

Weekly Column  
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## **Ideal Planting Locations for Different Plants**

There are so many choices of plants that we can have in our yards. You can pick a theme, or just randomly add splashes of color and interest. This can be very rewarding and exciting as you watch your hard work pay off with beauty and splendor. An important thing to keep in mind as you select plants for your yard is location. You may have a wet, sandy, or shady area that you wish to plant in or an area that receives full sun. There are plants that can thrive in these conditions and it is good to do a little homework to make sure you choose the right plants for the right location.

Having a wet area that you want to plant in can appear to be a tricky situation. This is the area of the yard that is usually low or close to a body of water which keeps the top 12 to 18 inches of the soil moist. You might wonder what plants can survive such wet conditions. Some plants that do well in wet soil are: bee balm, buttercups, and cardinal flowers just to name a few.

Sandy soil can present other issues to consider because it does not hold in moisture as long as is ideal for plants. If you want to increase the ability of your soil to retain moisture, adding topsoil or organic matter such as compost can be helpful. A few plants that do well in sandy soils are: the common bearberry, the American bittersweet, and grapes.

For areas that experience a lot of shade during the day, sunlight may be increased by pruning back trees to let some sunlight come through. If this is not possible, there are some plants that can do well in shady spots. However, it is important to remember that at least some sun is best and areas that receive no sun at all may present more challenges and may be better off unplanted. Some plants that do well in shade are: akebia, bee balm, and bugleweed.

Sunny areas are desirable for many plants, but these areas can mean that the soil gets very dry. It is important to make sure that soil in sunny spots is enriched with the nutrients it needs before planting. It is also important to water thoroughly after planting. Mulch can help to retain moisture. Plants that do well in sunny areas are: bush clover, Cotoneaster cranberry, and Adam's-Needle.

It is important to make sure plants are planted in locations that are best for them to grow well. For more information on types of plants that grow well in different areas, you can visit the web at [http://www.hort.purdue.edu/hort/ext/Pubs/HO/HO\\_227.pdf](http://www.hort.purdue.edu/hort/ext/Pubs/HO/HO_227.pdf) for wet area plants, [http://www.hort.purdue.edu/ext/HO\\_225.pdf](http://www.hort.purdue.edu/ext/HO_225.pdf) for sandy area plants, [http://www.hort.purdue.edu/ext/pubs/HO\\_222.pdf](http://www.hort.purdue.edu/ext/pubs/HO_222.pdf) for shady area plants, and [http://www.hort.purdue.edu/ext/HO\\_223.pdf](http://www.hort.purdue.edu/ext/HO_223.pdf) for full sun area plants. You can also contact your Elkhart County Extension office for more information.

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