

“MINDS ARE LIKE  
PARACHUTES —  
THEY ONLY  
FUNCTION  
WHEN OPEN.”  
-THOMAS DEWAR



## Raising Bulb Margins in Pots

**W**hat are the most commonly asked questions about bulbs? How deep to plant? Which ones are deer-resistant? What about the ever popular, “How late can I plant x bulb?”

Everyone loves bulbs, especially after a long, dark winter, but not everyone will have gotten around to planting their own. Enter your garden center.

Most nurseries have extra bulbs at the end of the selling season. It's very easy to pot those bulbs for sales later in the spring and summer, and doing so can yield margins as high as 300 percent.

According to DeVroomen Holland Garden Products, a standard, early-flowering tulip bulb — their recommendation for forcing — costs approximately \$0.28. Add to that \$1.50 for soil and a terra cotta pot, and you have approximately \$3.00 invested in the crop, taking

into consideration labor, water and any necessary chemicals.

You then sell the flowering bulb for whatever the market will support. I have seen mass merchandisers sell poor-quality tulips, four per 6-inch plastic pot, at a price of \$6.00. Your product, in its nicer pot, with its better quality, will certainly fetch a higher price. The amaryllis pictured above, at Gethsemane Garden Center, Chicago, were priced at \$15.99.

Whether your customers missed the optimal planting period or they simply have an early spring fever, bulb season is a great time to tap consumer demand and boost margins. And don't overlook the possibility of bulb sales throughout the year — amaryllis at Christmas, lilies in the summer. You could even have a permanent display where customers could purchase forced bulbs year round.

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### Green Goods:

Putting the “June is Perennial Plant Month” promotion to work in your garden center

### Management:

Racking issues — challenges and solutions

### Promotional Strategies:

How to get more advertising for less money by working with co-op

### Product Focus:

- Pots, Planters and Statuary
- Fertilizers and Plant Food