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DIVOTS

By **EDDIE SNIPES**
Selva Marina Country Club



“Night Shift on the Golf Course”

Finally, the end of the day and our golf course superintendent is ready for a good supper and an extra good night's sleep. Arriving at work the next morning, the superintendent finds that the “Night Shift” has paid him a visit. Golf course flags are ripped from the standards, tee markers have disappeared. Looking further, the superintendent finds golf carts in traps, on top of greens, and carts sitting on top of irrigation controllers. The dreaded Night Shift has been around and left vandalism, its ugly trademark.

This type of Night Shift activity will rarely happen at clubs having roving 24-hour security and camera monitoring systems. Not every superintendent has these luxuries. So how do the rest of us folks deter the Night Shift and its unfortunate consequences?

If your golf course is fortunate enough to be surrounded by dwellings of some type (homes, condos, etc.), the superintendent should try to make friends with as many neighbors as possible. The more friendly eyes watching the course the better. So put on that public relations smile and go to it!

On the golf course, flags having numbers or logos might be substituted for solid color flags that have less attractive value for vandals or “night time tourists.” Use your nicer flags for special occasions. This would also apply to special tee markers that some Night Shift personnel see as excellent souvenirs. Trap rakes that are made of fiberglass might also save you from having to replace broken wooden ones.

Around the maintenance building, good lighting is essential as a deterrent for Night Shift visitors. The more lighting the better. Check door jambs and windows for potential jimmying or pry points. Using metal strips to cover these areas where crowbars or pipes can be used to pry open an entrance way would be advised. Use extra heavy locks and clasps which make removing them time consuming and noisy. Bars over window areas that are easily accessible might also aid in saving entry of Night Shift people into your maintenance complex. Postings of “No Trespassing” or guard dog signs might be useful as a psychological deterrent whether you have a guard dog in your maintenance area or not. Giving your local police and fire departments a back gate key or a key to gain entrance to your golf course for patrolling or in case of fire is also an excellent idea.

Check with local authorities to find out what you legally have the right to do if Night Shift people are caught by you on your club grounds. Laws can be confusing so protect yourself by knowing what actions you can take when witnessing Night Shift people at work. Do not over react and take the law into your own hands. This could be far more detrimental to yourself than the vandals.

Hopefully, you have already taken preventative measures to stop the dreaded Night Shift visitors. If not, take a good look at your maintenance area and golf course borders. Implement as many safeguards as you can and get that extra good night sleep with a pleasant morning combination. ■

