



[www.TopTropicals.com](http://www.TopTropicals.com)

rare plants for home and garden  
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**Top Tropicals Botanical Garden and Nursery**  
phone 941-575-6987, toll-free: 1-866-897-7957, fax 954-252-4442  
47770 Bermont Rd, Punta Gorda, FL 33982

## Please read these important tips!

**Residue on leaves.** Brown or white residue on leaves is caused by mineral and organic components of water and is harmless for plants. It can be removed easily by moist paper towel rubbing; you may use a few drops of vinegar for faster removal; rinse with clean water afterwards.

**Healthy plants.** We guarantee that we ship healthy plants.

**E-mail only, in 3 days period.** All claims must be submitted in writing only, and only within 3 days after delivery. Please email us at [info@toptropicals.com](mailto:info@toptropicals.com) if you have any problems; if you call us regarding any claims, you will be asked to email us anyway.

**Shipping damage.** All shipments travel at the risk and expense of the buyer. We assume no responsibility for delay or damage (either temperature or mechanical) after delivery has been handled to carrier. To ensure your plants have a safe trip:

- Please make sure delivered package is not sitting on your porch all day. We can't guarantee the plants to be alive if they are shipped without heat pack in winter or if they are overheated in summer. Watch for our shipping confirmation email to expect your shipment.

- Please monitor weather in your area. If it's too hot or too cold, notify us, we can hold your order.

**Shipping cost is not refundable.** In case of replacement, you can either receive replacement plant with your next order, or at additional charge that covers shipping cost.

**Contact ASAP.** If you received a weak or broken plant - email us immediately, it may be saved, and we can help you!

**Pot size - important!** DO NOT use a pot larger than the root ball! Only when plant starts new growth, you may move it in a bigger size pot.

**Use only potting mix.** Do not use top soil or any other heavy soil for container planting. Potting medium must be light and well-drained. A plant can be killed easily by using wrong potting mix. **Do not overwater!**

**Proper care.** If you received a healthy plant, but managed to kill it under improper care - it can't be replaced. Keep the plant in warm conditions - between 75-85F - in a pot in shade until adjusted and recovered from stress. Don't plant out of package into a full sun!

## When your plants arrive

**Use smallest pot to start with.** After opening the package, immediately pot the plants in containers about the size of root ball. Do not use bigger size until the plant is recovered and established.

**Plant on same level.** Set the plant roots into the soil so that the point where the roots start stays just at the same level with soil surface. If you place the plant too deep in soil - the stem may rot.

**Potting mix.** Make sure you have a well-drained potting medium, with good drainage characteristics. The best choice is soilless potting mix containing peat moss. Do not use top soil or any other garden soil for potted plants!

**Water.** Water well and let it drain. Mist the foliage with pure water. Don't water again if the soil is wet!


**Leaves and stems.** Remove any yellowed leaves or damaged branches using sharp clippers. Some mature plants are slightly pruned for shipment to avoid damage and avoid burden for the plant during stressful period of transportation. Some leaves and flowers might fade or drop during shipping, your plant will recover and new growth will start after 1-2 weeks adjustment period in proper light and watering conditions.

**Light.** Place the pots in a shady spot: in good light, but out of hot direct sun, for 1-2 days until they re-adjust from shipping stress, then move them to their permanent location.

**Repotting or planting.** Allow a week or two before repotting, or planting directly into the ground. It might take a few weeks for recovery: watch for new growth - once the plant starts growing, it's time to move it into permanent place.

**Do not fertilize** for at least 3-4 weeks.

**Check our online Catalog** to determine the optimal light and water requirements for the species you have received. Remember, most of our plants are tropicals and shouldn't be exposed for a long time to low temperatures (below 50-55F).

STATE OF FLORIDA  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES  
1911 S.W. 34th St. / P.O. Box 147100, Gainesville, FL 32614-7100  
GENERAL NURSERY STOCK INSPECTION CERTIFICATE  
Registration Number **47233199**  
Section 581.031(21), F.S.  
**TOP TROPICALS LLC**  
47770 Bermont Rd, Punta Gorda, FL 33982  
This is to certify that this nursery stock has been visually inspected for plant pests and meets at least the minimum requirements of Chapter 581, Florida Statutes.  
  
CHARLES H. BRONSON  
Commissioner of Agriculture  
DACS 08011, Revised 11/99  
**LIVE PLANT - NO DELAY**

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**"MAIL ORDER ONLY"**  
Section 581.031(23)(a)F.S.  
**TOP TROPICALS LLC**  
Nematode Certification Number **2450**  
Nursery Registration Number **47233199**  
This is to certify that the material in this shipment meets the requirements of California quarantines (C.A.C. Sections 3252, 3271, 3282, 3279, 3264, 3263, 3283)  
DACS - 08049 Revised 09/03  
This certificate is valid unless revoked for cause

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Section 581.031(23)(a)F.S.  
**TOP TROPICALS LLC**  
Nematode Certification Number **2450**  
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This is to certify that the materials in this shipment Have been examined and found apparently free of burrowing nematode and meet the requirements for Texas Quarantine 4TAC, Chapter P. Diaprepes root weevil  
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## Potting container plants: soil and fertilizer requirements

It is very tempting to buy a 98-cent 2 sq ft bag of top soil in garden center, but it will definitely kill your expensive exotic plant in container. Tropical plants require a special soil for successful growing. In the Nature, most of them grow in conditions of rainforest, in a loose, porous medium contained of bark and light organic matter. This medium provides good drainage which is a must for healthy roots. In most cases you can use any **potting soil** (peat-based soilless mix) you find in nearest Garden Center. Potting soil can't cost \$1 for 30 lb bag – this would be something wrong. Expect to pay \$6-7 for Scott/MiracleGro/etc. names. General potting soil already has peat moss in it, so you can use it straight from the bag.

