

HOME, LAWN & GARDEN

Healthy plants: The Basics

(NC)—Bigger blooms and healthier plants can be yours if you start with good soil and feed your plants as well as watering them. Four simple elements are required to achieve healthy growth for plants.

Soil: Healthy gardens need soil rich in organic matter with the correct balance of air space, water holding capacity and drainage. Tip for Success: Enhance existing soil with three inches of quality garden soil before planting. Thoroughly mix the garden soil with the existing soil to a depth of six inches. This provides an ideal environment for the roots—a good foundation will help plants get off to a great start.

Water: More than 90 percent of a plant's weight is water, so it is vital to

replenish what is lost or used each day, especially during hot summer months. Tip for Success: For best results, water your garden during the morning hours. This helps prevent evaporation and ensure the plants get the necessary moisture. Be generous; water thoroughly until the soil is saturated for best results.

Plant Food: As with people, plants require regular feedings for healthy, abundant growth. Tip for Success: To save time, feed while you water with Miracle-Gro LiqueFeed plant food that attaches to your garden hose. The results are beautiful blooms, lush foliage and a healthier overall appearance for your plants with regular feeding.



Sun: Be sure to look at the tags on the plants for vital information about how much direct sun or shade a specific plant should receive. Visit www.miraclegro.ca for more healthy planting tips.

Handy hints for building your house

(NC)—The decision to build your own home puts you in control of the design, the materials, and the workmanship. Imagine building a home, for example, which is at least twice as energy-efficient as neighbouring homes. Or one with walls that are three times more sound resistant, up to four times more fire resistant, and up to nine times stronger than typical wood framed walls.

Information to acquire this for your new house can be found at nudura.com. Here are some additional handy hints as you begin:

Build for resale. No matter how long you intend to stay, don't build to your specific family requirements only. A single loft bedroom with basement kitchen may be perfect for you, but a home of this kind could be very difficult to sell.

Use the best materials your budget will allow. Superior materials provide the best environment for you, and it also pays off at resale. In greatest demand right now, for example, are materials and methods with a commitment to sustainability and energy efficiency—and that is achieved with the newest technology in the use of concrete. The Nudura building system for example, provides double the insulation by constructing walls with pre-assembled, concrete forms made with foam panels (EPS) held together with polypropylene webs and filled with reinforced concrete. Combine that with the use of ceiling and floor technology creating an entire building envelope that is design-friendly, much faster, and with less construction waste compared with traditional building methods. Another advantage to utilizing concrete when building is its defence against mould. The Nudura technology does not support mould growth due to lack of gaps in the walls where mould grows keeping the air in your home fresh and cleaner. Money is saved because of durability and energy efficiency—and the resulting structure is up to nine times stronger, provides far more fire pro-

tection, far more sound insulation, and can produce energy savings of up to 70 percent in both heating and cooling.

Don't overbuild. Buy a land lot in a neighbourhood that suits the design you have in mind. Owning the biggest and most expensive house in the area may be wonderful for you, but future buyers may not think so.

Monitor the progress. Stay involved. Paying attention to the materials used and quality control gives you an invaluable base of knowledge about your home. And, if mis-

takes are being made it is better to catch them at a time they can be fixed.

Prepare for delays. Try to be as flexible as possible on the completion date. Most construction projects involve dozens of workers, suppliers and subcontractors. Delays are common and since constructing a building is systematic, each delay backs up the entire process. Building with concrete has been known in some cases to cut construction time in half when dealing with trained professionals.

Thousands of Canadians are touched by breast cancer every year. It impacts the people living with the disease, their families, friends and loved ones.

Learn more about this disease by visiting www.cbca.org

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Call now for a **FREE LAWN ANALYSIS** so you can enjoy your yard this summer.

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