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Treat plants individually;

By JANNAN GHANNAM

Some people talk to their plants; others keep a blaring radio in their garden. A few even add two aspirin to periodic watering.

But Livonia residents John and Harriet Larson just give their house and garden plants a little tender loving care and watch them grow.

But it isn't as easy as it sounds. That TLC requires more than a green thumb, John Larson explains.

"You must treat each plant individually, keeping track of what it requires and when," he says.

Starting all their plants from seed or cuttings, the Larsons use a special soil mixture for potting.

"I start with three parts of good garden loam, two parts of peat moss and one part sharp sand," said Larson.

He explained sharp sand opens up the soil, allowing water to absorb into the roots.

Before potting plants, Larson suggests baking the soil.

"Baking the soil mixture at 250 degrees for two hours sterilizes and rid it of any fungus or impurities," he said.

The Larsons' technique does not end there, though. The next step is keeping the plants alive and healthy.

Caring for over 60 plants in the basement, the Larsons employ a white fluorescent Gro-Lux light. This is a patented light providing the correct



This six-foot Fairchild avocado tree in the Larson home hasn't yet produced any fruit, but with the meticulous care given it by the gardening couple, it is healthy and still growing.

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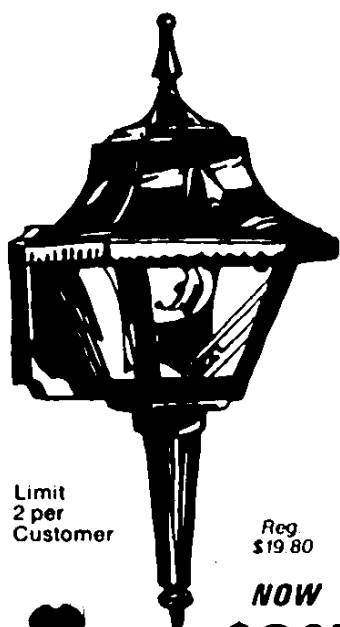
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