Care Guidelines

Soil and Mulch

Free-draining soil is essential. Dig the planting holes then fill them with water. If the water is still in the hole after 6-12 hours (very rare) then you need to improve the drainage.

If other common plants are growing well in the soil then there shouldn't be any issues. Do not mix in potting mix with the soil. Do not mix in chicken manure, blood and bone or compost with the soil unless you fully understand what you are doing.

Blood and bone, manure and compost work well put on top of the soil. This replicates what happens naturally and creating conditions that are not found as a result of 4 billion years of evolution in general

There is no natural environment where large quantities of organic matter are dug into the soil. In almost every natural environment where life exists, organic matter is broken down through invertebrates and then microbial action and is incorporated into the soil structure.

1 teaspoon of soil contains more bacteria than the entire human population. There are networks of fungi that connect the roots of plants in the soil (and we don't yet fully understand how they work)
This is probably a sign that the microbes are going to do a much better job than you at getting nutrients into the roots of the plants. (*see end for why you should be nice to your soil)

Bamboo plants love mulch. Start with 5 cm now, while they are small and then when they are bigger increase to at least 10 cm. Keep the mulch topped up all around the plant. Use manure and blood and bone covered with hardwood chips. With time this will improve the soil for the reasons above.

For growing in large containers only buy a potting mix with this label/tag on it or made in bulk to this standard. If at all possible, try to get roots in the ground, even if it means drilling holes in the bottom of containers and then breaking up concrete. The difference will save you a lot of time and money in the future. Please contact us if you are t sure what to do. Look at plants only in containers as plants that will need a lot of attention.

If you need potting mix in bulk, contact Australian Growing Solutions, they have depots in Sydney and their growth media is as good as their expertise.
Call them and explain what you are doing and they will give you advice and a specific mix, delivered by the truck, at a reasonable rate

https://www.agsolutions.net.au/
Tel: 1800 709 588
Fax: 1800 709 688
sales@agsolutions.net.au

Fertiliser

The best fertiliser which is readily available that we have used is Osmocote Controlled Release All Purpose Fertiliser which contains trace elements
https://www.bunnings.com.au/osmocote-9kg-all-purpose-landscape-fertiliser_p2980016
For the 1st season, it's a good idea to use this by digging it into the planting hole. It guarantees that all trace elements will be available for the plants to establish. You can use it again for the second season if your soil is poor.

First and second season only

Osmocote® Smart-Release® Plant Food Plus Multi-Purpose Plant Food
15-9-12 GUARANTEED ANALYSIS F1143

Total Nitrogen (N)†	15%
8.0% Ammoniacal Nitrogen	
7.0% Nitrate Nitrogen	
Available Phosphate (P_2O_5)†	9%
Soluble Potash (K_2O)†	12%
Calcium (Ca)†	1.9%
Magnesium (Mg) (Total)†	1.4%
0.7% Water Soluble Magnesium (Mg)	
Sulfur (S) (Total)†	4.0%
4.0% Combined Sulfur (S)	
Boron (B)†	0.02%
Copper (Cu) (Total)	0.05%
0.05% Water Soluble Copper (Cu)	
Iron (Fe) (Total)†	0.45%
0.42% Water Soluble Iron (Fe)	
0.03% Chelated Iron (Fe)	
Manganese (Mn) (Total)†	0.06%
0.06% Water Soluble Manganese (Mn)	
Molybdenum (Mo)†	0.02%
Zinc (Zn) (Total)	0.05%
0.019% Water Soluble Zinc (Zn)†	

†The Nitrogen, Phosphate, Potash, Calcium, Magnesium, Sulfur, Boron, Iron, Manganese, Molybdenum, and Zinc sources have been coated to provide 12.7% coated slow-release Nitrogen (N), 7.6% coated slow-release Available Phosphate (P_2O_5), 10.2% coated slow-release Soluble Potash (K_2O), 1.6% coated slow-release Calcium (Ca), 0.6% coated slow-release Magnesium (Mg), 3.4% coated slow-release Sulfur (S), 0.017% coated slow-release Boron (B), 0.38% coated slow-release Iron (Fe), 0.051% coated slow-release Manganese (Mn), 0.017% coated slow-release Molybdenum (Mo), 0.019% coated slow-release Zinc (Zn).

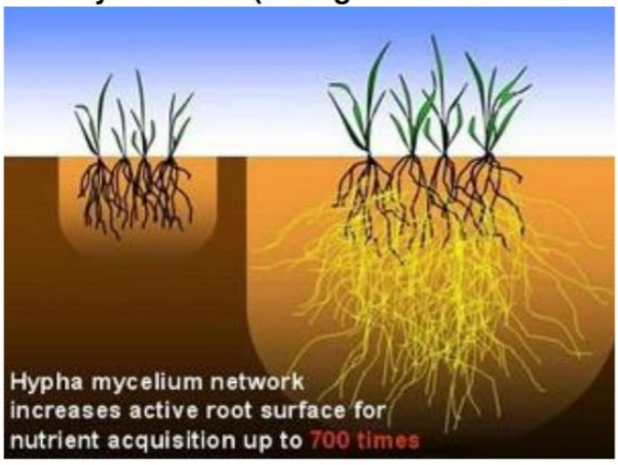
Scotts-Sierra Horticultural Products Company
14111 Scottslawn Road
Marysville, OH 43041

