

Cultural Information- Aphelandra
(af-el-AN-druh)

<u>Light:</u>	Full to partial sun, a southern, eastern or western exposure.
<u>Temperature:</u>	Maintain indoor temperatures above 50°. They will tolerate cooler temperatures; however, foliage and flower diseases become a problem.
<u>Humidity:</u>	Preferably 50% or higher; however, they will tolerate low levels for short periods.
<u>Watering:</u>	Bring soil to a state of visual dryness between waterings. When watering, thoroughly saturate soil until a little water runs out of the bottom of the pot. Growing in a clay pot will help maintain a healthy root system. A slight wilt will do no harm.
<u>Fertilizer:</u>	They are moderate feeders so ¼ tsp of fertilizer per gallon of water once a week is adequate. They are sensitive to high fertilizer salt concentration in the soil. Reduce feed under lower light conditions. Use a balanced fertilizer like a 15-15-15 or a blooming fertilize like Dyna-Gro Liquid Grow Plant Food 7-9-5. Discontinue feeding in the winter.
<u>Pruning:</u>	Prune after flowering. They can take a hard pruning. Do not prune any later than April as you may cut off the next season's blooms.
<u>Insects and Disease:</u>	Aphelandra sinclariana is susceptible to white fly and spider mite. Both Aphelandra aurantiaca and tetragona can get mealy bugs; their root systems are rugged and resist most disease.
<u>Comments:</u>	Aphelandra are spectacular bloomers. They are seasonal in their flowering and therefore attentions needs to be paid to the timing of pruning. They do have difficulty with marginal edge burn or a browning of the older leaves. Be careful not to over fertilize, especially when the light levels are low. Aphelandra aurantiaca seems to resist the problem. It also is one variety that can handle lower light levels and still flower. Aphelandra sinclariana needs the highest light to perform well.