Hardy? Half Hardy? do you know YOUR plant?

The Explanation of Hardy, Half-Hardy, not Hardy at all. Annuals are often classified hardy, half-hardy and tender, based on the cold resistance of newly planted seeds. This method of clarification is mainly used in England, which leads to some confusion as in North America many people use these terms, to rate the cold resistance of the plants themselves. If I am in doubt , I assume the term applies to both the seeds and to the plants in question. HARDY annual seeds do not seem to mind being frozen while in the ground, so they can be planted in late fall or very early spring. Hardy annual plants will not be killed until temperatures go down well below freezing, this can vary depending on how quickly it gets cold. Plants that have been toughened up can survive better through colder nights, than those that face these conditions for the first time. HALF-HARDY seeds could be called" fence sitters", in part they are somewhat resistant to the cold but not as tough as the truly hardy seeds. They should not be planted before the last frost-free date, but they can take extended periods at 35-45 F degrees . Plants that are rated half-hardy are more delicate than hardy ones, though I have known them survive at least for a few nights, at temperatures of 30 degrees or so. As with all the plants that are hardy, their vulnerability depends on the speed at which the frost arrives. This, being an unknown factor from year to year, gives the gardener more of a challenge as to what Mother Nature intends for each winter. TENDER annuals and many tropical perennials that are grown in the North, are also considered within this group. Though dry seeds can be kept in a freezer, they would never survive in frozen ground, and the slightest frost will kill these plants. I would also suggest that even mild cold should be avoided at all costs, since neither seeds nor plants will thrive until the air and the soil is above 55 degrees. I always think that seeds are really amazing. A tiny seed contains everything to produce a whole plant, to fill your eyes with beauty and your senses with a wonderful scent. Seeds that need light, and often they are smaller seeds, will not germinate if they are buried too deeply. Among seeds that need light are; ageratum, California poppy, gaillardia, coleus, columbine, love-in-a-mist, snapdragon, Shasta daisy, sweet alyssum, and sweet rocket. You cannot tell by looking at these seeds, so it is advisable always to read the packet instructions, for each type of seed that you buy. There is nothing more distressing to a gardener, than to wait patiently for an indoor tray of seeds to germinate, only to find that they do not. To avoid this disappointment, please read the packet labels.

About the Author

The Miss World pageant is an international beauty pageant founded in the United Kingdom. Miss World remains the only major beauty pageant.

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