Information regarding the contents and levels of metals in this product is available on the Internet at www.regulatory-info-sc.com

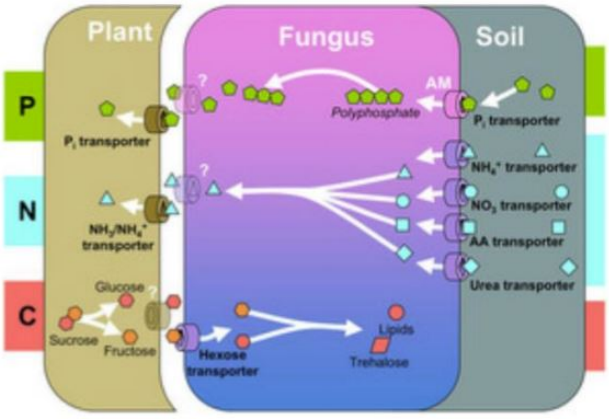
Derived from: Polymer-Coated: Ammonium Nitrate, Ammonium Phosphate, Ammonium Sulfate, Calcium Phosphate, Potassium Sulfate, Potassium Nitrate, Potassium Chloride, Magnesium Oxide, Magnesium Sulfate, Calcium Carbonate, Ferrous Sulfate, Iron EDTA, Manganese Sulfate, Zinc Sulfate, Boric Acid, Sodium Molybdate; Copper Sulfate and Zinc Oxide.

From the very beginning, organic fertiliser gives good results. Blood and bone, well-rotted compost and manure are good organic fertilisers and should be applied annually to create healthy and resilient plants.
Avoid soluble fertiliser if you want healthy soil, and you want healthy soil because it contains all the bacteria and fungi your bamboo naturally lives with (symbiotic relationship) and they will do a great job of keeping your bamboo growing and keeping it healthy.

Soil mycorrhizae (a fungi which connects to the roots of plants for many beneficial reasons)



This picture shows the increase in root growth of a redwood seeding with a mycorrhizal relationship (right) compared to a redwood seeding without this symbiotic relationship (left). Photo credit: Mike Amaranthus, USDA (2).



Growth

For the first year, they will grow slowly (but still much faster than any other plant).
Shoots may not appear for a few months after they first go into the ground but the plants will be putting down roots and building up stores of energy before putting up their first shoots.

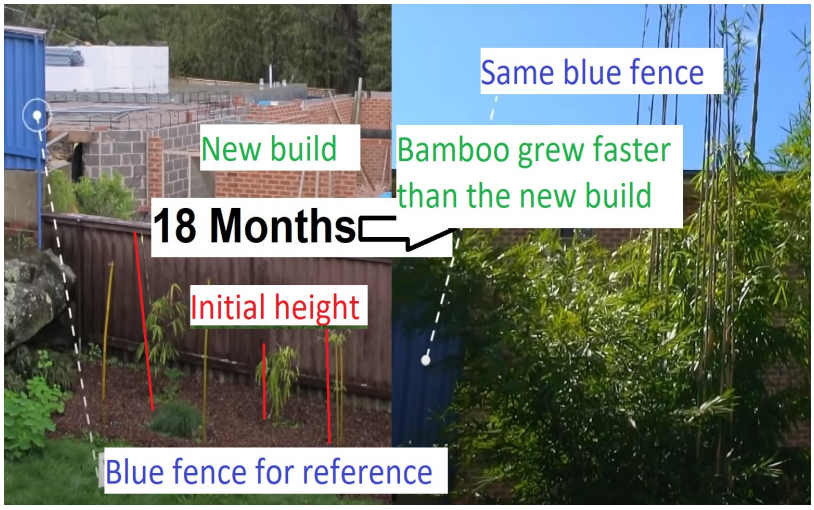
In year 2 they will grow much faster. From year 3 onwards they begin to show the kind of growth rates that bamboo is famous for. You can remove old/small culms (canes) to maintain the vigour and appearance of the clump.

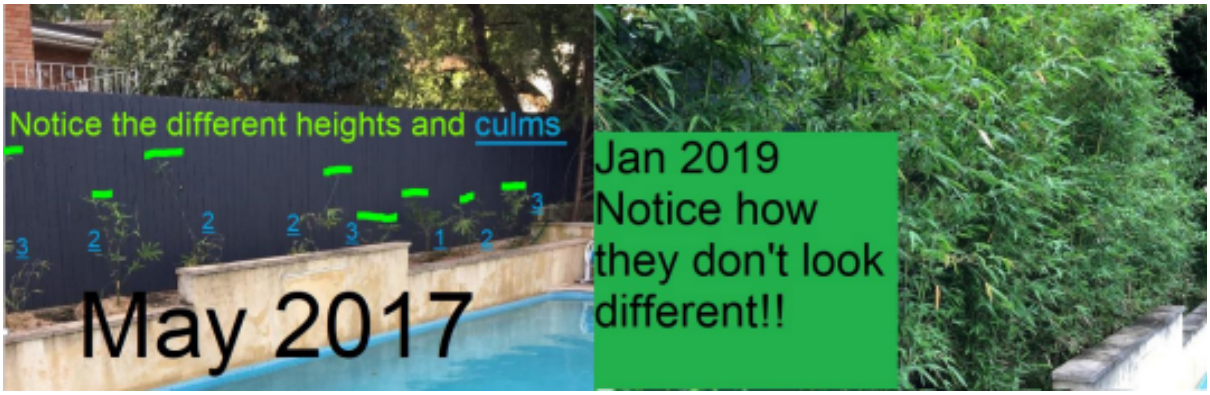
It's recommended to only keep the culms needed for whatever effect you want. This reduces water and nutrient demand and there is no point in having a plant with 100 culms when a plant with 20 culms does the same job.

