

THE CULTIVATION OF IRIS

- ! The following information is meant to be advisory.
! We (VWS) cannot be held responsible for any damage and/or bad results.

We herewith give you some important suggestions for the cultivation of iris, which will help you to make your cultivation a success!



BEFORE PLANTING

- Practically all kind of soils are suitable for the production of the iris, provided that they are loose, have a good drain and are free from disturbing layers. The best is to use fresh soil every 6/7 years.
- Try to have a low (15°C) soil temperature by shading the green/plastic house with a shade canvas of 50 until 70% and keep the soil moist, starting two weeks before planting!!
- If the soil is not free from diseases steam or disinfect the soil (3 weeks before planting).
- If the soil has a high salt concentration (E.C. higher than 1 - 1,5) then give the soil plenty of water two weeks before planting. The iris is a salt sensitive plant!
- Fertilization before planting is not advisable.
- To avoid a repeated infection with Pythium fungus (root-rot), treat the soil with the proper fungicide. If Pythium is expected, phosethyl-aluminium (10 grams Aliette, 80%) can applied by means of irrigation water onto any soil following plant emergence.
- To control Rhizoctonia solani, tolchlophos-methyl (5-10 gram/m² Rizolex, 50%) can be applied right before planting.

Please note that this is an indication of how to grow iris, each different circumstances asks for a different approach, therefore if you have questions or you want to know something more about iris, please do not hesitate to contact VWS

- Work any chemical well into the soil: Pythium agents down to the root zone a Rhizoctonia agents down to the bulb zone. The highest recommended concentrations apply to the heaviest soils.
- Give enough water a few days before planting so in the rooting area of the soil it is moist and fresh when planting.
- When you prepare the iris bulbs by yourself we will advice you to gas once a month with an insecticide, like Actelic 50 (10ml per 10m³ preparation room), in your preparation room.



PLANTING

- The iris bulbs are disinfected by VWS.
- In order to maintain the proper distance between plants, netting with 64 openings per m² is often used.
- If you cannot plant the bulbs immediately after arrival, unpack the bulbs and place them carefully in a thin layer in trays. Place them in a store room at 15 to 17° C with enough air circulation for a maximum of 2 weeks.
- Plant the bulbs, especially in the summer, deep enough (7 - 10 cm soil on the bulbs). See table 1 for the exact planting density for the maximum bulb size.
- Water the soil well after planting, so the soil fits well around the bulbs, this promotes a trouble-free rooting.
- Try to keep the soil temperature before and after planting at 15°C by shading, ventilating and watering with cold water. Never plant during the hottest period of the day!
- Cover the soil after planting with straw, so no heating radiation can come in.

AFTER PLANTING

- Try to keep the soil constantly moisture, water only in morning times with cold water.
- Optimum temperature for iris cultivation is between 15 and 17°C, with a minimum of 8 and a maximum of 22°C.

HARVESTING

- It is recommended to cut the plant when the flowers have a 1 to 1,5 cm coloured tip. This means that the flowers will have to be cut twice, sometimes three times a day.
- Leaf tipping is the removal of too long or dead yellow-brown leaf tips which may spoil the appearance of the bunch. Leaf tipping is easiest done after bunching.
- Put the flowers in cold (2°C) clear water for 1,5 hours, immediately after bunching.
- Store the flowers as short as possible at a temperature of 2 to 4°C