

Catch "Yellow Fever"

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Northern California Daffodil Society

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**The Northern California Daffodil Society
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Daffodil Internet Resources

Northern California Daffodil Society
daffodil.org

American Daffodil Society
daffodilusa.org

DaffLibrary - Online library with
more than 3,000 daffodil publications
dafflibrary.org

DaffTube – Videos, Powerpoint
presentations and self-study programs
dafftube.org

DaffSeek - Daffodil Database
Information & photos for 32,000+ daffodils!
daffseek.org

Daffnet – An International daffodil
discussion forum
daffnet.org



The Northern California Daffodil Society
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A Pocket Guide for Growing Daffodils in a Warm California Climate



Prepared by

Northern California Daffodil Society

daffodil.org

DO:

- Always plant daffodils in a sunny location. Too much shade might result in the daffodils not blooming after the first year down.
- Always plant daffodils in a well-drained location. Growing in areas where water regularly stands will result in bulb loss. If good drainage does not exist, good solutions are building a raised bed or growing in containers.
- Choose varieties that bloom in early season or mid-season, not in late-season. Late-season varieties will not survive because they will not have time to rebuild their bulb before warm weather sends them into dormancy.
- Cool new (first-year) bulbs in the refrigerator for several weeks before planting. The bulbs were probably grown previously in a colder climate; chilling will cause the bulbs to emerge and grow earlier, in your growing season, with sufficient time to rebuild the bulbs before warm weather comes.

DON'T:

- Don't plant daffodil bulbs too early. Wait until nights are cool and the soil temperature has dropped. In most areas, November is an ideal time to plant.
- Don't mow the daffodil foliage down after blooming; let it die down naturally. Cutting daffodil foliage down shortly after blooming will result in severe bulb loss and fewer blooms in subsequent years. Next year's bloom begins to form in the bulb immediately after blooming. Thus, early cutting down of the foliage will result in next year's flower not being formed in the bulb. Wait to cut the foliage until the leaves begin to yellow, (indicating growth completed).

- Don't braid the daffodil leaves or tie them up in bunches! Weaving the leaves lessens their exposure to sun and interferes with the making of food which is carried down to feed the bulb and the developing flower inside it.

PLANTING:

- Plant standard-size bulbs about six inches deep and six inches apart in trenches or holes which have been dug in well-prepared soil. As a rule, miniature-size bulbs are planted only one to two inches deep. Clay soil can be loosened by the addition of gypsum to the bed during preparation. Well-composted organic matter can be added to the soil. A little sand (1/2 - 1 inch) or Perlite at the bottom of the trench or hole is said to facilitate rooting of the bulb and supposedly provides good drainage as well.
- After planting, mulch the beds with an inch or two of coarse sand or ground bark. This will help to keep down weeds and will reduce the amount the amount of dirt splashed up on the blooms. It also will insulate the bed from the sun during the summer.
- You needn't water your bulbs immediately after planting. Wait to water the bed until the normal time for rain arrives (late November in many areas).

FERTILIZING:

- The relative amounts of the essential elements Nitrogen, Phosphorus, and Potassium supplied by a fertilizer are indicated by corresponding numbers (N, P, K) on its container. Avoid using high-nitrogen fertilizers (N greater than 10) or fresh manures as they seem to promote bulb rot. Phosphorus and potassium are greatly needed by bulbs. Nitrogen and potassium compounds are soluble and washed through the soil. A reasonable fertilizing option after planting is to liberally broadcast a granular feed low in nitrogen, moderate in phosphorus and high in

potassium (eg, 5-10-20). Alternatively, fertilizer can be worked directly into the soil during bed preparation.

- Some authorities recommend that daffodils be fertilized three times a year: 1) at planting, 2) as the foliage emerges from the ground, and 3) after blooming. However, other authorities feel that fertilizing three times a year is probably excessive unless the soil is extremely sandy and all the nutrients are continually being leached from the soil.
- Good advice: "Have your soil tested by the Agricultural Extension Service; see your County Agent for details."

DIGGING:

- In order to keep the daffodils from becoming too thick and decreasing in bloom, dig and replant the bulbs about every three years.
- When the foliage has died down naturally, but not disappeared, dig the bulbs, wash them with a hose after cutting off any remaining foliage, let them dry thoroughly out of the sun, and place them in a mesh bag.
- Hang the bags of bulbs in a well-ventilated garden shed or garage. After several months, the bulbs can be cleaned by hand to remove dried outer scales, etc.

Northern California Daffodil Shows

First Weekend in March
Alden Lane Nursery
981 Alden Lane, Livermore

Second Weekend in March
Ironstone Vineyards
1894 Six Mile Road, Murphys

For exact dates, go to daffodil.org