

## **MSU Product Center**

*For Agriculture and Natural Resources*

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

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### **Herbaceous perennials - Overview**

#### **Products included in the product line**

- These are perennials used in the bedding plant category. They are field and container grown plants including hardy/garden chrysanthemums, hosta and other herbaceous perennials.

#### **General market trend and information**

- Herbaceous perennials represented 12% of the 2004 sales of floricultural products. Sales from these products have shown a significant increase in the past ten years. Sales from these plants increased from \$65 million in 1995 to \$625 million in 2004.
- Perennial growing has undergone significant changes in the last three decades. As the plants gained popularity in recent years, many have shown interest in growing perennials. Therefore, an increasing number of growers of bedding plants, pot plants and cut flower growers are considering ways and means to integrate new perennial plants into their programs. Experts expect that, production of perennials will grow fast in the coming years

#### **New product trends**

- The introduction of perennial varieties in recent years has been driven by the consumer's increasing interest in new plants. Perennials are being used in containers, mixed combinations of pots, either all perennial or perennials and annuals. There are wide ranges of new varieties that are designed for container gardening. An increasing number of new perennials are especially entering the market in containers.
- There is a new wave of plant labeling activities and promotional tags particularly on perennials.

#### **Manufacturing and distribution issues**

- In contrast to most consumer products in the U.S., many flower and plant products are not marketed or recognized 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. There are, however, some flowers and plants currently sold in some home centers and mass merchandise stores are becoming less of a commodity.

#### **Overall assessment of opportunities**

- Herbaceous perennial growers can increase sales if they can offer different plant varieties, colors, foliages and flower textures, and introduce unique container innovations that improve plant combinations and arrangements that fit into the ongoing garden design changes.

#### **Sources**

Brockman, T. Perennial market sees continued growth. *Greenhouse Buisness*, August, 2004, volume 10, No. 8.

Holst, A. 2002b. Perennials witness strong growth. *Greenhouse Business*, August, 2002, volume 8, No. 8.

<http://www.provenwinners.com/plants/?doSearch=1&viewType=Perennial> - Proven Winners perennials.