

# Cannas in the Garden

Mary Jane Frogge, Extension Associate

## Lancaster County

444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A / Lincoln, NE 68528  
(402) 441-7180 / <http://lancaster.unl.edu>

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Cannas are quick growing, vigorous ornamental plants with heavy foliage and large flowers. Flower colors range from dark red to light green. Leaf colors can be reddish-purple, bronze or green. They are used most effectively for bedding plants in public parks and larger home grounds where they can be planted in front of taller shrubbery and viewed from a distance. Their vigor and size make them less desirable for planting in restricted areas.

Cannas require a warm, sunny location and under such conditions are capable of giving a subtropical effect, if used in quantity with ricinus or castor bean, caladium or elephant's ear or other appropriate plants. They thrive best under conditions suitable for corn, that is, a warm, well drained soil, well enriched with decayed manure.

The tubers should be planted after all danger of frost is past. A portion of an old tuber containing several strong buds is best. The old tubers may be divided to single eyes, but the weak eyes are likely

to make weak plants. If very strong clumps are wanted, a whole tuber may be used. When separated to single eyes they are best started in 4-inch pots covered with glass. The tubers should be planted 5-inches deep. Cannas should be planted 12 to 18 inches apart depending on the size of the varieties used and the effect desired. In dry weather a thorough soaking of the plants once a week will insure a stronger growth.

The blooms should be picked as soon as withered. After the tops have been killed by frost they should dry a few days, then be cut off. The tubers need to be dug, dried in the sun (a few hours) and stored in a cool (40–50°F) moderately dry (30% humidity) cellar or storage area. The tubers can be stored in dry sphagnum moss, vermiculite or sand. They may also be placed on wire racks so air can circulate freely. No frost must reach the tubers and they must not be too warm or dry. A cellar suitable for potatoes is about right for cannas.

*Source: Donald Steinegger and Donald Janssen.*



Cannas

Vicki Jedlicka, UNL Extension in Lancaster County