**How To Get The Most Out Of Your Holiday Greens**

The holidays are officially here and that means it’s time to deck the halls! Who doesn’t love the look and fragrance of live seasonal greenery? When decorating my home I try to use evergreens as much as possible but keeping them fresh for the four week season can be quite the challenge!

My background is in gardening and farming and I have run my family’s farm shop for the past eight years. We sell live greens, wreaths and trees (among other things) during the holiday season and I love arranging with them in my home.

I'm writing today for Lynzy’s Blog to share what I have learned, through trial and error, about additional measures to take to get the most out of your holiday greens!

* My number one tip may not be a popular one but it will work the best! Purchase your greenery and wreaths as close to the time you will be using them as possible. Let the garden center do the hard work of keeping them fresh, pick yours up the a few days before needed and you’re good to go!
* If you must purchase them early, store your greenery outside until absolutely needed in your decor. Evergreens prefer it cold (below 40 degrees is best) and will last longer when they are stored this way.
* When using branches and woody stems in arrangements, crush the ends of the stems (I use the back of my pruners and pound against a hard surface until the stem is more like a pulp). Then, place the stems (or even better) the whole branch in a bucket of water over night. Crushing the stems allows it to better soak up the water and therefore last longer!
* Soak your greens and full wreaths in buckets or tubs of water a day or so before you bring them inside.
* Mist your evergreen branches or wreaths with water as often as possible. The moisture in the water helps preserve freshness.
* Keep your greenery away from heat and sunlight. Heat especially can be extremely drying for cut greens. If using lighting in your evergreen display, use LED lights which are cooler. And, never ever place lit candles close by.
* Treat your greens with an Anti-Desiccant Spray. It adds a protective waxy coating to the needles or leaves of evergreens to slow the process of water loss. It is organic and biodegradable and can be purchased at a garden center, nursery, or florist.
* Add Glycerin to your greenery arrangements. Mix one part glycerin (found in drugstores) to one part water. The idea with this is keeping the water clean and clear of bacteria. I have also used Crysal or Floralife packets (you can purchase on Amazon) and they also work very well.
* Consider using non-traditional living substitutes. I saw beautiful topiary rosemary and boxwood plants at my local garden center, but you could also use potted ferns or eucalyptus as well. With proper care these will surely last longer than traditional cut greenery.
* Lastly, choose greens that dry well. Dried greens can be just as beautiful as fresh! Boxwood, princess pine, eucalyptus, holly and winter berry dry beautifully. Cedar, fir and pine dry ok but will only last a week or so before starting to fall apart.

I hope this post was helpful if you are planning to use fresh greens in your winter decor! Wishing you and your loved ones a wonderful holiday season!