

Gardens chosen to field test 20,000 narcissus bulbs

The significance of 20,000 narcissus bulbs planted at two County gardens goes beyond the beauty of their fragrant drifts of white flowers. Masses of the bulbs were planted along the Meadowbrook stream at the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum and in the volunteers' garden at South Coast Botanic Garden. The bulbs, paperwhite *Narcissus tazetta* 'Ziva', are part of nationwide field tests that will establish a database of information on narcissus.

The County gardens are the only places in Southern California chosen to participate in the trials. In all, more than 100,000 bulbs were planted for evaluation at 14 public gardens around the US.

The gardens' staff records height, time of flowering, strength of the plants, etc. When combined with observations from other test gardens, the information will form a solid database so homeowners and landscapers know what to expect from the bulbs in USDA zones 8, 9 and 10.

The computer program is being developed by Dr. August A. De Hertogh from North Carolina State University who has been doing research for the bulb industry for 25 years. His program will eventually catalog the performance of all bulbous plants. Then gardeners can research a bulb's adaptability in their area by pushing the proverbial button.

Dr. De Hertogh describes bulbs as "biocomputers" that can be programmed to bloom at specific times. Before the bulbs were shipped to

test gardens, they were chilled for six weeks to begin the predictable blooming process.

The uniform-sized bulbs were supplied by AGREXCO of Israel, the world's largest producer of paperwhite narcissus bulbs. The cultivar 'Ziva' accounts for 90 percent of the narcissus bulbs exported by this quasi-governmental agency. Because 'Ziva' succeeds so well as a forced plant, the company is investigating whether its use could be extended out of the greenhouse into the garden.

The plants are expected to naturalize in this zone, becoming a permanent addition to the bulb and perennial beds at the Arboretum and South Coast.



Narcissus tazetta 'Ziva' blooms in Meadowbrook.

Construction begins on Kallam memorial garden

Crews began moving earth and plants this fall for the newest addition to Meadowbrook at the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum. A garden of perennials dedicated to Grace V. Kallam will occupy the site of the former bulb garden between the stream and the western road.

An "All Year Garden" like the one the late Mrs. Kallam enjoyed at her home in Pasadena was designed by landscape architect Shirley Kerins. Floyd Kallam's bequest provides for a permanent memorial to his wife including funds for construction and an endowment for maintenance.

The garden should be completed and ready for dedication ceremonies in the spring of 1990.



Designer Shirley Kerins and contractor John Schoustra examine plans for the Grace V. Kallam Garden.



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