



Quite Simply. Amazing.

growing guide

Evergreens: Broadleaf Evergreens

Due to the nature of broadleaf evergreens, this plant group requires some special cultural techniques to assure their success. Their location, type of soil, and regular maintenance are different from other trees and shrubs. Consider the following:

EXPOSURE

In our hardiness zone 5, it is essential that most of the plants receive as little *winter* sun as possible. Be careful not to plant too close to brick buildings or large glass areas due to the sun and heat they reflect. The east side of a house is best for broadleaf evergreens. Locating them in the shade of evergreens and densely branched shade trees is also acceptable.

SITE SELECTION

Select a site sheltered from northwest winter wind. Too much wind increases the water loss to the point where roots cannot supply water as fast as the leaves are losing it. This is especially important in our area where the soil freezes for long periods and plants cannot absorb water from the frozen soil.

To avoid broadleaf evergreens from drying out in winter, they may be sprayed with *Wilt-Pruf*, an anti-transpirant. Apply this to the foliage of the plants sometime after Thanksgiving on a day when the temperature is above 40 degrees F. Only one application per season is needed.

SOIL ACIDITY

For success with azaleas, hollies, and rhododendrons, the soil must be loose and acidic. To create a pH of 4.5 to 6.0 mix equal parts sphagnum peat moss with the existing topsoil and add the recommended amount of iron sulphate on the package label. Many are adaptable to the soil in Central Illinois. Boxwood, euonymus, grapeholly, pyracantha, and yucca do not need an acid soil, although a loose, fertile soil is recommended. Follow the usual planting procedures for most trees and shrubs when planting this group of broadleaf evergreens.

FERTILIZING

Fertilizing the plants each year in March assures maximum growth and performance. Select either the granular *Fertilome Azalea*,

Camellia, *Gardenia Food* or a one-time annual application or *Fertilome Acid Loving Formula* for mixing in water and applying monthly. If yellowing foliage is apparent, apply iron sulphate yearly to correct the soil problem.

PLANTING

Once a suitable location is found, dig the hole twice the diameter and 6" deeper than the root ball. To the soil removed from the hole, mix 50% topsoil (if the existing soil is heavy clay, discard it and replace with black topsoil) and mix in one or two handfuls of iron sulphate. Place 8" of the prepared soil in the bottom of the hole. Set the azaleas and rhododendrons in the hole so that the juncture of roots and stems is 1 1/2 - 2" above the existing soil grade. Other broadleaf evergreens should be set so the juncture of roots and stems is at the existing soil grade. Backfill halfway with the peat/soil mixture and soak well with Root Stimulator Solution. Fill remainder of hole with the prepared soil mix, lightly compacting it with your hands. For rhododendrons and azaleas, cover the soil ball with peat/soil mix to create a mounded effect (don't tamp with your feet) since they should be planted 1 1/2 - 2" above the existing soil grade. Construct a ring of soil around the edge of the planting hole to act as a basin for holding water. Finish watering by filling the basin with clear water and mulch over the soil with shredded bark 3-4" deep. Keep the mulch from coming in contact with the trunk of azaleas and rhododendrons.

CAUTION:

When watering new lawn areas, make sure not to include new shrub beds or trees. Daily watering can be injurious or fatal to the new plants. More plants die from over watering than under watering. Less frequent, deep, thorough soakings are much more beneficial than frequent, light sprinklings.

ROOT STIMULATOR:

Dilute 3 1/2 Tablespoons of Root Stimulator per gallon of water and apply to the rootball when the hole has been backfilled halfway with the peat/soil mixture. After finishing backfilling and making the saucer, fill the saucer with clear water. Use 3 pints of the solution for #2 to #5 containers, 1 gallon for

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WATER:

Watering of new plantings is based on the following criteria:

Soil Type - heavy clay soils require less frequent watering. Loose, sandy soils may require frequent watering.

Weather conditions - hot, windy weather dries plants more quickly; spring and fall are generally more cool and moist, thus water demand is reduced.

Plant type - not all plants require equal amounts of water. Observe how your plant reacts to watering. If it wilts easily and responds to moisture then water it more frequently. If it wilts and/or turns lighter green to yellow and does not respond to moisture, then it is over watered; reduce your watering frequency.

Generally: water only once each week, unless there is an inch of natural rainfall. Turn your hose on to a pencil sized trickle, allowing a slow and complete saturation of the soil around the tree. Water twice a week if weather turns hot and windy.

FRENCH DRAIN:

If drainage is a concern, especially with heavy, blue, clay soils, create a French Drain. Do this by digging a hole 24" below the planting hole; fill it with washed gravel then proceed with the usual planting directions.

MULCHING:

Shredded Hardwood Mulch is one of the best and most readily available mulches. A mulch is used to conserve moisture, regulate soil temperature, and reduce weed and grass competition. A 3-4" depth will provide the best effects; additional fertilizer should be applied with organic mulches. Do not use leaves (except oak leaves), newspaper, or sphagnum peat to mulch. Straw, pine needles, black peat, and dried grass clippings are acceptable alternatives.

