

Insider Tips for Happy, Healthy Coneflower

1. Choose a location where they will get at least 6 hours of sunlight per day. This is VERY important!
2. Pay close attention to what type of coneflower you are planting. There are differences between the native varieties and the new hybrid varieties. Natives will spread; hybrids will not. Take this into account when choosing your location.
3. We always recommend amending your soil before planting, but this applies especially to the hybrid varieties. Natives can get by with less fuss, whereas the hybrids require a little more care.
4. With all the different varieties of coneflower, also come many different heights, ranging from about 18 inches to 4 feet. Pay very close attention to this, in order to choose the best location in your garden.
5. Coneflower are generally not heavy feeders, but they do appreciate a good feeding during the time they are budding and blooming. Our blue juice is perfect for this, or you can use a slow-release fertilizer if the conditions are right and it isn't too late in the summer. We generally recommend not using slow-release fertilizers after early August.
6. If you are planting now, you will want to include bone meal in the process. Bone meal helps to stimulate root growth. This is important for plants to get established before winter.
7. As mentions above, native varieties will spread, this is done by dropping seed. If you want them to spread, don't deadhead. They will drop seeds around their base. You can also harvest the seeds and spread them where you want them to grow.
8. If you want to harvest and spread seeds manually, you will have a higher success rate if you seed with soil and mulch. The seeds will need to be in contact with the soil in order to germinate.
9. If you don't want them to spread or feed the birds, then go ahead and deadhead as soon as the flowers are spent before they go to seed.
10. If you noticed in the spring that they were struggling to come back, it means that they were not watered enough during the late fall. Eriophyid mites and Aster Yellows are generally the only ailments they acquire. It can be common for foliage at the base of the plant to turn purple, but this is due to changes in temperature.