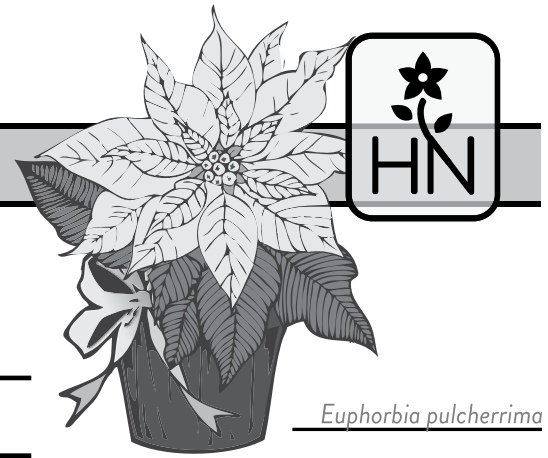


# CARE GUIDE:

## All About Poinsettias

Homewood is proud of its poinsettia legacy. For over 50 years, we have lovingly grown North Carolina's most gorgeous and robust poinsettias.



*Euphorbia pulcherrima*

### Guidelines for Success

**TEMPERATURE** Before transporting plants, your vehicle should be warmed. To prolong color and plant health, room temperatures should not exceed 74°F during the day, or drop below 60°F at night.

**WATER** Thoroughly water when soil surface is dry to the touch. Don't leave sitting in excess water.

**LIGHT** Poinsettias need the amount of natural light that would be sufficient to read fine print.

Plants will droop and leaves will turn yellow without enough light.

**TIP** Place plants away from drafts and sources of heat (fireplaces, air vents, radiators, or appliances).

Poinsettias are NOT poisonous. They are not edible either, but a fifty pound child would have to eat over 500 leaves to exceed experimental doses found to be toxic. Out of 22,793 cases of ingestion, no significant toxicity was found by the American Association of Poison Control Centers. Eating the leaves or stems may cause a mild stomach ache, vomiting or diarrhea, but severe symptoms in people or pets are unlikely. If you find a child eating a poinsettia plant, clear the mouth, and move the plant out of reach.

Some people are more sensitive to poinsettias than others. Reactions are more likely among people who have latex allergies, since poinsettias and latex contain

several of the same proteins. In the case of a severe reaction, seek prompt medical attention.

As for pets, the American Veterinary Medical

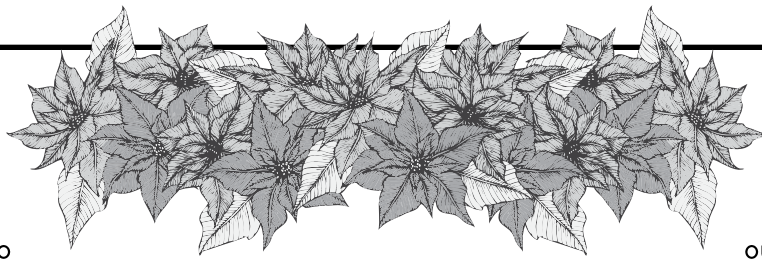
Association does NOT include poinsettias on its list of plants that are a threat to animals. The ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center in Urbana,

Illinois regards poinsettias as having such low toxicity risk that it doesn't even recommend treating animals that may have ingested them.

### ARE POINSETTIAS Poisonous?

Sources: Mayo Clinic (Jay L. Hoecker, M.D.); POISINDEX (American Association of Poison Control Centers).

See back for information on 'How To Rebloom Poinsettias'



When poinsettia bracts age and lose their aesthetic appeal, there's no need to throw out the plant. With proper care, dedication, and a certain amount of luck, you can rebloom your poinsettia!

By late March or early April, cut your poinsettia back to about 8" in height. Continue a regular watering program, and fertilize your plant with a good, balanced all-purpose fertilizer. By the end of May, you will see vigorous new growth.

After all chance of frost has passed, and night temperatures average 55° F or above, put your poinsettia outdoors, where it can bask in the warmth of spring and summer. Continue to water regularly during the growth period, and fertilize every 2-3 weeks.

Pruning may be required during the summer to keep plants bushy and compact. Late June or early July is a good time for this step, but be sure not to prune your plant any

later than September 1. Keep plants in indirect sun and water regularly.

Around June 1, transplant your poinsettia into a larger pot. Select a pot no more than 4" larger than the original pot. A soil mix with a considerable amount of organic matter, such as peat moss or leaf mold, is

recommended. In milder climates, you may transplant the plant into a prepared garden bed. Be sure the bed is rich in organic material and has good drainage.

The poinsettia is a photoperiodic plant. It sets bud and produces flowers as the autumn nights lengthen. They will naturally bloom in November or December, depending on the cultivar. Achieving

bloom time for the holidays can be difficult outside the greenhouse environment. Stray light of any kind, such as from a streetlight or household lights, can delay or entirely halt the reflowering process.

Starting October 1, the plants must be kept in complete darkness for 14 continuous hours each night. To accomplish this, move them to a totally dark room, or cover them at night with a large box. During October, November and early December, poinsettias require 6-8 hours of bright sunlight daily, with night temperatures in the range of 60-70° F. Otherwise, flowering could be delayed.

Continue normal watering and fertilizer. Follow this regime carefully for 8-10 weeks, and then enjoy a colorful display of blooms for the holidays!

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— Courtesy of Paul Ecke Ranch —

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