

Cultural Details: **Spring Bedding**

Introduction

There is a large range of products available to satisfy the consumer's demand to fill up their borders with bedding before the risk of frost has passed. There are two sales seasons for these items - firstly sales of non-flowering plants in the Autumn, secondly sales of flowering plants in the Spring. Colour labels are available for all these products from the suppliers listed in the catalogue.

The rise in popularity of the multi-pack tray especially suits these items, allowing the possibility to produce a higher quality plant compared with strip trays, at reasonable cost.

All should be sown in June and July, keeping temperatures close to 18-20°C to give the best results. There are further details under each product entry in the catalogue.

Plant variety improvements have generally been confined to hybrid development (e.g. Pansies, Violas and Primula) but there are many excellent 'cheap and cheerful' lines of Aubrieta, Iberis, Myosotis etc. which together provide an excellent range of items.

Alyssum Saxatile & Montanum

Flowers: June-July – Yellow flowers

After 5 weeks transfer to 8cm square pots or 6 packs. Sell Autumn (green plant with label) or spring, when budded.

Arabis

Flowers: April May - White or Pink

Aubrieta

Flowers: April-June - Blues, Purples, Reds, Pinks

Bellis

Flowers April-May - Pinks, Red, White

The variety Galaxy will also flower in Autumn in the same year from a June sowing.

Myosotis (Forget-Me-Not)

Flowers April-May – Blues, Pink, White

Pansy/Viola

Sow December/January for sales in April/May, before the main Summer Bedding selling season. Detailed cultural information is available on separate sheets.

Primrose/Polyanthus

Sow June – choose the hardy Primrose variety Husky, and any of the listed Polyanthus varieties.

Primula Species

A number of species will flower in spring from a May-June sowing the previous year; these include Wanda, Denticulata and Rosea.

Stock (Brompton)

Another popular item for spring sales.

Wallflowers, Erysimum and Cheiranthus Species

Dwarf Wallflowers will flower in the pack and in pots in the Spring; do not use the taller varieties for this, however.

Pest and Disease

Monitor for signs of pest and disease on the crops. They are particularly susceptible to attack from Powdery Mildew, and Botrytis on any dead foliage, especially as growth slows down in the autumn, and foliage may remain wet for long periods. So try and keep foliage dry as possible, and maintain good air movement through the crop. Aphids can also be a problem, so use a suitable insecticide as appropriate. We have more specific information on Pansies, Primroses etc, on separate leaflets.

Information provided for guidance only, as cultural practices and climatic circumstances vary.