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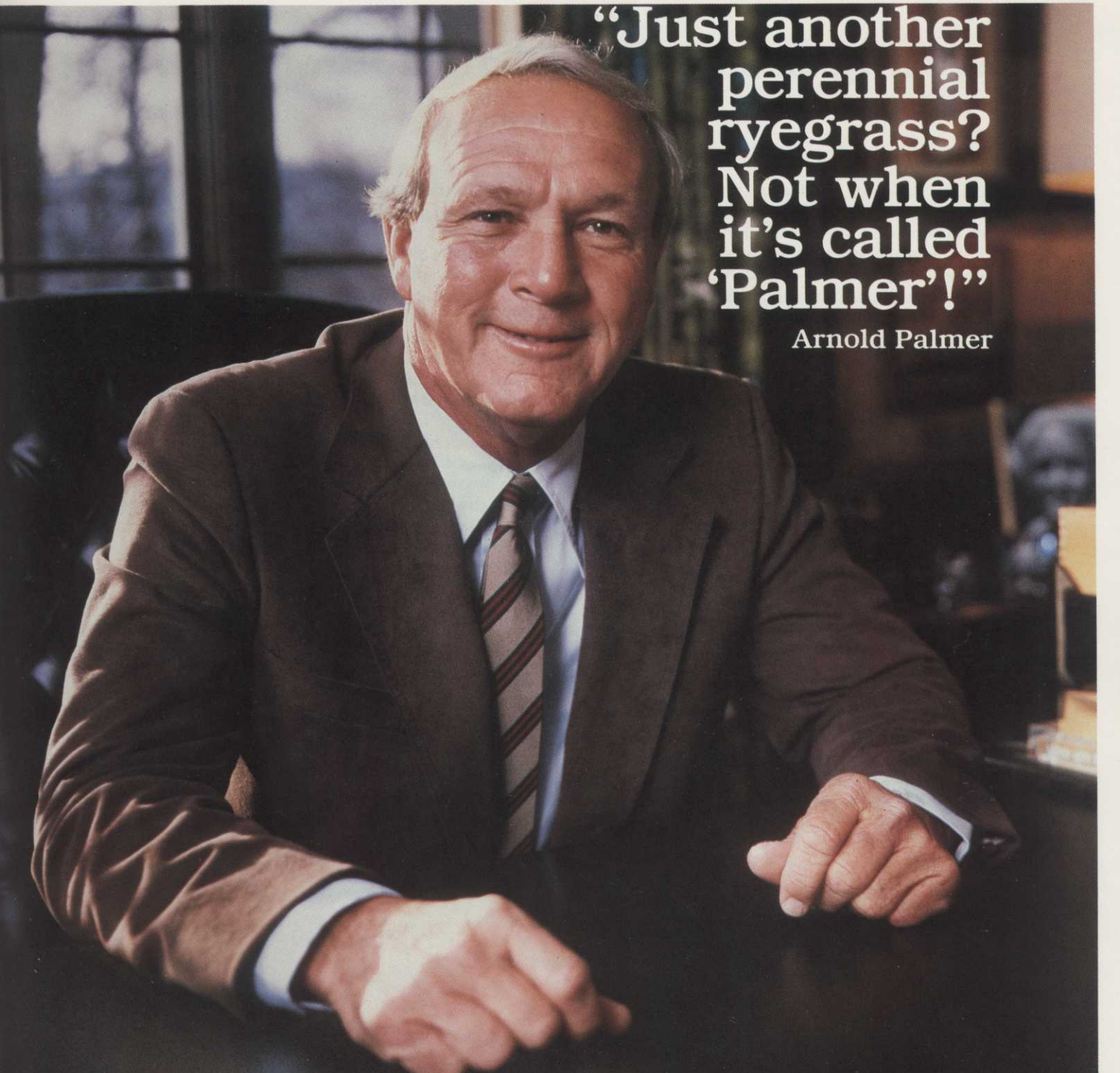
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Selecting Annuals for Golf Course Planting

By: Lynn Griffith

In addition to mowing, fertilizing, spraying, irrigation, personnel management and club member relations, a number of golf course superintendents are responsible for general grounds maintenance as well. While the extra responsibility can be a real burden to the turf professional, his non-turf duties can be almost as important. The planting and maintenance of good shrubbery, especially flowering plants, will go a long way toward complementing a well-manicured golf course.

Annual flowers have long been used to add seasonal color. They are used both in peripheral areas, such as around the clubhouse, as well as on the course itself. Favorite spots for planting of annual flower beds include near the practice green, on tee slopes, and near the bridges over water hazards. One of the best places to plant a flower bed is anywhere that grass has difficulty growing. Of course, flower beds cannot interfere with play, but an out-of-bounds area where the turf tends to do poorly may look much better planted in annuals.

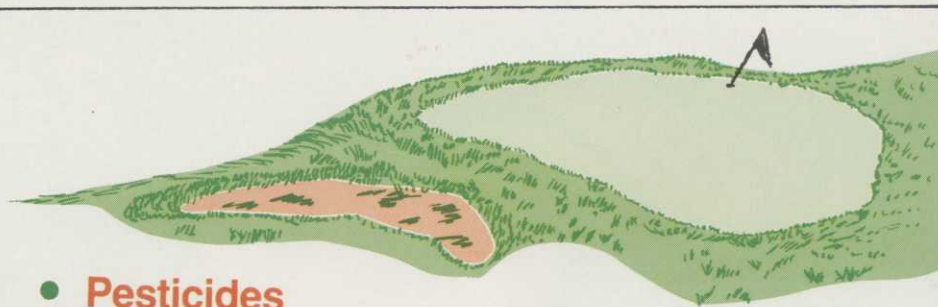
The key to success in annual flower beds on the golf course is the selection of the varieties themselves. However, nothing is going to do well unless the soil in the bed is of proper texture. Since most soils in annual beds are used for several years in succession, it is essential to select a quality soil. If you skimp on soil quality, sooner or later the plant vigor and longevity will suffer.

