

# zinnia



Widely known for disease resistance and garden performance, the All-America Selection Gold Medal-winning zinnia Profusion series has become an extremely popular variety in the United States. Now, there are two new colors in the series: 'Profusion Apricot' and 'Profusion Fire'. Apricot is a light coral-colored flower with a terra cotta center. This will be a very popular item in both spring and fall pots, flower beds and planter boxes. Fire has a scarlet-orange flower, which offers a striking contrast against its dark green foliage.

Expect the same excellent garden performance from these two col-

ors, which also have the same cultural characteristics and production time as the other three colors of the series. Profusion is a dwarf variety with strong basal branching. It is best to sell in the green stage for high-density cell packs (36 cells or greater). For color sales, it is best to use larger containers like an 1801 or 4-inch pot. Peat-lite mixes work well at a soil pH of 5.5-6.5. Weekly applications of 200-250 ppm nitrogen using a well-balanced calcium nitrate-based fertilizer helps produce high-quality plants. Warm temperatures (above 75° F) can stretch the plants. It will take 6-7 weeks after transplanting to flower. Sakata Seed America. (408) 778-7758.

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# dianthus

variety  
**spotlight**

The Sweet series is the first professional cutflower dianthus series offered in vivid individual colors, but it can also be grown as bedding plants. No vernalization is required. It is first-year flowering and very uniform for height and flowering time — field-grown plants reach 18-26 inches tall. There are large very fragrant, long-lasting blooms on tall, straight stems. Four colors make up the series: Coral, Purple, Red and White.

When grown as bedding plants, in plug production, 406-cell or larger trays are suggested. Use a well-drained, medium with a pH of 5.8-6.2, as well as good aeration and water-holding capacity. Temperatures should be maintained at 65-70° F. In

finishing, Sweet is suitable for 4-inch or gallon production and can be grown pot tight. Temperatures should be kept at 60-72° F. After plants are established, apply a calcium-based fertilizer or 15-5-15 at 100 ppm 1-2 times a week. Sweet is very responsive to PGRs. Experiment with concentrations and application timing. A Bonzi spray at 20 ppm can be applied two weeks after transplant into a 4-inch or larger pot. For 6-inch pots or gallons, another Bonzi spray at 20 ppm may be required two weeks later. PanAmerican Seed. (630) 231-1400. ♦

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# new varieties



## Hibiscus

The Fleming Hardy Perennial line offers Fleming dianthus, veronica and 12 varieties of hibiscus and will be introducing Fleming's Filli series of hardy crepe myrtles. The Fleming hardy hibiscus varieties and the three varieties of Tropical hardy hibiscus are produced in a Lincoln, Neb., facility. Seeds of Life Nursery. (402) 994-2477.



## Gerbera

Samurai gerberas excel with high germination rates, more blooms per flush and a consistently shorter bench time. The standard and micro-mini varieties boast a bold mix of striking colors, while the mini variety is available in a mix or as separate colors. Most of the varieties have dark centers. Samurai Gerbera. (604) 530-9298.

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## Lupinus

The Nootka lupine has beautiful blossoms, shorter stature and good durability. Broad, 3-inch wooly hand-shaped leaves circle the hairy, sturdy flowering stems that hold dozens of bicolored blue and white almost 1-inch blossoms. These open in late spring into early summer from the bottom of the tapered inflorescence to the top. Jelitto Perennial Seeds. (502) 895-0807.

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## Brunnera

'Looking Glass' PPAF stands 12-15 inches tall and sports leaves with an all-over sterling silver patina. Its edges tend to curl under, adding a softness to its mounded form. Springtime brings clusters of tiny, forget-me-not type flowers that naturally float above the foliage. Walters Gardens, Inc. (800) 925-8377. **GPN**

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