Similarly putting small plants in the ground now is going to give you the same result as putting slightly bigger plants in the ground in the future (obviously this is not true in all cases but it makes a point)
The plants in the next photos were purchased by a customer who called to express disbelief that they would screen anything.

Less than two years later the customer took more photos and expressed disbelief at just how fast they grew. The thing to notice is the difference in the size of the initial plants and then notice that you can't notice any difference in less than two years.

This is because in 200mm pots most bamboos grow very slowly. Their roots are restricted and they don't want to be in there. They have no adaptations for growing in a plastic pot that contains potting mix and not soil. Plastic pots and potting mixes are completely artificial environments and it is not easy to keep them happy in there.
The minute the roots get used to being in the soil (1-2 weeks), they take off because they are in an environment that 4 billion years of evolution have selected for.





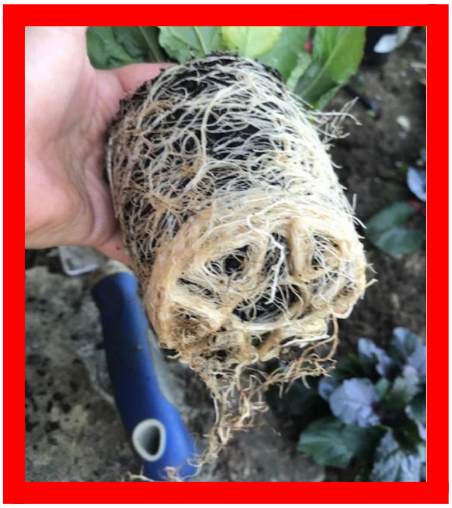
How many culms does each plant have and how tall are they?

The plants on the previous page all started at very different heights. Look carefully if you missed them.
The number of culms and initial height actually don't matter that much so long as they have a decent root system and are health (new growth during the growing season is the only true test.)
Each shoot reaches whatever height it is going to reach in about 2 months. The diameter of the shoot is proportional to the height it will grow.
This means a plant that has a 1.5m culm will be overtaken but a plant with a 50cm shoot which is of greater diameter than the 1.5m culm in 4 weeks or so.

The Root System is #1, always

These plants have root systems which can grow down and out easily

These plants would have been a nightmare to establish. They would have a lot of growth above ground and would have died within 12 hours of a hot summer's day because it's impossible to keep the water up to them when they are not in a nursery getting watered constantly by a saucer or a dripper or six.



How close should I plant them?

The best way to think about this is that a specific area of land has a specific amount of water and nutrients and a specific amount of sunlight falling on it. One plant that can fill that space will grow faster, taller and with longer branches and more leaves than two plants that end up competing with each other.

Generally, Slender Weavers go well planted 1.2-1.5m apart. Gaps at the bottom can be foiled by cutting new culms down to about 3m just before they start to put branches out. This causes them to put branches out only from the lower section that's left.

Do they come with a Guarantee?

We do guarantee that if you contact us as soon as you see anything you aren't sure about, take lots of photos from all angles and distances, close-ups especially and when you think you have enough, take some more. Then email us asap and tell us everything that has happened then we will help you so far we've solved every problem we know of (and almost every time it was over watering.)

These are guidelines for growing clumping bamboo in Sydney. They have produced reliably consistent good results for us. Slender Weavers is one of the most forgiving bamboo you can buy and it will grow if you plant it in soil and give it water. If you follow the guidelines then the chances are (based on feedback and experience) that you will maximise the potential for super- fast growing, fabulous-looking bamboo.

Once the bamboo is in your possession then the best guarantee you can find is to take responsibility for what are very easy to grow plants that require minimal maintenance and are tolerant of a wide range of conditions.

To minimise the already very small chance that anything will go wrong it's best to wait for them to grow for a couple of years before experimenting and then to apply changes gradually and wait to observe a noticeable response that can be reliably reproduced against plants that have not had any changes applied.

A VERY good idea is to take photos initial, with close ups.
99.9% of the time they will serve to amazed you at how quickly they grow every year/
0.01% of the time you may find yourself wondering, so send us any photos and we will most likely tell you to stop overwatering them / have you noticed it’s only the ones next to the pool, no plants enjoy pool water being sloshed on them or something similar.
We have a 100% success in fixing the few problems customers have experienced, if they bring it to our attention early.