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Dahlia Talk *from tubers to blooms*

May - Planting Time
May 2022



Planting the ADS Canby Trial Garden. Photo by Larry Smith.

In most of North America, this is the planting month. Mother's Day is a common benchmark, but my friends in the Adirondacks probably should hold off until the end of the month.

Here in Northern Virginia, my tubers are eyeing up and many have foliage. At the National Capital Dahlia Society (NCDS) meeting this week, there were rooted tubers 8 inches tall - ready to be topped. The major caution is the need to "harden off" the plants if you have started them inside. This means to close the pores on the leaves so outside weather conditions, heat and breeze, do not dry them out. View this [video](#) for some comments on hardening off plants.

One year we had a very late cold snap that froze some of the plants from tubers. Within two weeks new shoots appeared. If you are planting cuttings, you need to be more cautious. For seedlings and cuttings I will wait until the first week in June.

Time-release fertilizer should be spread at least two weeks before planting and scratched into the surface. There is general agreement that dahlias are surface feeders. Still, many internet sites recommend putting something in the planting hole below the tuber. If you choose to do this, be sure to create a buffer between the fertilizer and the tuber. [Here's](#) some info on planting in pots with fertilizer in the bottom of the planting hole.

Make a map or diagram of your dahlia plantings when you plant. Tags put out with the tubers occasionally disappear.

We generally direct this newsletter to the casual grower. As we approach 4,000 free subscribers, we agreed it would be informative to include links to the practices of the serious exhibitor. Look for this in future newsletters.

One last thought: dahlias grow like tomatoes.

Have a great gardening season,

Harry Rissetto

Congratulations to Deborah Dietz, a member of the Dahlia Society of California and the ADS. Deborah was recently featured in *Craftsmanship Quarterly*.

"The Craftsmanship Initiative is dedicated to reclaiming craftsmanship's principles of excellence, beauty, and durability as a pathway to a more sustainable world. The flagship venture of the initiative, which operates as a non-profit, is *Craftsmanship Quarterly*, a multimedia publication that focuses on master artisans and innovators whose work informs our quest." (Quoted from their [website](#).) See this really well-written and in-depth article [here](#).



[Video](#) of last year's Canby Trial Garden. Thanks, Larry Smith.

And the winner is - NO! WAIT! - The winners are

Did you notice our new banner above? The name of our newsletter is now, Dahlia Talk from Tubers to Blooms.

Two gentlemen suggested essentially the same name, so they are both declared winners and will receive a lovely and informative book. They are:

- Nick Weber, National Capital Dahlia Society
- Frank Lopiccolo, Southeastern Michigan Dahlia Society

Congratulations to both.



2nd Place, 2021 ADS Photo Contest, Class 1 Seedling - Photo by Jim Culp

Links

Here are two timely and informative videos. Check them out!

[Starting, Planting, and Fertilizing Dahlias](#)

[Dahlia Nutrient Disorders](#)



[More information about the show.](#)

American Dahlia Society

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