

these pieces of wood into the flower, behind the spadix and strategically place them so as to hold the flower as much as possible in the fully open position. This does work; it gives ample time to collect pollen, gives time to either self-pollinate that particular flower, or to introduce pollen collected from a previous flower. After removal from the spadix, the pollen may be diluted with clean water. I use two parts water to one part pollen, stir it well and brush it onto the ovular area with a small soft brush. The diluted pollen may be kept in a sealed glass jar in the refrigerator for several days.

**PROPAGATION OF *PHORMIUM TENAX*
'VARIEGATA' AND *P. TENAX*'RUBRUM'**

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The method we use is division of mature clumps but there are a few points to bear in mind. First, we plant the new divisions and they are left undisturbed for two seasons. New plantings and divisions are made in late spring as the weather begins to warm up a bit. We prefer this time to winter as the new plants start to grow without delay. The method of division is to cut each clump into single pieces using an axe, discarding flowering pieces which do not regrow.

Do not cut the leaves back on new divisions. The new plants are staked in the field to stop movement until established and fed at planting time. They usually lose quite a few leaves before growing away from the centre but after being cleaned up, after about 3 months they look quite reasonable.

When planting into containers we have saleable plants within about 6 mon and have found they too need staking if put straight outside but this can be avoided if they are placed in a shadehouse out of the wind. We are currently producing about 3,000 variegated flax a year by this method and a selection of red-leaf types selected for different colour and size variations.