

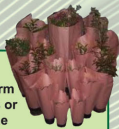


# Shipping Tropical Plants Direct

Receiving your tropical plants direct from a grower is a great cost savings decision for any garden center. It will allow you to increase your margins and make you more profitable. However, it's a slightly different experience than getting tropical plants from your local re-wholesaler or nursery down the road. Tropical plants travel a great distance to reach your garden center and need a short period of time to "rebound" from the trip. They are rarely retail ready when they first arrive. Ethylene accumulation in the truck or simple shock can cause leaves to yellow and drop.

## DO NOT BE ALARMED

this is normal and should not last.



## Unpacking Tropical Plants

Move the plants into the greenhouse or other warm location as soon as possible and open the boxes or paper sleeves. Leave the tropical plants inside the boxes/sleeves for a few hours to minimize shock. Later in the day, unpack and water the plants. To avoid breaking branches, cut around the base of the carton and lift it off the plants by its lid.



## Light

When the tropical plants first arrive, do not place them in direct sunlight for at least a week or so.

## Darkness

If you asked the average person if he or she would like to be wrapped in a paper bag, crammed into a truck, and forced to ride in the dark over bumpy roads for 24-48 hours, you might find very few people who would sign up for the trip. The funny thing is that tropical plants don't like it either and rarely volunteer for the experience. Keep this in mind when your plants arrive. The darkness and time in the truck will cause your tropical plants to become stressed. It will take a little bit of time for them to shake off the effects of the trip and be ready to present to your customers.



## Temperature Changes

Tropical plants are sensitive and vulnerable to temperature change. They don't like moving from their nice, warm home to their new (often cooler) home in the northeast. The sudden variation in temperature during shipment will cause most tropical plants temporary stress. Changes in temperatures or drafts can cause the leaves to drop. This is normal and the plants will rebound after a week or so.



## Hibiscus Care

With its sturdy shape and colorful blossoms, Tropical Hibiscus is a popular choice for container plants and summer gardens. The large, colorful blooms create an eye-catching display during the summer, creating the look of a tropical paradise. Hibiscus is the main flowering tropical plant purchased by homeowners in the northeast, and with proper care and maintenance, they will provide you with color and beauty in and around your home.

Tropical hibiscus plants are very vulnerable to environmental changes. Moving them indoors or out, repotting, and changes in their care can cause hibiscus to become stressed. Even minor changes that you might not notice can cause some problems.



## Sunlight

Tropical Hibiscus like a lot of direct light, but under a blazing sun from dawn 'til dusk with temperatures in the 90s will reduce their blooming and cause some leaf burn. Give them a little shade during the heat of the day and they will reward you with more blooms.



## Watering

Too much or too little water is a primary cause of yellowing hibiscus leaves. Tropical Hibiscus need lots of water, but they don't like to be soggy. Water more often during heat waves, and less when it's cool or overcast. Make sure the plant doesn't sit in water and that the soil is not constantly wet. Organic matter in the soil and mulch on top help to maintain a constant level of moisture in the summer. In pots or not, good drainage is very important!



## Yellow Leaves

The leaves of Hibiscus turn yellow for basically two reasons: The leaves are old and the plant is discarding them or the plant is under some stress. Sometimes yellow leaves (from stress) are indicative of a problem and sometimes it simply indicates a temporary discomfort the plant is having.



## Temperature

Temperatures below 45 degrees or over 85 degrees can cause bud and leaf drop. The plants usually recover once temperatures return to a 75- to 85-degree range if frost injury doesn't occur.



## Insects

Aphids, thrips and mites may feed on the leaves, causing holes, wilting and discoloration. Treat these unwanted pests with an insecticidal soap that doesn't contain oil or use a wettable powder Malathion pesticide.



**Green Goods Direct**

phone: 609-549-3112 ■ fax: 609-549-3118