

CARE AND HANDLING OF REDBUDS

The ornamental beauty of Redbud trees and shrubs continues to make for the ever growing popularity of this landscape plant. A little special care in nursery handling and customer planting can help assure your customer's delight for years to come.

Cercis (Redbud) is a Leguminosae. And like most legumes, are very water sensitive. The main cause of loss of Redbuds is normally from over watering, or soil/ media too wet. They are also subject to toxic acids.

BAREROOT HOLDING

If holding as bareroot, put in straight coarse sand. Be sure there is good drainage. If the roots were to stand in water for any length of time they would be severely damaged.

CANNING

The following information has been provided to each nursery reporting Redbud losses in the past. The results have been pleasing as there have been no reports of continuing losses. The mix for Redbud (as well as Smoke Tree, Desert Willow, Albizia, Pomegranates, Almonds and a few others) should not contain any toxic components such as barks, cedar or redwood. The media should allow good drainage. The media should have no more than 60% organic (50% is even better). The balance should be a mixture of course sand (not plaster sand), perlite - prefer #3. Rice hulls are also good to replace the perlite or part of the sand. Rice hulls are available from some soil mix companies or equestrian centers.

WATERING PRACTICES

When canned, water in good. 24 hours later water in once again and forget until they leaf out. Do not re-water as long as any dampness remains in the bottom of the container. Even in dry climates, they can go for 2-3 months without water in January, February, and March. Test the moisture through the holes in the bottom of the container. If the top of the media becomes dry, no problem.

PRUNING

Cutting back apical buds (tip buds) will help by releasing the gibberellic hormone in the stem to help the side buds to leaf.

CUSTOMER LANDSCAPE PLANTINGS

Select a location which will not be over-watered by automatic sprinklers. When planting, avoid putting any organic in the bottom half of the hole. Use the top half of the soil dug out of the hole. Mix some organic in the top 2" for ability of the soil to breathe. Water in well. 24 hours later water in once again. Forget watering until leafing. Do not put on a drip system until in **FULL** leaf.

Soil media and watering are very important for success in the above varieties.