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## African Violet Society of America

### AVSA Weekly Growing Tip

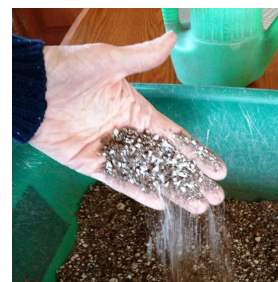
November 28, 2016

#### Greetings!

Welcome to AVSA's Weekly Growing Tip email. We hope you benefit from our experience and expertise!

#### Today's Tip... Stir water into your potting mix before you plant!

[Sphagnum Peat Moss](#) is the most commonly used component in soil mixes for violet growers in North America. Most potting mix recipes these days include both sphagnum peat moss and perlite... the first to retain water and the latter to provide air pockets.



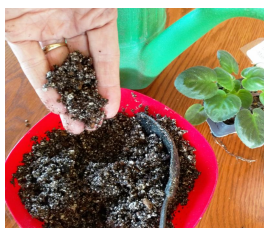
Dry potting mix is dusty, which causes coughing, and dries delicate roots.

Which of these statements is true?

1. Peat moss can hold 15-20 times its dry weight in water.
2. When bone dry, [peat moss sheds water](#).

Answer: Both are correct!

Vendors usually sell peat moss dry to keep it fresh and because it is much cheaper to ship if it is lightweight. But when growing violets, we need peat moss to absorb water so that our plants will flourish. Really dry peat will resist absorbing water and may even float on top of water.



Moistened potting mix sticks together and causes less root shock when transplanting.

How do you get really dry peat moss to absorb water? There are two ways:

- 1) Stir the water into the mix vigorously (before potting your plants,) using about 1 part of water to 4 parts of potting mix.
- 2) Choose a commercial potting mix which includes a [wetting agent \(or surfactant\)](#). Over time, this wetting agent may become less effective.

One more thing... once your violet is planted in moist potting mix, avoid letting the soil become bone dry again. It is very hard to cure dry pockets of peat moss in a potted violet without repotting. Keeping the soil moist also promotes [better blooming](#). As Benjamin Franklin said..."An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

**You may [contact us](#) with your violet questions or comments at any time.**

**Please share this tip with anyone who might be interested and invite them to [sign up](#) for their own weekly email from the African Violet Society of America.**

Sincerely,

## **News from the [African Violet Society of America](#)**

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