Preparing Spring Bulbs

Although it's hard to imagine, now is the time to prepare spring bulbs for next year, advises Susan Goldsworthy, Delaware County Cooperative Extension horticulturalist.

After tulip leaves turn yellow, cut and dispose of stems and foliage that may carry disease to new growth if left on the ground. Daffodil foliage is the strength that

goes back to the bulb when it matures and dies down, storing next year's flowers. If you plan to divide bulbs, wait until they have matured. When leaves turn yellow, uncover some to see if they are ready; if bulb coats are tan to brown, they are ready to dig. If they are white, bulbs are immature.

scales. Discard those of poor quality and spread the rest in a shaded place to dry, protected from chipmunks and squirrels. When the outer scales are dry, store bulbs away from sunlight, in a cool, dry area in temperatures between 60 and 65°F. Keep air circulation around bulbs and don't store in more than two layers or you may have problems with heat build-up and decay.

Lift bulbs with a spading fork, wash off soil and remove old dry

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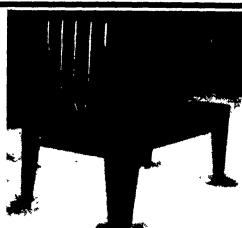
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