

How to Propagate *Solidago nemoralis*



Goldenrod Galore: Multiplying the Beauty of *Solidago nemoralis*

Solidago nemoralis, more affectionately known as Gray Goldenrod, is a North American prairie native that brings a burst of sunshine yellow to any garden. Beloved for its resilience and late-season blooms, this wildflower isn't just a pollinator magnet, it's surprisingly easy to propagate! So, if you're looking to expand your goldenrod patch or share its cheerful presence with friends, you've come to the right place. Let's dive into the world of *Solidago nemoralis* propagation.

Method 1: Division – Sharing is Caring

For established clumps of Gray Goldenrod, division is the simplest and most effective propagation method. Here's how it's done:

1. **Timing is Key:** Early spring or fall, when the plant is

dormant, are ideal times for division.

2. **Digging Deep:** Carefully loosen the soil around the clump using a garden fork, ensuring you don't damage the roots.
3. **Separation Anxiety (for the plant, not you):** Gently pull apart the clump into smaller sections, ensuring each division has healthy roots and shoots.
4. **New Beginnings:** Replant your divisions immediately in well-drained soil, spacing them 12-18 inches apart. Water thoroughly.

Method 2: Seed Starting – From Tiny Seeds to Golden Towers

While slightly more time-consuming, starting *Solidago nemoralis* from seed offers the thrill of witnessing its life cycle firsthand. Here's the step-by-step guide:

1. **Seed Collection:** In the fall, collect seed heads from your existing plants. Allow them to dry thoroughly before storing in a cool, dry place.
2. **Cold Stratification:** Gray Goldenrod seeds need a period of cold treatment to germinate best. Mix the seeds with damp vermiculite or sand and store them in the refrigerator (around 40°F) for 6-8 weeks.
3. **Sowing Time:** Once the cold treatment is complete, sow the seeds in seed trays filled with a well-draining seed starting mix. Don't bury them deep; just press them lightly on the surface.
4. **Light and Warmth:** Place the seed trays in a bright location, out of direct sunlight. Maintain a temperature of around 70°F.
5. **Germination Patience:** It may take 2-4 weeks for the seeds to germinate. Keep the soil consistently moist but not soggy.
6. **Transplant Time:** When the seedlings have developed a few sets of true leaves, they are ready to be transplanted into individual pots or directly into the garden after the last frost.

Bonus Tip: Basal Cuttings – A Springtime Endeavor

For a slightly less common but effective method, consider taking basal cuttings in spring. Here's the lowdown:

1. **New Growth is Key:** Identify and carefully cut a 3-4 inch section of new growth from the base of the plant, ensuring it has a heel (a small portion of the main stem).
2. **Hormone Boost:** Dip the cut end in rooting hormone (optional but recommended).
3. **Potting Up:** Plant the cutting in a small pot filled with a well-draining potting mix.
4. **Humidity is Key:** Cover the pot with a plastic bag or humidity dome to create a warm, humid environment.
5. **Root Development:** Within a few weeks, roots should develop. Once the cutting shows signs of new growth, you can transplant it.

No matter your chosen method, propagating *Solidago nemoralis* is a rewarding experience. Soon, you'll have a garden awash in the vibrant gold of this resilient and beautiful wildflower!