

erate full sun conditions and still maintain good color include the white cultivars Candidum Junior and Seagull; the pink cultivars Carolyn Whorton, Rosebud, Mrs. W. B. Haldeman, Pink Gem, and Lance Whorton; and the red cultivars Fire Chief and Red Frill.

The major requirement, once plants are established, is an adequate supply of water as caladiums will not perform well under dry conditions. Soils high in organic matter are usually excellent. Whatever the soil type, it should have a high water holding capacity and yet have good drainage. The soil should be tilled to a depth of at least 6 inches before planting, and the soil should be moist. Before planting tubers, the soil temperature should be at least 65°F.

Planting tubers

Tubers should be planted so that 1 to 1 1/2 inches of soil cover the tubers. The spacing of the tubers depends upon the size of the tuber planted. Generally, a No. 1 sized tuber should be planted on 12 - 14 inch centers. No. 2 sized tubers should be planted on 10 - 12 inch centers. Tubers may be planted closer in order to fill in the bed more quickly. Tubers that are de-eyed will produce both more shoots and shorter shoots than tubers that are not de-eyed.

Fertilization and irrigation

Caladiums require a moderate level of fertility. Many types of fertilizers may be used including organic materials incorporated prior to planting, granular fertilizers, slow-release fertilizers, or liquid fertilizers. Regardless, a balanced fertilizer such as 14-14-14 or 20-20-20 is satisfactory. Plants grown in

warmer climates and on sandy soils will require higher fertilizer levels than plants grown in cooler climates or on organic soils and may need supplemental applications throughout the growing season.

Caladiums have a relatively high water requirement. If plants are allowed to wilt, foliage loss will occur and foliar color will deteriorate. However, caladiums should not be kept constantly wet as tuber rot may develop.

Digging and storing tubers

Caladiums do not tolerate cold temperatures. When air temperatures drop below 65°F plants will begin to deteriorate and the foliage will eventually collapse. Tubers will need to be lifted throughout most of the continental U.S. except for south-central Florida and extreme southern Texas where foliage will die but tubers can over-winter. In south Florida, temperatures may never get low enough to stop growth and caladiums will survive year round. Plants grown in the northern half of the U.S., where the growing season is short, or that are grown in dense shade may fail to produce well developed tubers. In this case it is better to purchase new tubers and replant in the spring.

When caladiums are lifted, the tubers should be dug from the soil, cleaned, dried and held in a well ventilated area at 70°F. Temperatures should not exceed 90°F or fall below 65°F. Tubers held for many weeks may begin to sprout. However, tubers should not be planted out-of-doors until the soil temperatures are at least 65°F.

Table I. Common Caladium Cultivars, Characteristics, and Appropriate Uses.

Cultivar	Primary Foliage Colors	Uses and Requirements ¹			
		6-inch pots	4-inch pots	hanging basket	bedding plants
<u>Fancy-leaf types</u>					
Aaron	white/green	D			SHD
Blaze	red	D	D		SHD
Candidum	white/green	D			SHD
Candidum Junior	white/green	N	O		SHD, SUN
Carolyn Whorton	pink/white/green	D			SHD, SUN
Dr. Groover	pink	O	D		SHD
Fannie Munson	pink	D			SHD
Festivia	pink/green	O	D		SHD
Fire Chief	rose/red	O	D		SHD, SUN
Florida Cardinal	red/green	D			SHD