

## A Gardener's Dictionary

Annual - Any plant that dies before blooming.

Aphid - Insect pest that infests gardens and causes gardeners to foam at the mouth, stamp their feet in protest and utter four-letter words.

Bed - 1. Where most prized flowering perennials are located. 2. Where most gardeners are located when they hear rabbits in 1.

Brochures and Catalogues - Forms of entertaining fiction that are published by nurseries, seedsmen and tool manufacturers.

Fence - Wire barrier erected to protect garden produce against animal pests that lack wings, paws, teeth or brains and cannot leap, tunnel, climb or fly.

Fruit - General term for the seed bearing part of a plant that turns mushy, is eaten by birds or worms, drops off, rots, gets funny spots and speckles, pockmarks the lawn, isn't what was pictured in the catalogue, tastes like a glove or doesn't appear at all.

Furrow - Horizontal line on the forehead of a gardener.

Garden Fertilizer - Plant food. The feeding procedure is complicated and technical, but the few essential facts about fertilizers can be mastered quickly. Just remember the number 3-2-5. They refer to: the three basic types - messy, stinky, and messy/stinky; the two sizes they are available in - tidbit (100-gram packet) and blammo (100-kilogram sack); and the five methods of application - too much, too little, too early, too late and wrong kind.

Harvest - An operation conducted with a large, four-wheeled machine called a 'car' which is driven along country lanes until a roadside stand is located. There, the desired fruits and vegetables are picked up, boxed or bagged, and placed inside the vehicle.

Hoe - Gardening tool whose name derives from the fact that when its blade is stepped on, its handle delivers a sharp rap to the gardener's brow, at which point he cries 'ho!'

Hose - Crude but effective and totally safe type of scythe towed through gardens to flatten flower beds.

Mulch - Material placed around the base of a plant to keep it moist and warm. Wood chips, leaf matter, and even unwanted printed matter may be used.

Narcissus - Early-blooming flower with an unsatisfactory plural form. Botanists have long sought a suitable ending. But their attempts - narcissi (1947), narcissuses (1954) and narcissus for both singular and plural (1958) - haven't enjoyed any real acceptance, and thus gardeners still prefer to plant the easily pluralized daffodil.

Peat Moss - Organic substance used to keep soil loose and moist. One of the three things of interest to gardeners for which Canada is famous. The other two are cold air and black flies.

Perennial - Any plant which, had it lived, would have bloomed year after year.

Pest - Any creature that eats green vegetables voluntarily.

Potato - the ideal vegetable. Not bitter, stringy, pulpy, sour or -. It can be boiled, baked, roasted, creamed, hash browned, fried or mashed. Incredibly, it's even tasty served as a salad. And, best of all, since potatoes of excellent quality are available the year round at reasonable prices, there is absolutely no reason whatever to grow them—in fact there is a very good reason not to.

Potato beetle - The very good reason not to.

Root - 1. Subsurface part of a weed that is inadvertently left in the ground when the upper portion is removed, thus resulting in the weed's speedy regrowth. 2. Subsurface part of an

ornamental, or tree, a small portion of which is inadvertently left in the ground when the specimen is transplanted, thus resulting in the plant's rapid death.

Rose – A beautiful and fragrant flower of which there are thousands of hybrids. Most common garden type is a specimen with a tight, 15-centimetre cluster of short, thick, brownish stems with large thorns, bearing a shiny metal tag about four centimeters in diameter.

Rot – Gardening advice.

Seed – Highly nutritious form of bird food sold in handsome packets.

Tools – Gardening implements that have a distinct life cycle; active phase (1-12 weeks), marked by the appearance of blisters on the hands and bruises on the legs of the user; metamorphosis phase (12-14 weeks), during which the handle suddenly breaks at the point where it is joined to the metal working-end; and dormant phase (14 weeks – 20 years), spent by the two halves of the tool resulting from metamorphosis, usually in a dark corner of a shed.

Weed – any plant that will survive at least one week without being watered, fertilized, pruned, sprayed, staked, mulched, misted, dusted or wrapped in burlap, paper or plastic.

Yard – Dusty open area where hard labour is performed.

Zzzz - 1. Sound produced by dozing gardener. 2. Sound produced by bee trapped in dozing gardener's pant leg.

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