



DEPARTMENT OF  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY • MARYLAND

# RainScapes

## Schools Growing Program



Montgomery County DEP's RainScapes for Schools Growing Program offers a unique, hands-on experience to receive, cultivate, and maintain a diverse array of native plants from Montgomery County Parks' Pope Farm. While most plants are kept by the schools, some are returned to the RainScapes team for use in various projects throughout the county.

For more information, reach out to [rainscapes.application@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:rainscapes.application@montgomerycountymd.gov)

1



*Seeds of native plants are harvested from nature.*

2



*These seeds are germinated and grown in trays in Pope Farm's greenhouse.*

3



*Seedlings are separated and grown in small "plug" trays. These trays are given to schools along with potting soil and pots.*

4



*At the schools, plugs are transferred to 1-quart pots, where the plants will mature. For detailed instructions, refer to the accompanying "Plug Planting Guide" sheets.*

5



*Just before spring break, some of the grown plants are returned to Pope Farm's greenhouse. From there, they'll be installed in projects across the county, like the Wheaton Garden above.*



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## Plug Planting Guide

Use the following instructions for best results when transplanting a landscape plug to a 1-quart container.



1

Moisten the soil just enough to darken it, but not enough to have it drip.



2

Select your tools to extract the plug.



3

Slide the tool down the side of the plug, and gently pop it out. Remove it.



4

Snip off any dead leaves. See the many roots.



5

Loosen and/or remove the roots at the base with your fingers or with a snipping tool.



6

Gently spread the roots wide, almost like a fan.



7

Use a scoop to add about 1.5" of soil in the pot. Then, hold the base of the plant level with the pot's edge.



8

Fill the remaining space with soil up to the pot's edge. DO NOT press down. Gently tap pot on table to tamp soil down.



9

Slide the plant tag in the side of the pot, not in the middle of the soil.



10

Water until the pot drains from the bottom.



11

Planting complete! Top up soil, and use fingers to raise the plant's crown.



## Common mistakes:

This plant's roots were not loosened, it was not buried deep enough, and the soil was not topped up - notice the plug and roots stick out. Gently remove the plug and retry the process.



This plant is buried too deep. Make sure that the base of the plant is level with the pot's edge. Nothing green should be below the soil.



If you have questions, please visit [Rainscapes.org](http://Rainscapes.org) for resources, or reach out to the team at: [rainscapes.application@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:rainscapes.application@montgomerycountymd.gov)