Propagation of Cactus and Succulents

Master Gardener Education
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Principles of Succulent Propagation

- Always take cuttings from clean, healthy plants
- Take cuttings or sow seed at the appropriate time of year

Principles of Succulent Propagation

- Once seed is sown, water regularly to keep soil mix damp
- Always label the pot or propagation tray with the date sown, the botanical name and seed supplier
- Keep track of your successes and disappointments

Succulent Propagation

Seed

Cuttings

Use clean tools (saws, pruners, knives, etc. to remove cutting)

Plan ahead, have all the correct tools and other materials readily available

Cactus and Succulent Seed Medium

- 50% Pumice
- 25% Sand
- 20% Sphagnum Peat Moss
- 5% Vermiculite
- Top dress with 1/4 inch of pumice
Propagation mix showing pumice added for good drainage and aeration

Seed Propagation

Advantages of Seed Propagation

- Relatively inexpensive
- No greenhouse normally required
- Produces numerous plants
- Produces numerous ‘types’

Seed flat on left, and year old seedlings above
Agave seedlings emerging after 10 days

Roots emerging from areoles on Santa Rita (Opuntia violacea 'Santa Rita')
Prickly Pear

After 30 days roots will have emerged from the areoles

Take cuttings from healthy plants
Take cuttings during summer
Dry off cut ends (dust with sulfur*)
Stick in clean, quick-draining media

Shade and water regularly
Rooting typically occurs in 3 weeks
Some growers use rooting compound

Cereus peruviana (Peruvian Apple Cactus)
Carefully remove the cutting from the parent plant

Most columnar cactus will root from the vascular bundle

Place in prepared medium in a container slightly larger than the cutting diameter

After 2-3 weeks, roots will begin to appear. The cuttings are ready to plant

Sansevieria Propagation

Side shoots emerging from latent buds at the site of an areole
Easter Lilly Cactus
(*Echinopsis* spp.) Propagation

*Echinopsis* (Easter Lilly Cactus) are easy to propagate. Just twist or cut the stem off, let air dry and ‘stick’ in rooting medium.
Some Agave species produce ‘bulbils’ which are miniature plants that are genetically identical to the parent plant.

They are very easy to root and grow and is an easy way to rapidly reproduce your plants.

Species such as *Agave murpheyi* and *A. palmeri* are cold hardy species that produce bulbils.

Cactus and succulent plant propagation can be fun, help you understand how plants grow, an opportunity to share your favorite plants with friends and a great pastime, give it a try... you’ll like it!

Questions, Comments?

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