

### **When To Plant**

Wildflowers take more moisture than grasses to germinate. Once planted, seeds must remain moist to ensure a successful stand. Some seeds will germinate and bloom the first year, while others will not begin blooming until the second year.

Certain wildflower species need to germinate as seedlings in the fall and over winter to develop hardy root systems by spring. Seeds of other species need winter temperatures to break their dormancy; therefore, the best planting times will vary from region to region. The optimum rainfall period, severity of the winters, and the dormancy of seed will determine the most favorable time to plant wildflowers in your area.

When planting in the spring, plant early when ample rainfall is anticipated. Seeds also may be planted all summer if they can be watered.

Most varieties handled by United Seeds prefer full sun with exposure to drying winds. Select a site that receives full-to-partial sun and is well-drained. Avoid planting in acidic soils.

### **Preparing The Beds**

Your main objective when preparing the seedbed is to provide optimum soil-to-seed contact. Rid the area of weeds by repeated tilling, then rake the soil to provide a workable surface prior to planting.

### **Sowing The Seed**

A small amount of wildflower seed goes a long way. When hand broadcasting the seed, it is good to mix the seed with damp sand to help prevent clumping and to provide even distribution. Rake the seed in lightly, being careful not to bury it too deeply. A good rule of thumb: Bury the seed no deeper than two-to-four times as deep as their diameter. Tamp to firm the seedbed after seeding.

### **Care After Planting**

All seeds need water to germinate. Plantings should be kept moist during their early stages of development. Light waterings three or four times a week will help ensure optimum germination. During their establishment and blooming states, supplemental watering once a week (*more often if natural rainfall is low*) will help wildflowers thrive and may even prolong the blooming periods of some species.

It is generally unnecessary to fertilize wildflowers if they are planted in their native habitat. In fact, fertilizing may produce excessive foliage at the expense of blooms.

Weeds still will need to be pulled as soon as they can be identified. Mowing also can control some seeds, but the blade must clear the height of the desired seedlings.

### **Ensure Reseeding**

Wait to clear your wildflower garden until all the species have gone to seed to allow them to reseed themselves.

It may require some patience on your part, since wildflowers tend to look rather unkempt during their final stages.