

PLANTING FAQS



Can I leave my plants in these black plastic pots?

The plastic pot that you bought your plant in is great for use in the nursery but is not so great for use at home. They will require lots of extra water while in these pots. If you can't plant right away, keep the plants in some shade and check them every day or two for water. You should try to plant as soon as you can.

Should I use mulch?

Mulch is great with native plants, especially newly planted ones. It will help keep the roots cool and moist. Be sure to keep mulch a few inches away from the stem of the plant to avoid rot.

Fertilizer? Most native plants shouldn't need very much fertilizer. If you do want to fertilize consider using organic products like worm castings or compost.

How often should I water?

California is a big state with 6000+ native plants and many different ecosystems. Some established plants can handle living on rainwater alone and others, such as riparian plants, will need water at least once a week if planted in a sunny location. Every garden is different: soil type, drainage, sun exposure, and microclimate can all affect how often you will need to water your plants. The "look" that you seek is also a factor. Some native plant gardeners are happy with a landscape that is dormant in summer whereas others prefer more signs of life! Learn from your garden: let your plants educate you and then trust your educated gut!

What if I don't have a big garden? Are containers okay?

Many native plants will thrive in containers placed in a suitable location. Use a well draining bagged, potting soil, not garden soil. Commercially sold potting soils often benefit from addition of some perlite for increased drainage. Remember that, because their roots are limited by the container itself, plants in containers will need extra water for the entire time that they are kept in a pot.

Should I cut the root ball, I heard this helps increase rooting?

Never cut or score the root ball of your native plants. Dense, overgrown root balls can be gently loosened with your fingers, a dowel or chopstick, but generally the less manipulation of the roots the better.

Should I use bagged soil?

Most native plants are going to do just fine in your native garden soil. If you know you have a problem for sure you can use a planting mix or soil amendments but most of the time you will only be wasting money. Note, you should not use potting soil in your garden, save it for your container plants.