

GLADIOLUS IN COLORADO!

Meg Gaeta, CPVGC Master Gardener



Though I may not be the most observant person, I had never seen gladiolus growing in Colorado until I was driving by CPVGC member & past president, LoJuana Davis' house in Castle Pines Village. I actually did a double take and strained to see what I was looking at. At the next opportunity to speak with her (up at Tweet's Memorial garden where LoJuana is a loyal participant), I quizzed her about her gorgeous glads and this is what she told me...

LoJuana's mother grew gladiolus in eastern Colorado for as long as she can remember. Even some of the corms she continues to use today are decedents of those her mother grew years ago. Gladiolus makes a wonderful cut flower and they are available in many colors from any reputable bulb provider. Even Costco had an impressive collection available this year.

LoJuana plants her gladiola corms in **mid to late April**, 4 to 5 inches deep in well-amended soil 6 inches apart. In the fall she will allow them to stay in the ground until a good freeze has passed. (Plantalk has recommended that you do not allow them to go to seed as this will adversely affect the corm development which does not conflict with LoJuana's recommendation.) As she pulls them up in the fall she sorts them by color and cuts the top down to 1 inch, pulling the old corm off the bottom. She then puts them in a mesh bag or basket with holes for ventilation, labeling them for the following spring. She has found that her garage is an acceptable storage location because it does not get below freezing.

In the spring, LoJuana takes the dried top, shell and root off before planting. If the corm has set more than 3 "babies" on top, she suggests that we remove them down to 2 or 3 so that the new growth has plenty of strength and will help the stalks to grow straight.

Thank you, LoJuana. I am sure there are many more tidbits of knowledge that you could pass along to this willing recipient!

