

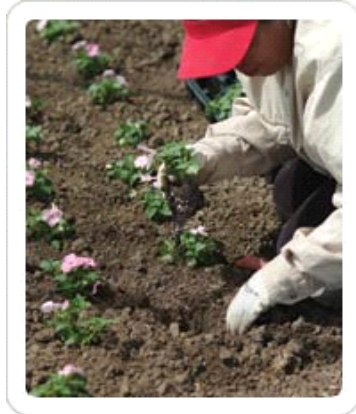


A Timeline For Working With Your Grower

Get quality color when you need it.

(excerpted from Color Solutions Volume 1, Spring 2008)

Working with your color supplier is the best way to ensure you get the quality plants you want. Established seasonal color firms know the value of developing a partnership with a grower supplier.



Up to 12 months before installation

- Think “next year” when you’re cleaning up landscape beds. Keep records of the site conditions (light levels, soil conditions, etc.), which plant varieties worked and how they’ve performed, and client feedback.
- Take pictures!
- Talk to your grower at the end of the season. Looking for a new supplier? Visit [Find A Plant Supplier](#) for a supplier near you.

6 to 9 months before installation

- Place your initial order. Determine color palette, establish varieties and review photos of what worked. Review items you wanted, but could not get. Order those first.
- Your grower can help you select the best varieties for your region.

Growers often trial new varieties the year before they’re introduced.

- Discuss timing and site delivery. Rootbound, overgrown plants are the number one reason annuals don’t perform. Work with your grower to get “fresh” plant material.
- Establish if your grower will deliver directly to the job site.

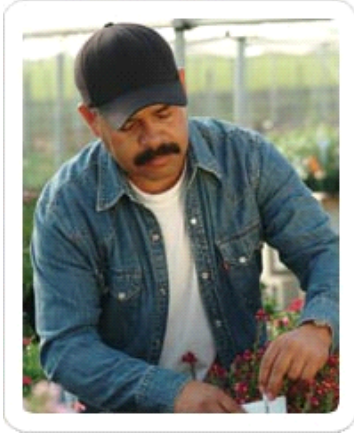
4 to 6 months before installation

- Time to place your final order. Order Spring bedding plants in the Fall and order Fall plants in the Spring. The earlier you order, the longer your grower has to get specific varieties. Specialty items or newer varieties often sell out quickly!
- Get confirmation of your order.
- Discuss variety selection and the preferred size and type of growing container.
- Consider ordering 70 to 80% of your yearly needs in advance. Pick core items that you know you will use. “Fill in” with available plant material when renewals with clients are signed.
- Schedule delivery. Shipping on racks, pallets or loose flats impacts your labor and time at the job site.
- Make clear the stage the plants should be in when delivered. Annuals perform best with about 25% color; they handle the stress of installation well and root faster for better flowering.
- Plan inspection visits with your grower. You don’t want to find out there’s a crop problem a week before installation!



1 month before installation

- Confirm the delivery date and method.
- Visit your grower to inspect your crop.
- Confirm your order for quantity and color.



1 week before installation

- Notify your grower on timing and/or delivery. Make sure the site has ample space to hold the plant material, or arrange for grower racks to be available.
- Schedule the foreman, equipment and crew.
- Establish crew tasks, including unloading, bed preparation and watering in.

Your grower can be an invaluable partner for you as you plan your clients' projects. Great plants from a great supplier are the first steps to a great landscape!