Donating Perennials to the Master Gardener Plant Sale

The plant sale team is asking for donations of perennials and natives for the April 24-25, 2020 Master Gardener Plant Sale. Here are guidelines to have fun and make a meaningful contribution to the sales’ success.

HOST A POTTING PARTY:
- Set date & location; identify who will store the pots and take them to CUH
- Get materials and supplies, request people attending to bring their own tools
- Clean pots either before the party or have a cleaning corner set-up (see instructions)
- Follow the “Perfect Practical Potting” instructions below for dividing and potting your plants
- Group potted items together and make sure that at least one pot has a label with the full genus-species name and the number of pots of that item (No more than 12)
- Determine how you will create labels for each pot
- Water pots as needed. Put labels in the pots. Each label needs to have the Botanical Name, common name, bloom season and color on the label
- Take labeled pots to CUH following email instructions

LESSONS LEARNED FROM LAST YEAR’S PERENNIAL DONATIONS:
- QUALITY NOT QUANTITY—we had too many plants last year that did not sell (common, and/or partially labeled) so please think about the plants that you pot up
- Identify where potted plants will be stored until the Plant Sale and who will take them to CUH a few days prior to the April 24-25 sale
- Buy your own potting soil and then ask for reimbursement
- Make sure that you have a source for black pots
- Only pot up those plants where you know the full botanical name (genus & species)
- Pot up a maximum of 12 pots of any given genus-species (quality NOT quantity)
- Do NOT pot up any plants that are on an invasive species list or that are garden thugs
- Common, fast growers do not sell well—this includes hostas, day lilies, miscanthus (make sure that they are distinctive plants—see list on next page for favorites)
- Pot Perennials between March 1 – 17 so that the plants have at least 6 weeks to settle in and grow roots/leaves before the sale

MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES:
- Pots: the preference is to use standard, black nursery pots so our donations have a cohesive, organized feel. Ask fellow clinic members, and nursery for used pots. See instructions below on how to sterilize.
- Potting soil: purchase bagged potting soil. If your clinic is unable to donate the cost of this, contact Cleo (cleo@raulerson.net) for reimbursement.
- Plant divisions: ask clinic members and neighbors for divisions of their overgrown perennials and native plants.
- Labels: I will send you blank labels and a marker – let me know how many you need.
HOW TO CLEAN AND STERILIZE POTS:
- Wear water-proof and bleach safe coveralls, safety glasses and other appropriate clothing
- Fill a large plastic storage tub or bucket about half full of water (approx. 10 gallons)
- Add approx. ½ cup of bleach
- Use rubber gloves and a brush to scrub pots
- Rinse in another tub of clean water if using immediately OR set aside to drain and dry for at least an hour prior to use

LINKS OF INVASIVE PLANTS:
Please check to make sure that none of the items you plan to pot are on these lists since we cannot sell them. This includes many Centaurea (knapweed), Lysimachia (loosestrife), Anchusa (bugloss), Carduus (thistle).


Plants that sell well at the Plant Sale:
This is the year to donate divisions or cuttings of the plants we love in our own gardens. After all, we’re gardeners: We want to share our love of growing beautiful and interesting, or delicious and healthy, things. Absolutely can’t bear to compost the rampant actors in your garden? Contribute two really exceptional specimens that shine with quality and health. Include the plants you have that flower in the spring or are popular evergreens including:

Aquilegia — columbine  
Aubrieta  
Bergenia  
Brunnera  
Convallaria — lily of the valley  
Corydalis  
Dicentra (now Lamprocapnos) — bleeding hearts, always popular for Mother’s Day  
Geum — always sells out early  
Helleborus  
Heuchera — not blooming, but always popular  
Iberis  
Iberis — sells out if blooming  
Lithodora  
Mukdenia — not blooming, but popular  
Papaver — poppies  
Phlox  
Podophyllum — not blooming, but popular  
Primula  
Pulmonaria  
Scabiosa  
Tiarella  
Viola
Select only healthy and NAMED specimens. Cut away any dead, broken, diseased or too long roots to healthy tissue. Also cut away dead, dying or broken stems and leaves to healthy tissue. The Pot should be an unbroken, clean, preferably black, one gallon - no fancy colored pots. Place 1”- 2” of potting soil in pot & suspend the plant in the center of pot so that the longest roots just brush the soil in pot. Arrange the roots so that they radiate evenly around the pot - don't crowd them. Still holding the plant steady, feed in more soil all round the pot and around and through the roots. Firm soil with fingers without compacting it, around the roots to exclude air pockets. Continue adding soil evenly all round and firming until the plant is self-supporting and soil level is approx. ½’ below pot rim. Tap the pot on the ground a couple of times to settle the soil and roots together. Add more soil if necessary to bring the top level to within ½’ of the rim again. Add water to top of rim and allow to drain away. Add more soil if level has settled. Stand the pot in indirect light for a few days to allow the roots and plant to recover. One gallon pots hold 4 quarts of soil. A 32 quart bag of soil will fill 8 pots. Soil quantities in some bags are given in Cubic feet. 1 Cubic foot = 25.75 quarts.