

MSU Product Center

For Agriculture and Natural Resources

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

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Annual bedding and garden plants - Overview

Products included in the product line

- These are finished annual flowering plants entering the market mainly in flats. Among the major annuals are begonias, geraniums, impatiens, marigolds, pansy/viola, and petunias.

General market trend and information

- Sales from annual bedding plants showed a steady growth in the past ten years. Sales in 2004 were \$1.823 billion, up 41% from 1995. The quantity sold has also grown.
- The current trend of larger containers, which are now replacing both flats and some smaller pots, may affect future growth. In some nurseries flats are becoming old-fashioned and they are now having most of their production in larger size pots.
- The present consumers want to have annual plants that can grow longer and bloom before they die. They also want annuals that can be mixed with perennials.

New product trends

- Color sophistications, texture and shapes are becoming dominant characteristics of new ornamental plants. Color is especially becoming one of the determining factors in new plant introductions. The sector is also marked by a trend toward exotic and new colors that are increasing in popularity. It also follows color trends in the fashion and design industry.
- Annuals currently entering the market are becoming near-mature and bigger. Many new annual varieties are coming technically as tender perennials, depending on the location, which can theoretically survive year after year.
- Flower longevity has received attention by breeders, propagators and growers in plant introduction.
- High energy cost and limited greenhouse spaces have compelled some growers to focus on fast growing varieties or on plants that require less space in greenhouses.
- Some varieties are entering the market as being resistant to certain diseases and pests.
- Propagators and growers are currently offering new varieties in a package form with other improved and new supplies and technologies that help maintain and improve plant quality. Plants are sold with specific type of soil, pot, or other supplies to be used for the plant.
- Container gardening is the new dominant trend that affects the market for all kinds of flowers and plants; annuals, perennials, cut flowers, potted plants, foliages, trees and shrubs, etc.

Manufacturing and distribution issues

- Many flower and plant products are not marketed by brand names. Though several companies are interested in establishing a brand identity in the floral market (e.g., Dole, Sunkist, Gerald Stevens, Hallmark), this is still in its infancy. However, some plants currently sold in some home centers and mass merchandise stores are becoming less of a commodity. In addition, there are some emerging brand names and products within sector.
- It also appears that some consumers are not interested in brand or variety names. Rather they are looking for other characteristics such as color, price, etc.

Overall assessment of opportunities

The fashion/design, home ownership and value market drivers provide many product development and market opportunities to raise sales from annual bedding and garden plants.

Sources

Mintel, flowers and potted plants, 2001.

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