Most annuals are somewhat prone to over-watering and root rot, so proper aeration and drainage are important. I prefer soil amendments which last for several seasons without breaking down. Such ingredients include sand, perlite, styrofoam beads, and pine bark. Whether you choose a bagged or bulk potting soil for your beds, at least one third of the mix should consist of these ingredients. Wood chips and sawdust don't last much beyond the first season. A good mix for annual beds might consist of something like 50% peat, 20% pine bark, 20% styro beads or perlite, and 10% sand.

The next question is how will the beds be irrigated. Water can be supplied by the regular golf course irrigation system where applicable. In these cases, however, good drainage is a must. If the course is watered at night, then annuals which are subject to leaf spot diseases may have to be avoided. Flower beds which are away from the course itself can have their own irrigation system, or work off of the lawn sprinkler system.

Besides removal of spent flowers, occasional weeding is usually the primary maintenance job. Cypress mulch is generally used to hold down weed growth and to maintain more even moisture levels. Dark peat soils tend to absorb a great deal of heat, and a two-inch thick layer of mulch will help moderate soil temperatures.

(continued on page 30)



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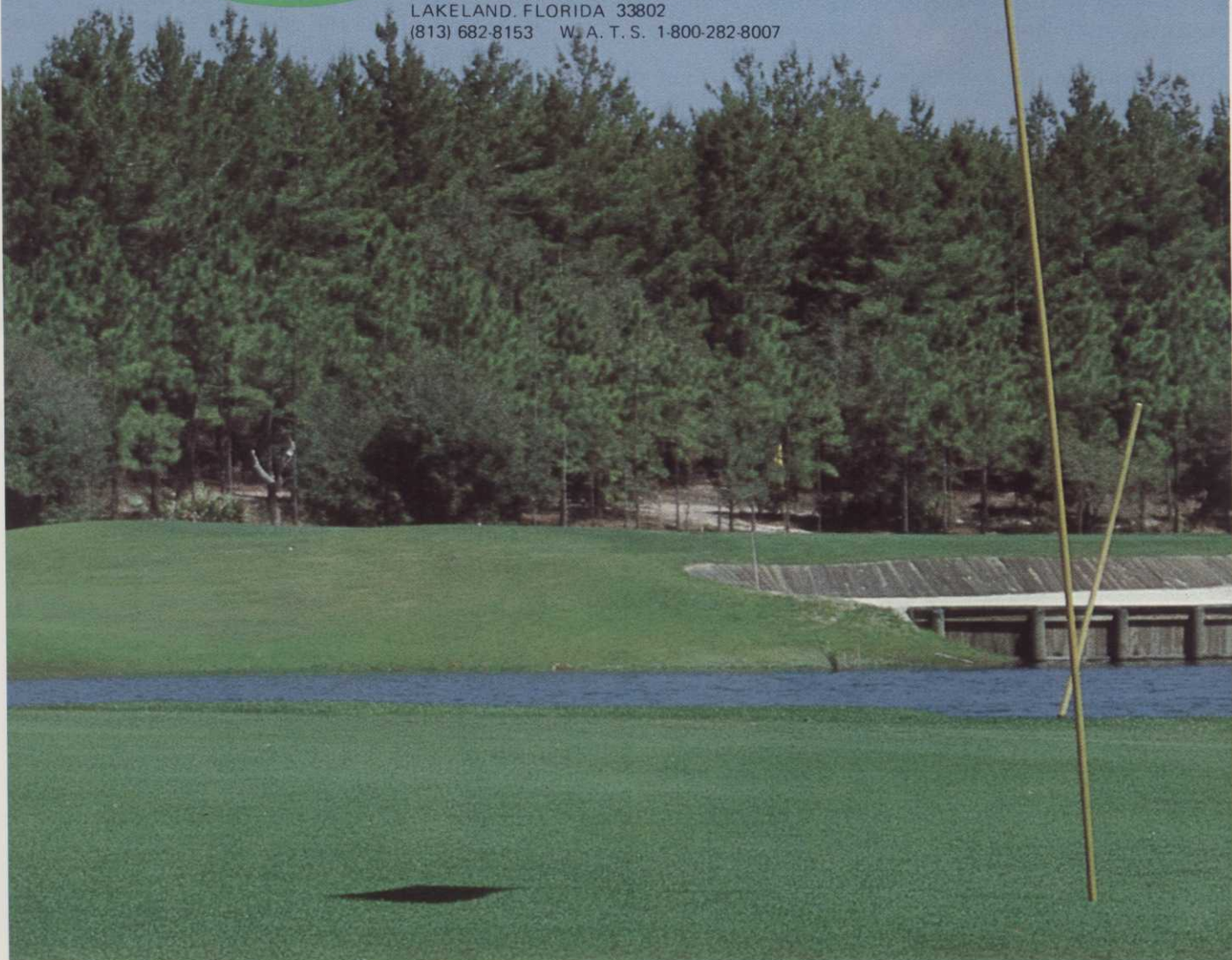
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Depending on the severity of your vandalism problem, some sort of preventive measures should be looked into to help minimize future attacks. If you make things tougher to vandalize, possibly the offenders will give up and go elsewhere. Here is a list of old standbys that have been successful in many different areas.

