



LET'S GET GROWING

With planning, many plants can make the move to a new home

The nursery and landscape industry has long promoted "Fall is for planting," and I couldn't agree more. Soils are warm, while the days are cool and often cloudy and damp. While this kind of weather isn't all that pleasant for most of us, trees, shrubs and perennials thrive when their roots are warm and tops are cool!

While the "Fall is for planting" promotion is meant to encourage consumers

to continue adding plants to their landscape, as long as it's not snowing - at least not too hard, it's just as pertinent if you're making a move from one home to another this fall or next spring.

Make sure buyer agrees

While I'm not a real estate agent or lawyer, it seems to make sense to me to make sure that the buyer of your current home is fully aware of which plants you plan to take with you and is in complete agreement - in writing. I certainly wouldn't want to take the chance at mucking up a couple hundred-thousand dollar deal over a couple hundred, or even a couple thousand dollars worth of plants.

Evaluate the conditions at your new home

It's not uncommon for soil conditions, sun/shade, water drainage, presence of wildlife

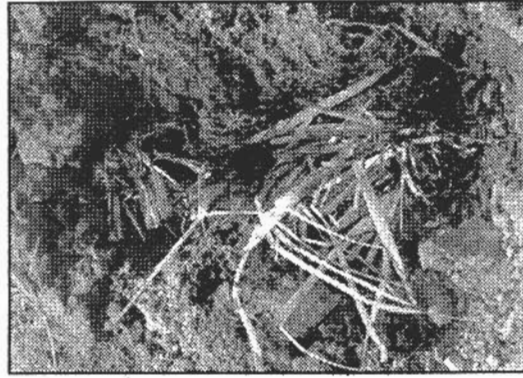
(e.g., deer) to vary significantly from one's current home to a new home. A prize collection of hosta may need to be kept under lock and key if you move it to your new home in deer country, for example. (Most hosta are like triple deca-dence chocolate cake to deer.)

The transplanting process

Assuming that conditions at your new home will allow your favorite plants to thrive, the key to moving them successfully is to water them thoroughly now, then dig them with as much of their root system intact as possible soon after the first hard frost if you're going to be moving this fall.

A good watering is important because we have had only about an inch of rain across most of Central New York since the first week in September. Meanwhile, the frost will kill the leaves of herbaceous perennials, leaving their crowns less susceptible to water loss. And, though many trees and shrubs will still have leaves, they won't be functioning as well as during the height of the growing season, which means that they won't be as susceptible to water loss, either.

If you're going to be moving next spring, dig the plants as close to the time you're going to

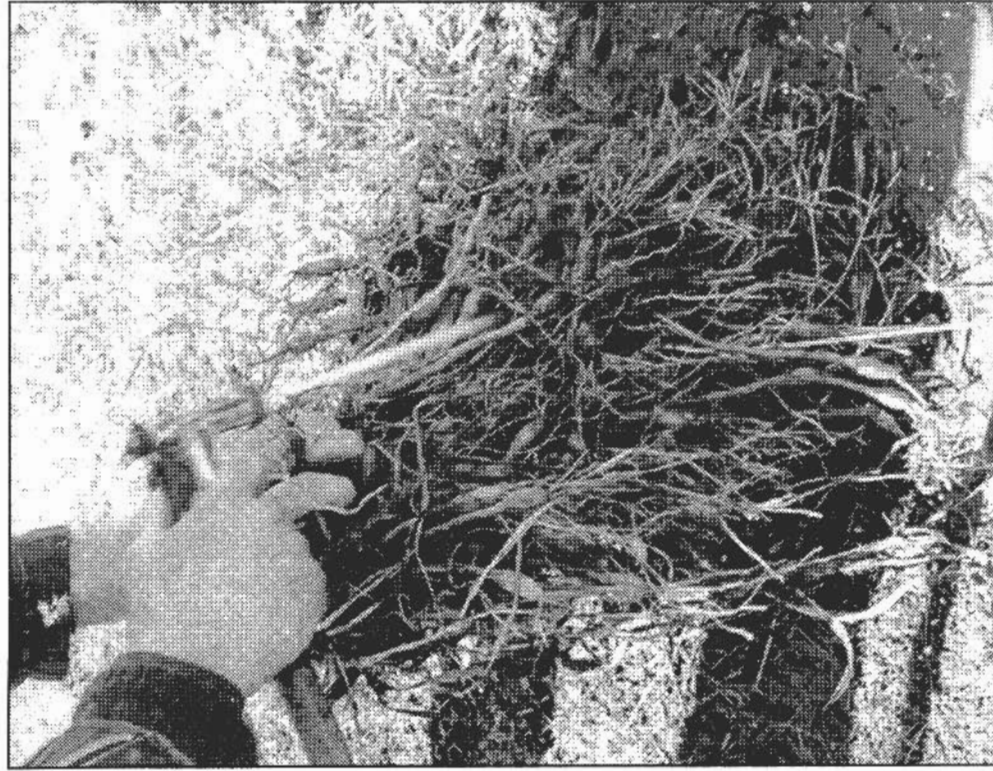


These clumps of Siberian iris are being temporarily healed into a shallow trench for holding before being transplanted into their permanent location.

be moving, but before new leaves emerge.

Regardless of when you're moving, once your plants are out of the ground, you need to keep their roots from drying out both before the move and once they're at your new home.

You can accomplish this by setting your plants in a shady spot that's protected from drying winds and mounding soil or mulch over their root systems. Or, you can temporarily "heal" them in to the ground until you're ready to move them to your new home by digging a shallow trench, setting the roots of your plants into the trench, then covering them back over with soil or mulch and watering well.



Washing the soil from the roots of your plants before moving them to your new home can allow you to leave problematic weeds behind.

The same technique of covering their roots with soil or mulch, and/or healing them into the ground can be used to hold your plants once they've made the move to your new home.

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