

MSU Product Center

For Agriculture and Natural Resources

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Foliages – Selective opportunities

Market drivers that provide selective opportunities

- Foliage suppliers will have selective opportunities to raise sales from these plants based on **homeownership, convenience, value, ethnicity** and **demographics** as market drivers

Specific opportunities

- New homeowners will buy these plants to create different indoor and outdoor plant combinations. But opportunities in this market segment will not be broad. There is also a potential to expand market shares in the convenience market segment, if growers and retailers focus on container and plant combination innovations that make foliage plants attractive to consumers.
- Since these are plants mostly coming as potted plants and in hanging baskets, they are not low-price plants. Thus value will play just a selective role. These plants are also not expected to have an extended ethnic market. In order to raise sales in this market, growers need to find out the desires and wants of this consumer group. This will require conducting studies that analyze ethnic based flower and plant consumption patterns to identify and introduce product and packaging innovations. Various demographic groups who want to use these plants in their plant combinations will purchase foliage plants. In particular, the baby boomer generation is the main buyer.
- Garden centers that can offer variety and high quality foliage plants combined with different plant arrangements can raise sales. Also, growers who work with supermarkets to sell different plant combinations adding some design elements that increase the use of foliage plants can also increase sales. Landscapers who work with individual consumers and with malls, hotels, and other businesses can improve sales of these plants. Retail florist shops will use these plants as additions in their pot plant designs and arrangements. Plants with unique color and foliage textures will benefit from this market outlet. Mass merchandisers and home centers will carry products from selected suppliers or focus on specific varieties, colors, sizes, shapes, etc., providing foliage plant growers selective market opportunities.
- If growers introduce product innovations that support floral displays on balconies or in window boxes and make a concerted effort to promote and educate consumers about gardening in limited spaces, this will be a new untapped market opportunity for ornamental plant growers.

New product examples

- New ivy varieties have been introduced in various sizes, shapes, colors, and patterns. Recent introductions include cultivars such as Adams Choice, Bettina, Nina and Sara.
- *Graptophyllum* is a new foliage plant introduced recently by the Athens Select program. The plant comes in Chocolate and Tricolor varieties. Other new foliage species introduced in recent years include plants in the *Aracae*, *Liliaceae*, and *Orchidaceae* families.

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 breeding companies and origin of species countries are also shaping the development, supply and commercialization of new species and varieties.

Key to success

- Product innovations and market promotion activities on health benefits of indoor foliage plants, as well as innovative planting arrangements and combinations to use them in indoor and outdoor plant and flower mixes are key to success in this product line.

Sources

Mintel, flowers and potted plants, 2001.

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