

PERENNIALS AS COMMERCIAL CUT FLOWERS

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(Concluded from last Issue)

3. - **Lilies** offer some difficulties in shipping, but usually find a good market. Three to five flowers on a stem is the most desirable size. While many species will produce more, this can be controlled by correct cultural practices. *Lilium candidum*, the Madonna lily, - especially some of the newer hybrids such as those of De Graaff, *L. regale* and its hybrids, and *speciosum* have been used for years. *L. testaceum*, the Nankeen lily, is also good. Some of the *centifolium* hybrids, if segments are not too broad and flowers not bowl-shaped, also offer possibilities. *L. Henryi* for August and September, if correctly handled, is a good bet.
4. - **Heliopsis incomparabilis**, Summer Gold, with its 18ⁿ - 24ⁿ stems, long flowering season, and excellent shipping qualities, offers a good golden yellow during midsummer.

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5. - **Liatris**, shipped to market for many years, is still in demand. Plants are good for five to six years if not cut too hard. *L. pycnostachia*, *scariosa*, and especially *scariosa alba*, are good.
6. - **Buddleia**, particularly some of the newer and more hardy varieties. Peace and Fascination are two good whites. Charming, a good pink, and a few of the older types have proved profitable. Under some conditions the Buddleias are not too hardy.
7. - **Pyrethrum roseum hybridum** has been produced for the market for years, and many of the newer sorts are excellent. The double or anemone types, as well as the large singles, sell well. Eileen May Robinson, a large single pink; Florence Shadley, double pink with 30" stems; Pink Bouquet, and Purity are good commercial varieties.
8. - **Shasta Daisies**: Doubles are the best shippers. Variety Esther Read is old but still good. Mt. Shasta and Marconi are good doubles. The large singles are not good shippers. With these, as with many other perennials, it is advisable to build up a strain by selection and division.
9. - **Iris**: A few of the apogon, or beardless, group: I. Snow Queen, (*Iris Orientalis*) white; I. Spuria Ochroleuca, white standards with yellow falls. These are similar to the bulbous iris in flower form, are good shippers, and excellent keepers. I. Monspur also has possibilities. I. Hexagona-Fulva group-native to Louisiana, offers a wide range of colors, especially in the pinks and coppery tones. This iris is hardy as far north as the Michigan peninsula, but to produce profitably in Massachusetts, it should be grown in frames.
10. - **Anemone Japonica** offers one of the loveliest cut flowers. They require cool night temperatures during the growing season, and are therefore best grown in the Berkshires.
11. - **Trollius**, (Orange globe flower). These are simply a glorified buttercup with better color, and wonderful keeping and shipping qualities. There are three different types: the European, with its solitary yellow blooms on 12" - 15" stems; the Asiatic, with 18" - 24" stems carrying several flowers; and the three to four foot Trollius Ledebouri with much-branched stems and clear orange flowers.

The materials listed above are all marketed in dozen lots. With the so-called "filler" materials, a standard bunch weighing about one pound seems to be the best method of handling.

Listed below are perennials which have the necessary qualities to make good fillers:

Gypsophila Bristol Fairy is undoubtedly at the top of the group. It has been profitably grown for several years in many sections of the country. The old *Gypsophila paniculata* fl. pl. is the one commonly used for drying and is best for such purpose.

Artemesia albula, variety Silver King, is used for its silvery gray foliage, and is excellent either fresh or dried. Plants remain productive for a number of years.

Archillea ptarmica varieties with 18" stems.

Galium verum, yellow bedstraw, offers 6" - 8" panicles of small yellow flowers.

Statice latifolia, sea lavender, is used both fresh and dried.

Feverfew: A new one, Wallace's variety, is an excellent clean white and fully double. This has proved quite hardy at Batavia, N.Y., but in sections where winters are more or less open, it may be severely injured.

Eupatorium coelestinum, hardy ageratum, is a good dark blue for late summer.

Thalictrum: *Glaucum* and *Fendleri* are both yellow which flower in late June and July.

Strange as it may seem, **Clematis Mandschurica** (one of the shrub type) is a fine shipper and keeper.

Success of outdoor production depends upon geographical and topographical factors as well as soil conditions. It must be remembered that out-of-door growing under natural conditions, and greenhouse culture under an artificial environment are quite different procedures. Rains frequently spoil the fine-flowered fillers, and not much can be done about it.

Probably the most important factors in profitable production are:

1. - Cutting at proper stage of development,
2. - Correct hardening and storage.

These are the two items about which very little is known.

Perennials have cut flower potentialities, and if well handled, will be acceptable to the market.

Why not try a few?

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