Northern Wonder™ Banana

Musa basjoo 'Northern Wonder'



Northern Wonder Banana
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 18 feet

Spread: 7 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 5a

Other Names: Japanese Banana

Description:

An exceptionally hardy variety that dies back in winter but will re-sprout from the roots in spring; cut back in mid-fall and mulch; very fast growing; evergreen in warm temperate climates; a nice landscape accent or container plant

Ornamental Features

Northern Wonder Banana is a wonderfully ornamental plant with characteristically tropical foliage and uniquely interesting flowers. Its attractive enormous glossy oval leaves remain green in color throughout the season. This plant features showy buttery yellow flowers with creamy white overtones rising above the foliage in mid summer. The green fruits with yellow overtones and which fade to dark brown over time are held in clusters from early to mid fall. The fruit can be messy if allowed to drop on the lawn or walkways, and may require occasional clean-up.

Landscape Attributes

Northern Wonder Banana is an herbaceous tropical perennial with a towering form, with a high canopy of foliage concentrated at the top of the plant. Its wonderfully bold, coarse texture can be very effective in a balanced garden composition.

This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should be cut back in late fall in preparation for winter. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Northern Wonder Banana is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

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Planting & Growing

Northern Wonder Banana will grow to be about 18 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 7 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 3 feet from the ground. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 30 years. As an herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen!

Bananas are curious plants in a botanical sense. Strictly speaking they are perennials, with individual shoots rising up from underground rhizomes and maturing in one to two years, then ultimately dying after producing fruit, to be replaced by new shoots from the base. However, given their ultimate size and coarseness they almost behave as small trees in the landscape. This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. This plant is a heavy feeder that requires frequent fertilizing throughout the growing season to perform at its best. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.

Northern Wonder Banana is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. Because of its height, it is often used as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.