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HYDRANGEAS

As professionals, we are asked about hydrangeas and their care more than other plant. Perhaps a plant that produces such wonderful flowers is associated with difficult care.

Mophead hydrangeas are the most popular hydrangeas grown in home gardens and landscapes. At **Woodbury's Garden Center**, you will find beautiful colors of blue and pink. There are a few guidelines to follow...

In the last few years, a few everblooming hydrangeas called “everbloomers” have been developed. They bloom longer and further north. A popular variety is Endless Summer. Living in our colder climate, you will have to experiment with different varieties and ways of protecting them.

Hydrangeas need an abundance of water (hydrangeas means water tub in Greek), partial to full sun and very rich soil. The spent flowers should be removed as soon as possible to allow the plant to direct its strength to growing and producing new buds. We suggest fertilizing liberally in the spring using a good all purpose plant food.

Pruning and Blooming

Hydrangeas only bloom on the tops of new growth so remove any stems which have already bloomed. The French hydrangea (or hydrangeas macrophylla) blooms from buds on new growth produced the previous year. For this variety pruning should be done immediately after blooming in early summer. Other varieties of hydrangea should be pruned in later fall or early spring. The entire plant can be cut back to the ground if it becomes too large. It will grow back quickly and begin blooming again.

In acid soil blooms will become blue, pink in alkaline soil and white in neutral soil. The flower colors may be controlled by applying aluminum sulphate to the soil prior to budding for blue flowers or by adding lime to produce pink flowers.

And the most frequently asked question – why don't my hydrangeas bloom? There are 3 possibilities. The first is too much shade, the second improper pruning and third is weather-related damage to flower buds. Damaging weather conditions include early fall freezes that occur before the plant goes dormant, very low winter temperatures and late spring frost.