

An ideal time to repot your plants

Growth is stirring in outdoor gardens and soon the earth will be alive and singing with welcome colors. It is the start of the growing season and an ideal time for repotting healthy houseplants, too.

But, this should be undertaken only when essential. There are foliage plants that do best when left undisturbed for a few years (like Aspidistras, Palms, etc) and flowering ones that bloom vigorously when roots are restricted (like African Violets, Wax Flowers, etc.). Indicators that moving on may be in order are when many roots emerge from drainage holes or crop out on top of the soil or if wilting occurs between routine waterings.

A brief examination of the roots is advis-

able and slipping the plant from its pot will be facilitated by moistening the soil an hour beforehand. If the roots have formed a matted, coiled web on the exterior of the root ball, almost hiding the potting medium, it needs moving on.

Overpotting invites problems, so it's wise to increase the container by one size, but I upgrade by two sizes for fast growing ones (like Spider Plants). While holding the root ball intact, trim any dried or straggly roots, remove debris like moss, white crusts, withered foliage, etc., and check to ensure there are no damaging pests in the soil.

With a layer of recommended sterilized soil spread in the bottom of a scrubbed

Green 'n' Growing

Elaine Gordon



clean pot with drainage holes, centre the plant making sure the root ball is at the same level as previously, leave space for watering room at the top of the pot and lightly tamp fresh mixture down and around the sides... just enough to support the plant. Gently tapping the pot a few times on a hard surface will aid in settling the soil and eliminating air pockets. Water sufficiently and while waiting for

excess moisture to drain, wipe the foliage with a damp cloth. This is extremely beneficial because it allows the plant to absorb more light, breathe better, look nicer and discourages insects and disease. Settle the plant in a dry receptacle in an area away from direct sun for a few weeks and water cautiously at that time. As the fresh soil provides all the nutrients required, fertilizing isn't needed for a few months.

Annual topdressing is just fine for those plants you don't want to pot on because they've reached the largest convenient pot size. Just remove a few inches of old soil, being careful not to expose many roots, and refill with fresh to the original level.

This new layer plus a diet of regular feedings give an effective boost. (I was pleased with the vigorous new growth on my Norfolk Island Pine after a topdressing of African Violet soil and a fertilizing.)

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There's a lot going on for young people in Ontario.

Find out

Young people in Ontario can take advantage of a number of excellent programs and services offered by the Government of Canada. If you're interested in any of the ones described here or in knowing more about others that are available, just use the coupon below to find out.

Youth Opportunity Fund

The continuing strength and vitality of our nation rests with its young people. That's why the Government of Canada has attached such great importance to creating jobs for Canadian youth.

In the last federal budget, \$150 million was added to the \$1 billion Youth Opportunity Fund. The purpose of this fund is to help young people, including students, to learn new skills and find jobs in private industry and the voluntary and public sectors.

Training for Youth

Have you found the right job yet? On-the-job training is one of the most practical ways to gain valuable work experience. The Government of Canada's General Industrial Training program allows you to earn while you learn. Many employers have already used this program to help give young people a start in life.

Your employer may be reimbursed for nearly all of the training costs. As well, the Government of Canada will, in most cases, pay the employer half of your wages during the training period. Training may last from a few weeks to a year. To learn more, use the coupon below.

Career-Access could open doors for you

A lot of young people know what kind of career they want and may even have prepared for it by studying at high school, university or training at vocational schools or community colleges. Even so, once they start looking for jobs in those fields, they may not be able to find what they want. That's when the Career-Access Program can help. It was designed to encourage employers to hire these people so they can gain valuable experience in their chosen careers. The encouragement for employers is that the Government of Canada pays part of the wages while the person is gaining needed experience.

Specialized Services

Because they have no job training or trade, lots of young people find it difficult to get jobs. So there are special programs designed just for them. For example, Specialized Youth Units (SYUS) are staffed with people who cooperate with community agencies and Outreach projects to place these young people in suitable and rewarding jobs where they can increase their skills. There's a SYU branch in Scarborough where Ontario young people can apply for help.

Planning now for future job security

Modern technology keeps changing the ways we work and the jobs we do. Canada's National Training Program includes a plan that will make sure people are trained now for the kinds of skills that will be very much in demand in the eighties and after. The Skills Growth Fund encourages public training institutions and private non-profit organizations to teach modern technical and related skills and to develop the facilities for this work. The easiest way to find out more about training is to ask at your local Canada Employment Centre.

Get involved in Katimavik

Katimavik is a popular and successful national youth program for single people from 17 to 21. If you participate, you will be involved for nine months, travelling in groups to different regions in Canada and working on community projects. The work is rewarding and varied, from the restoration of cultural artifacts to the clearing of trails and waterways in municipal parks. While you don't get paid as you work, there is a \$1,000 honorarium at the end of the nine months.

Some Katimavik projects here in Ontario have involved a companionship and home care program for seniors, establishing day care centres for single mothers and a drop-in centre for teens.

Or, you could find yourself building a fishermen's wharf on Cape Breton Island or staffing a community cablevision station in British Columbia.

This year, 5,184 participants will be needed for over 400 projects in cities and communities across Canada. It could be a great way for you to develop new skills, meet new people and learn a lot about yourself and your country. Interested? Find out!

Canada Works

Canada Works is a job creation program that provides funds to community organizations, municipalities and businesses, helping them to hire staff for special work projects and activities. If you have been unemployed for eight weeks, you could be eligible to work on a Canada Works project. The jobs last from six to 52 weeks and give you experience and contacts that might help you find a long-term job. Your Canada Employment Centre has information on the Canada Works jobs available in your community.

Get in on it

Please send me the publications I enclosed:

Opening Doors to Jobs Youth Katimavik

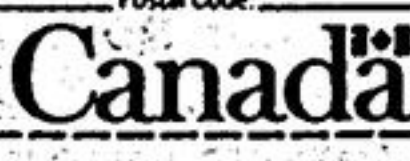
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