

## Hydrangea Planting Instructions

### Care Upon Arrival

Bare-root plants need special care upon arrival. Please read the following instructions to help your new plant get off to a good start.

You have received a bare-root plant with little or no visible growth. This is normal. Upon arrival, open the packaging and check to make sure the roots feel moist. If they are dry, sprinkle the roots with water until they are moist but not soaked. If you have any questions about the appearance or condition of your plant when it arrives, please call us immediately.

Never expose the bare roots of plants to wind or sun before or during planting. If your ground is frozen, or for some other reason you are not ready to plant, soak the roots in a bucket of lukewarm water for up to 24 hours (no longer). You can then delay planting for a week or two if you keep the roots moist and in a dark, cool place where the temperature is above freezing. If the weather is warm, it is best to plant immediately.

**Do not** store a dormant bare-root plant in a warm place, such as in your house, for more than a week or so. Plants stored under warm conditions are much more

likely to be damaged by cold spring weather than are plants kept cool (ideally 35 to 40 degrees F).

### About the Variety

Endless Summer™ Hydrangea is a *Hydrangea macrophylla* that was discovered by Vern Black of Bailey Nurseries in 1983. Vern was impressed with the hardiness of this plant in a Zone 4 climate and found that it flowered on both old and new wood, resulting in dependable blooms year after year.

Endless Summer is a mop-head type that produces clear pink blooms in alkaline soils (high pH) and blue flowers in acidic soils (low pH). Flower heads may be as big as 4 to 6 inches in diameter and as much as 8 inches in diameter on healthy container-grown plants.

Endless Summer has medium to deep green foliage and is mildew-resistant. In the ground, it can reach a mature size of 3 to 5 feet in width and height.

The most unique characteristic of Endless Summer is its ability to bloom on new wood. If the new emerging growth is cut back to half, the amount of bloom is significantly increased. Regular

removal of spent blooms will stimulate repeat bloom.

### Hydrangea Care

There are three key areas to pay close attention to in taking care of your hydrangea:

- Plant in partial shade
- Use plenty of organic matter when planting
- Water frequently until well established.

### Choosing the Planting Site

This hydrangea grows 3 to 5 feet in width and height, making it an excellent plant for borders, a foundation planting, or to provide a backdrop for other flowering plants.

Hydrangeas need a partially shaded location or a northern exposure. They can tolerate full sun only in areas with cooler summers.

### Drainage

Good drainage is characterized by the soil's ability to retain sufficient moisture to nourish the root system while still being able to drain off excess moisture. Hydrangeas do not thrive in soggy or overly dry soil.

Before planting, dig a hole about 8 inches in diameter by 12 inches deep. Fill the hole with water. If the water has not drained after one hour, amend the soil to improve the drainage or select another location.

### Planting

1. Dig a planting hole approximately 12 inches deep and 24 inches wide. Hydrangeas prefer

loamy, well-drained, acidic soil (pH 4.5 to 6.5) enriched liberally with organic matter. We recommend adding compost to the planting hole.

2. When planting, place the top of the root ball level with the surface of the hole. The top layer of roots should be a few inches below the surface. When filling in with soil, it is important to water well, but do not flood, and avoid compacting the soil around the root system. The idea is to remove air pockets, yet keep the soil porous.

3. Trim the plants down to about 6 to 8 inches from the base of the plant after you are finished planting. This will ensure a much bushier plant.

### Pink or blue: How does soil pH affect color?

If the plant is able to absorb an abundance of aluminum, the flower color will be blue. If aluminum is absorbed in only small quantities, the color will be in the midrange, and if aluminum is absent, the flower color will be pink.

Hydrangea flower color is determined by soil pH because soil pH affects the availability of aluminum to the plant. When soil is acidic, aluminum is more available to the plant's roots, resulting in blue flowers. When the soil is alkaline, aluminum is "locked up" and not available to the plant's roots, resulting in pink flowers.

It is also worth noting that an abundant level of phosphorus will also "lock up" aluminum in the soil, making it unavailable to roots, resulting in pink flowers — something to consider if adding

fertilizer to the soil when planting your hydrangea.

If you have blue flowers and desire pink, you can add our pH Up (see *Ordering Information* below) or apply lime at the rate of one cup per three feet of plant height. Apply pH Up or lime to the soil area around the plant extending slightly beyond the drip line. You may not see a color change for at least one year. A repeat treatment the following year may be necessary for a complete color change.

For blue flowers, we recommend adding pH Down at a rate of one cup per three-foot plant. It may take up to a year before you see a color change. The soil will need to be retreated each year to maintain the desired flower color and pH level.

### Watering

Deep watering once a week is far better than frequent light watering. Thorough watering encourages deep root growth, making the plant less susceptible to drought stress. **Be sure to water your hydrangea regularly during the summer. Water more frequently during dry weather to keep the leaves robust, not wilted.**

### Ordering Information

#34-314	..... 'Endless Summer' Hydrangea
#34-294	..... pH Up
#34-295	..... pH Down

*To order, please call or visit our web site for current prices.*