

Transplanting Perennials

One fall activity is transplanting perennials. Although not all perennials need to be transplanted every year, many do. Some signals plants may give include a “balding near the middle,” smaller blooms than in the previous year, weaker stems that may have to be staked in order to hold up new growth and blooms.

Transplanting can bring new life to perennials by improving air flow which reduces the chance of mildew and disease even as it provides more nutrition to each plant. Dividing also controls plant size. And, dividing increases the number of plants you have.

Before you divide perennials, provide in advance a new bed or work spots in the ground of an existing bed where you intend to put the new plants. Since most injuries to new plants come about from root damage or dry soil, it is essential to make sure that both the initial and new bed are moist. If you are up for it, even better conditions come from transplanting in a light rain. A couple of overcast days will allow the plants to adjust to the new environment.

There are several ways to go about dividing plants. It is recommended that you use a fork to loosen the clump of original growth. You can then use your hands to tease the roots apart. Use a sharp spade or knife to separate the mass into smaller sized plantings or put two forks back to back and pull them apart.

Each new division should have 3-5 healthy shoots and a strong network of roots. Keep transplants moist until they acclimatize to their new spots and look forward to next year when you can enjoy more and more vigorous plants in both the old and new sites.