

## Musella Lasiocarpa

This dwarf Chinese banana from high in the Yunnan region is one of the toughest Banana plants for UK cultivation. Originally found at altitudes up to 2,500 meters, it can tolerate cold and drought as well as being fairly wind resistant. It's common name 'The Golden Lotus Banana' comes from its large rosette of yellow bracts produced when in flower, which looks similar to the lotus flower. The Bracts open to reveal tiny flowers. Its upright leaves have a slight glaucous sheen to them giving a blueish hue to the plant. *M. Lasiocarpa* grows to about 1.8 meters, with a similar spread.



### Cultivation

In the UK *Musella Lasiocarpa* can be grown either in pots or planted directly into the ground. When grown in pots, use a rich, well drained compost, with added fertiliser. At the Nursery we use a peat free compost mixed 50/50 with John Innes number 3 compost. To this we add a handful of perlite and our slow release Banana fertiliser. Pot size is important: Always pot up into a pot around twice the size of the last pot and pot up during the growing season every 8 weeks (From May to August).

When planted out, *Musella lasiocarpa* prefers a sunny or semi shaded spot, in rich, well drained soil. Dig a hole about 4 times the size of the pot and dig in plenty of nutrients - well rotten manure, John Innes compost, leaf compost etc. Add a slow release fertiliser to the back fill and water in well.

Although quite resistant to drought, this dwarf banana prefers a moist growing medium for most of the year. So keep well watered and fed Spring to Autumn.

### Winter Protection

*Musella lasiocarpa* will require winter protection in all but the mildest places. The top growth will be damaged by temperatures below -2°C, however the rhizome can withstand -12 °C. We protect our plants with a similar method used to over winter *Musa basjoo* (details can be found in *M. basjoo* cultivation notes). This involves building a wire mesh cylinder around the whole plant. This is packed with straw and then covered with horticultural fleece. The protection is applied before the first frost and removed in late March or after the last frost.



Need more advice? Email us at : [office@bluenurseries.com](mailto:office@bluenurseries.com).

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