! Just remember, there is a wide spectrum of dahlia growers. Figure out where you want to be, and where you are going...and enjoy the ride.

I cannot conclude without a plug for the ADS National Show hosted by the National Capital Dahlia Society in Reston, VA. Hope to see you there. Link for more information, below

Good growing,

Harry Rissetto

Most of us grow our dahlias from tubers and cuttings. But growing from seeds is fun too! See two "seedling gardens" below. To follow a seedling grower through the ups and downs of a season click [here](#).



Agape Field Seedling Garden in Washington State - Photo by Steve Lamb



Seedling Garden in Ohio - Photo by Jackie Evangelista

Congratulations to any new graduates in our readership and any June newlyweds. Happy Father's Day to all you fathers. And flag day reminds us to thank the Veterans for their service. June is a busy month!

Links

[Netting Dahlias \(for support\)](#)

[Tying dahlias to a stake](#)

[An innovative way to stake dahlias](#)

[Supporting your dahlias](#)

[Grooming your dahlias](#)



[More information about the show.](#)

American Dahlia Society

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