

PROBLEMSOLVER

LANDSCAPE TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS » BY H. BRUCE HELLERICK

PROBLEM

Rolling Stones lead singer Mick Jagger once said, "Anything worth doing is worth overdoing." While that may be true for rock music, it doesn't hold for landscapes. As professionals, we need to create more interest and excitement in the landscape. Many contractors use various tulip and viola combinations to create great-looking beds, but sometimes the execution is a bit too enthusiastic. Here, the entire bed is filled with pansies and tulips. How do you accommodate the client's desire for both violas and tulips without creating too busy a scene?



SOLUTION

Contractors often get carried away planting too many bulbs to make a spectacular display — and forget that it's the violas that really provide the long-term color presentation. By simply planting fewer bulbs with wider spacing, however, you allow each type of flower to be spectacular instead of competing with one another.

In this case, we removed about 24 extra bulbs along the front and sides of the bed that did not need to be planted, which also helps the bottom line: 24 bulbs times 20 cents per bulb is \$4.80; multiplied by 100 beds is \$480. You save money and keep your client very happy.



Every day you see horticultural problems. Sometimes the solution is obvious, but others are much more difficult to solve. Brickman Group Senior Horticulture Specialist H. Bruce Hellerick tackles these issues each month in Problem Solver. He can be reached at Hellerick@BrickmanGroup.com.