For our tropical plants, we prefer to use our own custom mix, made with professional components that you can't get from local retail garden center. TopTropicals professional potting mix is a very close substitute for natural medium. This is a soilless mix that includes soil conditioner, peat moss, perlite and special slow-release fertilizer with micro-elements (active for 3-4 months) and is ready to use. TopTropicals Potting mix available at our online store [www.TopTropicals.com](http://www.TopTropicals.com).

If you prefer to create your own custom mix, never use heavy soils! You don't need compost, manure, etc. in pots. The problem number one with tropical plants is overwatering and poor drainage, especially when you use compost/manure. It's good to add some soil conditioner as a "soil improvement": a fine mix of bark pieces and charcoal will work best (you can add orchid mix as conditioner). Another helpful components are perlite (or aperlite - styrofoam imitation) and vermiculite. Instead of peat-moss you can use GrowCoir (coco-based fiber), which is superior to traditional peat moss.

In pots, you should use Osmocote, Dynamite (or similar) slow-release fertilizers according to the manufacturer directions.

It's beneficial to use water-soluble fertilizer like Peters, Miracle-gro, etc., especially if you want to induce blooming. Spray foliage with fertilizer solution; it's better to use weaker solution more often than full blast once a month.

Do not over fertilize plants, especially, when temperature is low - you can easily destroy root system.

And, again, do not overwater. Tropical plants like water but they hate having wet feet. That's why drainage is so important.

## TopTropicals guide to in-ground planting in South Florida

*This planting for South Florida can be used for most areas suitable for in-ground planting of tropical and subtropical plants.*

**1. Plan before you plant.** Make a sketch of your property showing existing plants, driveways, buildings, and overhead or buried utility locations. Play it safe and call your local service two business days before digging to find out where buried facilities (electric, gas, telephone, cable, water) are located. The "one call" utility locator service is free. For Florida residents: Sunshine State One Call of Florida (1-800-432-4770, <http://www.callsunshine.com>)

- Determine mature height and spread of your selected trees. Consult reference books, the Internet, or contact us. Make sure you give your trees adequate room to grow.

- Do not plant large trees under utility lines or where they will grow to interfere with utility lines or equipment.

- Do not plant trees or shrubs where they will block traffic signs or views at corners.

- Do not plant trees too closely.

- Do not plant tree with invasive roots (such as ficus tree) that might damage pavement

- Provide shade to your outside AC unit to increase its efficiency.

**2. Plants should be kept in containers until the last possible moment before planting.** It's a good idea to water plants the night before you plant. If it's too dry, the root ball could fall apart on you when planting.

**3. The hole must be at least two-three times the diameter of the container in.** Most South Florida soils are alkaline and extremely low in organic matter content. That's why we recommend digging as large hole as possible and modifying your soil by adding peat moss, composted manure (not fresh!). Many shrubs and trees develop shallow root systems and a wider planting hole can make a significant difference in the rate of establishment. Mixing components directly in the planting hole adding controlled release fertilizer. Make sure that fertilizer you're using contains microelements which are extremely important for plant health.

**4. After you prepare hole, add enough soil mix at the bottom, so that the top of the root ball is same level with the surface.** Soak soil mix in the hole and let it settle. Make sure soil mix is compacted under the root ball, so the plant won't "sink down". If part of the trunk gets below ground, its bark may rot.

**5. Place the tree in the hole.** Pull the container away from the root ball. Don't pull the tree out by its trunk. With small containers, you just hold the plant at the top of the root ball and then turn it upside down. Tap the sides to loosen the container, grab it and let the root ball slide out. For larger containers, simply tilt the pot onto its side, tap it lightly, and gently slide out the root ball. You can also cut the container off. If you see roots growing from drainage holes try not to damage these roots.

**Important!** *Container plants tend to grow roots in circles. If the plant is root-bounded, make a few vertical cuts with a sharp knife down the roots to encourage them growing sidewise.*

Place the root ball in the center of the hole and adjust the tree so it is straight and at the proper level.

**6. Start filling the hole in and around the root ball with prepared soil mix.** It's a good idea to add slow-release fertilizer in the mix. Tamp the soil around the root ball gently with your foot. When the hole is half full fill the remaining space with water to settle the soil and allow the hole to drain. Repeat until the hole is full.

**7. Cover the entire area of soil with 3-4 inches of mulch.** It will slow water loss, reduce competition from weeds and grasses, will moderate soil temperature in hot weather. Make sure mulch is 1-2 inches away from the trunk to avoid rotting.

**8. Water is absolutely essential for new plants.** Make sure you provide regular watering during first two or three months.

**9. Staking trees is recommended** as it prevents dislodging by wind, people, and animals. Make sure the stake ties do not cause damage to the bark. The stakes should be removed after two or three growing seasons.