

Care of Spring-Flowering Bulbs

Iowans will be enjoying the beauty of tulips, daffodils, and other spring-flowering bulbs soon. Proper care of these plants through the remainder of spring and early summer helps to insure repeat performances in succeeding years.

Remove the flower heads of tulips and daffodils as soon as the flower heads fade. This prevents the plants from expending large amounts of energy in fruit (pod) development. After blooming, two to three pounds of a 5-10-5 fertilizer may be applied to 100 square feet of bed area. To prevent burning of the foliage, wash off any fertilizer which remains of the leaves. Control weeds which compete with the plants for water and nutrients.

The foliage of spring-flowering bulbs should not be removed until it has turned yellow and begun to die back. After the foliage has yellowed, it can be safely cut off at ground level and discarded. Premature removal of plant foliage reduces plant vigor and bulb size, resulting in fewer flowers next spring. Taken from Horticulture & Home Pest News