

Heating Greenhouses

Ventilation

While more an environmental factor than an actual supply, proper ventilation is required to let your plants breathe. Ventilation provides carbon dioxide to the plants, and cools the greenhouse. Without a ventilation system, your greenhouse would simply be a big glass furnace. Heat from the sun is stored within the greenhouse, making it warmer inside than the natural atmosphere outdoors. Ventilation fans incorporate fresh, cooler air into the greenhouse.

Heat Sources

It's important to have a source of heat for your greenhouse, particularly during cooler seasons and at nighttime. Greenhouse heat can be generated by oil, gas, wood or electricity. The source of heat you choose really depends on the cost and availability of the fuel. A smaller, backyard greenhouse may be warmed by electric heaters. Extra caution must be used when running electricity in the greenhouse. It must not be exposed to or come in contact with water, or electric shock can easily occur.

Thermometers

Simply supplying heat is not enough to make your greenhouse temperate. You must have the means to maintain and control the proper temperature. Plants will not thrive if the greenhouse is too hot, or too cold. Only a min/max thermometer will allow you to keep the greenhouse at the correct temperature. This thermometer also lets you record the minimum and maximum temperatures. Keeping records of this valuable data will help you determine whether the heating and cooling system is working properly.

Moisture Systems

Fog and mist systems are a useful element of any greenhouse. Providing adequate mist and fog helps to maintain essential humidity levels, and a good amount of humidity enables the greenhouse owner to reduce the need for water supply.

Determining how much water to give the plants depends mostly on the varieties you are growing. Average plants can be watered using a regular wand, while larger plants benefit from the use of a drip system. Using the drip system can also help you save money, as less water is wasted. Seedlings grow best when watered with small sprinklers or misting system. Using a regular hose will disturb the soil and could harm the young plants.

Lighting

Proper lighting is as essential to the growth of plants as food and water is to humans. The artificial lighting used in your greenhouse will serve as a surrogate sun, providing warmth and light to your growing plants. Having an efficient lighting system is especially important during cooler, darker seasons.

Shade

While light is needed for growth, your plants can have too much of a good thing. Shades are handy greenhouse essentials to have, particularly on hot summer days. Shading can block certain harmful rays from entering the greenhouse, as too much heat and sunlight during the dry season can be detrimental to the growth of your plants. Additionally, some plants grow best when sheltered or screened from direct sunlight.

Many greenhouse owners love to relax in the peacefulness of their homemade tropical oasis. By installing comfortable benches in your greenhouse, you can take a break from your hard work to enjoy and observe the fruits of your labor. Plants requiring shade can also be tucked underneath the benches. Enjoy!