- 1) Storage areas for golf carts and maintenance equipment should be well lit and properly secured (alarm systems, fencing, etc.).



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- 2) Minimize access points to the golf course property. Plantings along roadways have been successful but sterner measures might need to be taken in the form of man-made obstacles. Fencing can be unsightly but can be hidden with natural plantings.
- 3) Keep accurate records on when, where and the extent of damage in each instance of vandalism. Local police should be contacted. They may not investigate each incident but at least you will be on record should further incidents occur. This may also result in stepped up patrols to your property by local police agencies.
- 4) Golf courses with homes and condominiums lining the fairways have the potential for built-in security. By making the residents aware of the problem, they could report any suspicious activities and avert the damage before it's done. Some developments have organized their own security patrols that have proved to be good deterrents to crime and vandalism. They are usually happy to incorporate maintenance and cart storage areas into their routine patrols.

Hopefully by limiting access and availability to the property, large scale vandalism will be cut back. Making it tougher on vandals will, hopefully, take the fun out of it for them.

Since costs are on the rise, vandalism is fast becoming a burden on golf course operating budgets. The time may have come to include a vandalism prevention program in your next budget proposal. ■

Think

If you think you are beaten, you are,
If you think you dare not, you don't.
If you like to win — but you think you can't,
It's almost certain you won't.

If you think you'll lose, you've lost,
For out of this world we find
Success begins with a fellow's will,
It's all in the state of mind.

If you think you're out-classed, you are.
You've got to think high to rise.
You've gotta be sure of yourself,
Before you can win the prize.

Life's battles don't always go
To the stronger or faster man,
But sooner or later the man who wins,
Is the man who thinks he can.



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How Fast Is Fast?

By: Sherwood A. Moore
Superintendent of Golf Courses
Winged Foot Golf Club (New York)

Editor's Note: Many discussions with colleagues and turf professionals this summer have focused on problems associated with turf being maintained under low mowing heights. The following article is quite timely and informative — from a professional's point-of-view. CHP

In the English language, the word "fast" has many meanings such as you can run fast, go for a fast, have fast women, and have fast greens. The topic of conversation around the locker and grill rooms of most golf clubs these days is "How fast are the greens today?" In some areas of the country it is referred to as the "roll of the green." It all boils down to the speed of the ball on the

green. Lost is the art of stroking the ball—today, a tap is all that is required. I think some of the golfers want the ball to roll into the cup just by looking at it. At some clubs they post the speed of the green on their bulletin board for the day.

Are we becoming victims of the stimpmeter, fast greens and tournament play? When big tournaments are on TV, all we hear about is how fast the greens putt; that they doublecut the greens daily, even triple-cut and yes, on some greens quadruple-cut to increase the speed.

Whenever a group of golfers or superintendents congregate, golf and turf are naturally discussed, green speed for the average club is a favorite topic. Seven, 8, 9, 10 or more feet is suggested.

Has the superintendent contributed to the dilemma? Yes, in a way. He probably has perfected his course to the point where only incredibly fast greens will save par. Also, the competition to have faster greens than your neighbor is not helping the situation in any way.

In any event, an increasing amount of pressure is put on the superintendent to increase the speed of the greens. Every superintendent has heard the following remarks: "Are the greens going to be mowed today?" "When are you going to lower the height of cut?" "The greens at such-and-such a club are faster than ours."

Seriously, I am concerned about this trend of "fast greens." Can we afford to maintain greens of this caliber—that require frequent topdressings; frequent verticutting; daily cutting or double-cutting of greens; close, close mowing—even to the point of grinding the under side of already thin bed knives.

