Newsletter September

Dear Peony Grower,

After months of drought, the Netherlands is once again receiving regular rainfall. Some parts of Europe, however, are still waiting for rain. Despite the dry conditions, the young plants generally look very good, largely thanks to regular irrigation.

Weeds:
The changeable Dutch summer, with frequent showers, has made it difficult to keep fields free of weeds. If a large part of the crop has already died back and weeds are abundant, consider mowing it.

Keeping green foliage on the plant supports growth. Even foliage that is dying back contributes to root growth; the strongest growth of the underground parts takes place as the plant dies back. If a field is relatively free of weeds, it is therefore better to mow later.

Roundup:
Peonies are extremely sensitive to Roundup. Take particular care where annual meadow grass is present: the product must never be used in a peony crop under those conditions. Peony plants can absorb it through their roots, and it can also seep through cracks in clay soil to reach the roots.

Foliar nematodes and blind buds:
Foliar nematodes can enter a field with weeds or weed seeds. Remove all weeds before winter.

To help limit foliar nematodes in the next harvest season, you may consider mowing the crop in early September. Foliar nematodes can overwinter in dead leaves on the ground and in young peony growing points. If you mow relatively early in autumn, remove the crop residue as well. Only do this in dry weather when the crop is dry.

Blind buds ("rose buds")
To help limit blind buds in the next harvest season, you may also consider mowing the crop in early September.

Botrytis control
Although the growing season has only just ended, preparations for a healthy crop next spring begin now. Botrytis control starts in late summer.

After flail mowing or mowing, carry out a Botrytis treatment to address wounds on the plants and spores present on the soil. These spores can develop into overwintering structures that cause stems to collapse in spring. This autumn treatment is therefore just as important as the spring treatment. Remove crop residues as well, since they may harbour Botrytis and nematodes.

Mowing height: Research indicates that leaving some stem above the soil in autumn can help suppress Botrytis and reduce stem collapse the following spring. A mowing height of 7–10 cm above ground level is better for the crop than mowing directly at ground level.

Watering in greenhouses and tunnels
Provide enough water in greenhouses and tunnels during this period so plants can take up nutrients. Drought now can reduce next year's flower production.

Active soil life is important. Moist soil and appropriate organic matter content help plants take up nutrients.

Yellow fruit tree leafhopper



Yellow fruit tree leafhoppers are being found in an increasing number of greenhouse peony crops. Because they appear after flowering, small populations cause little damage.

Most leafhoppers are visible in August; they lay eggs in September. Carry out control measures in August, bearing in mind that one treatment is unlikely to eliminate the population.

Crane fly larvae




Adult crane flies feed on small amounts of nectar. Their larvae, known as leatherjackets, feed much more aggressively. They are relatively large, soft and thick, and feed on various plants, including peony stems just below the soil surface.

Life cycle: Crane flies have six developmental stages: one egg stage, four larval stages and an adult stage. Adults live for only a few days. Some species have one generation per year, while others have several. Larvae may therefore be present and cause damage throughout the year.

Signs of damage: Leatherjackets stay in the soil during the day. At night, they emerge and feed on the base of the stem and the lower green parts of the plant. They may also pull part of the plant into the soil. Stems with a damaged base wilt.

Control: Biological control may be possible using parasitic nematodes such as Nemasys H, C or F.

Nematode sampling

Autumn is the best time to check for harmful nematodes. Populations are then at their highest, making samples more informative. Request a test that includes incubation so nematodes in root fragments are also counted.

Discuss the results with your crop adviser and take them into account when planning your crop rotation, including your choice of green manure crops for the following year.

Green Works Care™
Green Works has developed an effective and environmentally friendly method for controlling nematodes in peonies. This is done in collaboration with institutes and universities in the Netherlands and abroad. This method, called 'Green Works Care™ for peonies,' is available exclusively from us. It has been extensively tested over several years and offers a viable alternative to the standard hot water treatment. 'Green Works Care™ for peonies' even has major advantages over traditional hot water treatment.

The benefits of Green Works Care™ include:
- Plants do not dry out during treatment.
- The treatment is environmentally friendly.
- It provides preventive treatment against root knot and foliar nematodes.
- Plants show stronger growth in the first year.
- Plants produce more flower stems per plant in the second year.
- No chemical products are used in the process, so there is no risk of resistance to them.
- The treatment is safe for people, animals and the environment.

Storing peonies after receipt

Autumn is the best time to plant peonies. They root better during cool periods, which supports stronger growth in spring. Aim to plant before frost.

Peonies intended for autumn planting should preferably not be kept in cold storage. If the chilling period is too long, they may sprout before winter and suffer frost damage in winter or early spring. Do not refrigerate them between September and November.

- Do not allow the roots to dry out; this is highly damaging to peonies.
- After receipt, store the plants in a shed or cold room, away from draughts.
- Cover the pallet sufficiently with damp jute sacks or wrap it to prevent drying.
- Do not direct a fan or the airflow from a refrigeration unit at the plants.
- Immerse the peonies in water for 15 minutes before planting.
- Plant in moist soil, with approximately 5–8 cm of soil above the roots.
- Water after planting so the soil settles around the roots.
- If soil structure is poor, wait until conditions improve before planting.
- If the plants cannot be planted in autumn, store them after 1 January at −2°C, packed in dry peat and a plastic bag with small ventilation holes to prevent drying.
- If peony plants must be transported in autumn, a temperature of 2–5°C is preferable to help prevent overheating and mould.

New plantings

Preparation
Test the soil for major and trace nutrients, organic matter and nematodes. Also consider the following:
- Add compost if needed.
- Ensure excellent drainage and good soil structure.
- Remove perennial root weeds.
- Consider the previous crop and any nematode pressure.
- Carry out necessary weed control in good time.
- When selecting varieties for long-term production, visit the flower auction and fields where peonies are grown for root production.

Planting Time:
-Make a planting schedule
-Outdoors: September to March (fall is the best time)
-Set the buds/eyes upright
-Soil preparation is very important for structure and water management
-Drain the land
-Plant in moist soil
-Consider spray beds / flower emergence
-Take future tunnel placement into account (harvest spreading / higher yield).

Planting depth
Planting depth of 5-8 cm of soil covering the roots (planting too deep results in fewer flowers).

In the link below you will find our extensive and updated peony assortment of 2025 - 2026: Catalogus

Green Works also supplies other summer flower starting material, like: Ranunculus Butterfly™, Ranunculus Romance™

For more information, please consult **our website** or contact:

Ed Kleijbeuker tel. 0031 (0)6 24 94 64 05 | ed@green-works.nl
Daan Kneppers tel. 0031 (0)6 51 82 47 12 | daan@green-works.nl
Beau Kneppers tel. 0031 (0)6 12 57 60 45 | beau@green-works.nl
Gijs Laan tel. 0031 (0)6 37 22 58 70 | gijs@green-works.nl

Follow Green Works on **Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn**

Green Works International supplies young planting material for pot plants and summer cut flowers, as well as ready-to-sell plants for the plant trade and export. With support in cultivation, promotion, marketing and sales, Green Works offers a complete package for bringing a distinctive, healthy product to market.

Green Works International BV cannot be held responsible for cultivation advice. Growers are responsible at all times for consulting product labels and for the application of fertilizers and crop protection products.