

The Charisma of Chrysanthemums

Mums first appeared more than 2,500 years ago, and they've come a long way since then. Inspire your customers by showing off mums' range of colors and universal appeal!

By Faith Savage

It's hard to find a single plant with more flower power than a chrysanthemum. With full, luscious, extra-large balls of blooms, mums create unparalleled color impact. From the time that the first mum was cultivated — more than 2,500 years ago in China, in a solitary golden-yellow hue — to today, in a vast array of colors, the garden mum is a beautiful must-have in gardens and containers.

Mums' multitude of glorious colors, from reds, oranges, yellows and bronze to purple and burgundy shades, is a perfect mirror image of nature's autumn landscape. They're an excellent choice for gardeners looking to refresh garden beds or containers for fall. Let's face it: No one can resist taking home a mum or two!

But are we doing everything possible to help our customers understand the full potential of their garden mums?

Mums make great container plants and also work well in garden beds...

but why not both? Inspire your customers to use the mum as the frame for their fall gardens — then reflect those color choices in some fresh new containers on their patios or front porches. Mums are certainly well-suited for both applications, so give your customers some handy tips on how to have more success with their mums at home.

Meanwhile, keep mums looking their best on your benches so they move out quickly!

Care Tips for Retail

Be sure to water plants well, from the base of the plant. Overhead watering makes the flower heads separate and creates unsightly voids, so use a bit more care in the watering process to ensure maximum beauty and impact for your mums the entire time they are on your bench. Base watering also reduces the risk of disease.



For a longer shelf life, cover plants or bring them indoors when expecting frost.

Inspire customers with unique color combinations in your displays. Show them how to mix and match colors for extra impact: Try picking

three shades of the same basic color to create a lovely tonal quality in the container. All three colors are in the same corner of the color wheel, but when combined this way each looks exceptional. Achieve the same look by displaying individual pots

of these three colors on the bench. Once your customer sees this beautiful palette, it will be easy to sell three plants (or more!) to customers who want to recreate it in their own gardens.

Mixing and matching extends



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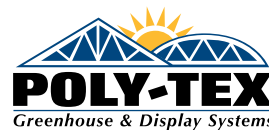


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Consumer Tips

- * Mums love full sun but also do well with at least a half day of sun.
- * Mums have shallow roots, so water lightly two to three times per week for the first week or two after planting in the ground. Don't oversaturate the soil.
- * Mums in containers offer tremendous flower power.
- * Water daily in hot weather and a couple of times a week in cool weather.
- * When frost approaches, protect mums by mulching around the base to help them withstand the cold temperatures and aid potential spring regrowth after the cold weather passes.
- * Fertilize monthly in the spring when the new growth develops. No fertilizer is necessary in the fall when the plant is in full bloom.

beyond mums to include beautiful asters in your displays. The great color choices in the Royalty asters, like vibrant purples and pinks, make the fiery oranges, reds and golds of the mums pop. Improved shelf life and double flowers make them a win-win for your fall displays.

Create inspiring displays of fall color — and offer your customers tools for success — and you will create renewed interest and excitement for the potential of the fall season.

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