And, in all my conversation and reading and listening, I have never heard anyone mention a thing about the little grass plant. How is it standing up under all this abuse? I was tutored under the late Professor Lawrence Dickenson of Massachusetts, and one of his often quoted phrases was, "Give the little grass plant half a chance. It wants to live." Under these conditions of shaving the grass plant to $\frac{1}{8}$ inch or less, are we giving it "half a chance?" I do not think so. We are giving it very little chance. Sooner or later we are headed for trouble.

We all know that the root growth of a grass plant is in proportion to the top growth. That the grass plant needs leaf surface for survival, for transpiration, respiration, the manufacturing of carbohydrates to maintain life and growth. It also needs nitrogen and other nutrients that we are withholding so as to increase speed by limiting plant growth.

I predict that in the not too distant future we will get back to the basics of a good putting green surface—that the demands of the grass plant will be given equal or more consideration than the demands of the golfers. A firm, true, healthy green with reasonable speed is much more pleasurable than putting on dead grass and plain soil. We will return to stroking the ball, not tapping it.

CREDIT: Northwest Turf Topics. ■

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(continued from page 24)

Finally, scheduling of annuals is critical to their performance. Florida is a big state, however, and planting dates vary considerably from the Panhandle to the Everglades. Use the enclosed table to guide you in the right selection for the time of year.

Summer is now upon us, and only some annual varieties can take the summers here. Some of the best summer annuals include Salvia, Marigolds, Lizianthus, Jacob's Coat, Purslane, Dianthus, and Gazania. If you are not sure of the requirements of a particular variety, the best thing to do is ask the grower from the bedding plant wholesaler you buy from.

Growing annual plants in pots is something of a specialty, and most landscape nurseries do not grow them. Ask a landscape nursery you deal with who grows good quality annual in your area. Another method is to ask at one of the large garden centers in your area where they buy their annuals. They should be happy to help you once you explain that you are a golf course employee and a wholesale customer.

One good way to test the suitability of annual species for your course is to plant a "combination" bed of several different varieties. That way you can see which ones perform well, and which ones your members like. Members, and especially potential members, notice attractive flower beds immediately, and they can add a touch of class and a great deal of beauty to a golf course. ■

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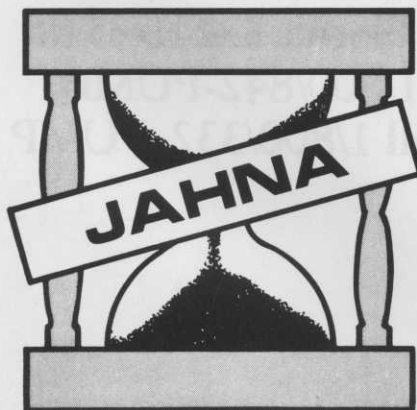


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Table 1. Annual¹ Flower Planting Guide

Name	Exposure ²			Cold Tolerance	North Florida ³		Central Florida		South Florida		Spacing (inches)
	Full Sun	Morning or Afternoon Sun	No Direct Sunlight		Planting Date	Removal Date	Planting Date	Removal Date	Planting Date	Removal Date	
Ageratum	XX			Tender	Mar. 1-15	August	Feb. 15-Mar. 15	July	Feb. 1-Mar. 1	June	10-12
Alyssum	XX			Tender	Mar. 1-15	July	Feb. 15-Mar. 15	July	Oct. 1-15 Feb. 1-Mar. 1	March June	6
Amaranthus	XX			Tender	Mar. 15-30	September	Mar. 15-30	July	July-August Mar. 1-15	First Frost July	14-18
Asters	XX			Tender	Mar. 1-15	July	Feb. 15-28	June	Oct.-Nov. Feb. 1-5	June	12
Baby's Breath	XX	X		Hardy	Feb. 15-Mar. 15	June	Feb.-Mar.	June	Aug.-Dec.	Mar.-Apr.	12
Balsam	XX	X		Tender	Mar. 15-30	August	Mar. 1-30	July	Mar. 1-30	June-July	8-12
Begonia (Nonstop)		XX	X	Tender	Mar. 1-15	June	Feb. 15-28	May	Nov.-Feb. Jan.-Mar.	May May	12-14
Begonia (Tuberous)		X	XX	Tender	Mar. 1-15	June	Feb. 15-28	May	Oct.-Jan.	April	12-14
Begonia (Wax)	XX	X		Tender	Mar. 15-30	Sept.-Oct.	Feb. 15-28	Sept.	Sept.-Nov.	August	12-14



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