

Potted Bulbs

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Potted spring bulb plants are being produced by many more growers for the Connecticut markets. Tulip, daffodil, hyacinth and crocus are the major bulb species produced. Potted bulbs fall into two distinct categories—prefinished and finished. Prefinished are those that are brought into the greenhouse to green-up (sprout) and are sold to be forced by someone else. Finished plants are those grown by a single grower from potting to flowering, such as a retail or small grower.

The following should assist the grower in identifying the marketable stage of bulb development and in storing plants until sale:

Potted tulips: These plants must be marketed in the green bud stage. They should not be allowed to show color, especially if they are to be stored for any length of time. When storing tulips, water plants, then treat with a fungicide and store at 33 to 35°F. Plants treated in this manner can be held for two to three weeks.

Potted Hyacinths: These plants are marketed when the floral head begins to show color. To store, no florets must be allowed to open. Plants should be well watered, treated with a fungicide and stored at 33 to 35°F for up to two weeks.

Potted Daffodils: These plants should be marketed in the goose-necked stage of development. The pencil stage is preferred for storage. Stored plants should be treated as tulips and hyacinths prior to storage.

Potted Crocus: These plants are ready for market when the first flower begins to show color. Crocus should not be stored if they are showing color. Stored plants should be treated as daffodils prior to being stored.

Potted bulbs need to be handled properly to produce a marketable crop. The grower should check potting, cooling and forcing schedules provided by the supplier.