



PLANTING

Ideally plant when temperatures are mild and there is natural rainfall. Having said that, with a suitable watering regime, planting can occur at any time. Plants grow at different times of the year so if planting some species in winter, they may sit 'dormant' until ground temperatures increase.

- Ensure plants have been hardened off to sun and frost before planting to ensure they settle in well to your site
- Before planting, make sure the plants are thoroughly wet in their pots
- Dig a hole around 1.5 times the deeper and wider than the pot. Thoroughly mix in the material you will be using to improve the soil (eg. a small amount of cow manure or planting compost, coarse sand, granite and gypsum if your soil is very hard clay, or Rock dust) with existing soil in the bottom of the hole
- If you have clay soil, 'roughen' the sides of the hole for better root penetration
- Ideally, fill the hole with water before planting and allow to drain
- Place a 'handful' of a wet mix of water crystals and slow release fertiliser (fertiliser depends on your plant type) into the hole – you will surround the plants root ball with this mix by making a depression in the crystals before placing the plant (see our handout on preparing water crystals for further information).

Water crystals assist by maintaining moisture at the root ball where it is needed and will maintain moisture provided by rainfall or watering. The slow release fertiliser will facilitate growth during the establishment phase.

- Trim any roots protruding from the bottom of the plant container
- Gently remove the plant from the pot by holding the root ball at the base of the trunk, not the trunk of the plant. You may need to turn the pot on its side and squeeze gently
- Loosen roots at the bottom and sides of the root ball. If roots are too tight to do this, you may need to root prune the bottom of the root ball (otherwise the plant may die)
- Place the plant in the hole and backfill with the remaining soil you dug out for the hole
- Fill the hole in to the same level as the surface of the potting mix and don't bury the plant any deeper than it was in the pot
- Press the soil into shape to make a shallow depression about 3cm around the plant to collect water from rain and hand watering
- Water in gently, up to half a bucket per plant depending on soil dampness, and check that roots are not exposed after watering - add more soil if necessary
- Mulch lightly around the plant. Don't place mulch against the plant as this can bring on stem rot and insect attack

