

MSU Product Center

For Agriculture and Natural Resources

Funding: USDA Rural Development Cooperative Service Market Advisor: The Hale Group

Use of this material is subject to caution.

Annual bedding and garden plants – Many opportunities

Market drivers that provide many opportunities

- **Fashion/design, homeownership** and **value** are key market drivers that provide many opportunities to raise gains from sales of these plants.

Specific opportunities

- Annual garden plants are used as attractive combinations in pots, and in plant borders with perennials and shrubs. Growers who focus on variety, color and other plant traits appealing to the consumer will benefit from fashion trends and seasonal garden designs.
- Growers can also benefit from an increasing rate of home building especially from those consumers who are increasingly spending more time decorating their gardens with plants.
- Most of these plants particularly those in flats are not expensive. The consumers also appear to be willing to buy them to add them in their garden mixes. Growers who can develop cheaper cultivars and make large-volume sales can have many opportunities to raise sales.
- Growers can raise sales through supermarkets, home centers and mass merchandise stores. Growers can also benefit from garden centers that are attracting consumers interested in plant selections. Operations at greenhouses can provide some opportunities to raise sales.
- Growers can also benefit from alternative market outlets such as different urban, village, street etc. decoration programs by municipalities, communities, and urban, downtown, highway and road authorities that want to decorate their areas using plants and flowers.
- Floral displays on balconies or in window boxes can provide a new untapped market opportunity for ornamental plant growers, if they introduce product innovations that support this trend, and make an effort to educate consumers about gardening in limited spaces.
- Capturing some international market trends can also provide future options to enter new markets (e.g., about 18% of all flowers and plants sold in Germany are for cemetery use).

New product examples

- Proven Winners - A line of petunia-like calibrachoa varieties and hybrids, which bloom all season; new hybrids of daisy that come in creamy whites, oranges and peaches, bearing names such as Orange Symphony and Lemon Symphony.
- Species-wise, petunias, begonias and impatiens appear to be top on the Proven Winners new variety and hybrid introductions list. There were about 65 petunia, 57 begonia, and 38 impatiens varieties and hybrids introduced in the North American market in recent years.

Special issues

- Increasingly retailers are expecting growers to make smaller but more frequent deliveries to their stores, which ensure that the product looks a lot better. Agreements and emerging alliances between companies and origin of species countries are also shaping the development, supply and commercialization of new species and varieties.

Key to success

- In addition to color and variety, product innovations that allow annuals to grow and bloom longer and container innovations that can provide opportunities to better mix annuals with perennials are key to success in annual bedding and garden plants.

Sources

Higgins, A. Nursery and plants get bigger and bigger, with prices to match. *The Washington Post*. 06/24/2004.

Holst, A. 2002a. Bedding, pot plant markets expand. *Greenhouse Business*, September 2002, volume 8, No. 9.

<http://www.floracultureintl.com/archive/articles/767.asp> - Hamrick, D. German ornamental production.

<http://www.provenwinners.com/plants/?doSearch=1>.

Mintel, gardening, 2003.