

Hosta, Hemerocallis, and Coreopsis

The most popular perennial sold in the U.S. for 1993 was *Hosta*. Over 70 different genera were listed by respondents as their "three best sellers" for 1993. *Hosta* was identified by 17% of all firms as one of their top three sellers, followed by *Hemerocallis*, *Coreopsis*, *Astilbe*, and grasses.

The top four selling genera of 1993 were also the top four sellers in 1992. Grasses, which had been #8 in 1992 increased in popularity to #5 in 1993. *Phlox*, which had been #5 in 1992 slipped to #8 in 1993. Notable increases in popularity were observed for Herbs, *Geum*, and *Heuchera*. Decreases in popularity were noticed for *Dianthus* and *Salvia*.



Hosta is the most popular genus among perennials sold in the U.S.

Growth of the perennial market

The combined value of wholesale, retail, and landscape sales of perennials by PPA commercial members in the U.S. and Canada during 1993 was **\$338.4 million** or 25% of an estimated **\$1.37 billion** in gross sales. Furthermore, perennial sales in 1993 increased over 1992 levels for **75%** of all firms. These results were obtained from the 1993 Perennial Sales Survey conducted during January, 1994. Questionnaires were sent to members involved in growing, selling, or using perennials for commercial trade. Of the 1,161 surveys sent out, 373 (32%) were returned, usable surveys totaled 357, or 31%.

and were about what was expected for 50% of all respondents. In contrast, sales of grasses were below expectations for 33% of all respondents.

Sales of perennials in 1993 exceeded expectations for 31% of all respondents,

Successful marketing strategies for increasing sales

Successful marketing of perennials includes many aspects of promotion. However trying something new is often avoided because of uncertainty about the impact. A list of 24 different ideas for promoting perennials was developed. Members were asked to indicate whether or not they had used each of the ideas and indicate whether customer interest and/or perennial sales had been increased, Table 21. A majority of members believed herbaceous perennial **Sales and Customer Interest Increased** when using the following promotional ideas:

Display Gardens (74.8%)
Wholesale Catalogs (67.7%)
Direct Sales Persons (66.9%)
Design Services (63.6%)
Retail Catalogs (57.1%)
Customized Plant ID Tags (56.5%)
Sun-Shade-Wet-Dry Displays (54.4%)
Direct Mail Flyers (52.3%)
Newspaper Advertising (51.7%)
Educational Seminars (51.7%)
Printed Information About Perennials (59.0%)

However, a majority of respondents indicated that in their opinions there was **'No Impact on Sales, But Customer Interest Increased'** when using the following promotional strategies:

Color Coded Containers (71.9%)
Customer Appreciation Days (69.2%)
Television Advertising (65.4%)
Plant of the Week Sales (56.4%)
Loss Leader Products (53.3%).

Most Commonly Used Strategies by:

Wholesale Growers

Display Gardens
 Wholesale Catalogs
 Printed Information About Perennials
 Direct Sales Persons
 Customized Plant ID Tags

Garden Centers

Display Gardens
 Radio Advertising
 Printed Information About Perennials
 Sun-Shade-Wet-Dry Displays
 Customized Plant ID Tags
 Newspaper Advertising

A display garden is the most popular strategy for increasing sales and customer interest in perennials.

Reducing expenses & product selection ...

When managing a business, there are a variety of challenges that must be dealt with in order to "stay in business." A list of 12 different issues related to managing a business were identified and members were asked how often their firm dealt with each issue.

Members indicate that they are faced with the challenges of **Reducing Expenses** and **Product Selection** every week. Less often but still occurring every quarter, are the challenges of **Increasing Market Share, Financial Planning, Knowing the Competition, Staff Retention, Marketing Programs, Distribution and Delivery, Wages and Benefits, and Assessing Computer Needs**. The challenges of **Environmental Regulations** and **Production Automation** are being faced on a semi-annual and annual basis.

Perennial sales strongest in the Great Lakes region

Sales of perennials by PPA members were strongest in the Great Lakes region, **\$94.1 million**, but the percentage of gross sales attributed to perennials was highest in Canada, 43%, followed by the Northeastern region, 33%.

Region	Perennials	Gross Sales	Share
Great Lakes	\$94,061,000	\$352,377,000	26.7%
Mid Atlantic	71,693,000	238,420,000	30.1%
Central	68,020,000	287,692,000	23.6%
Northeast	49,746,000	150,917,000	33.0%
Southern	36,251,000	282,431,000	12.8%
Western	14,129,000	50,277,000	28.1%
Canada	4,469,000	10,400,000	43.0%
Total	\$338,369,000	\$1,372,513,000	24.7%

Perennials averaged 24.7% of gross sales for all firms.

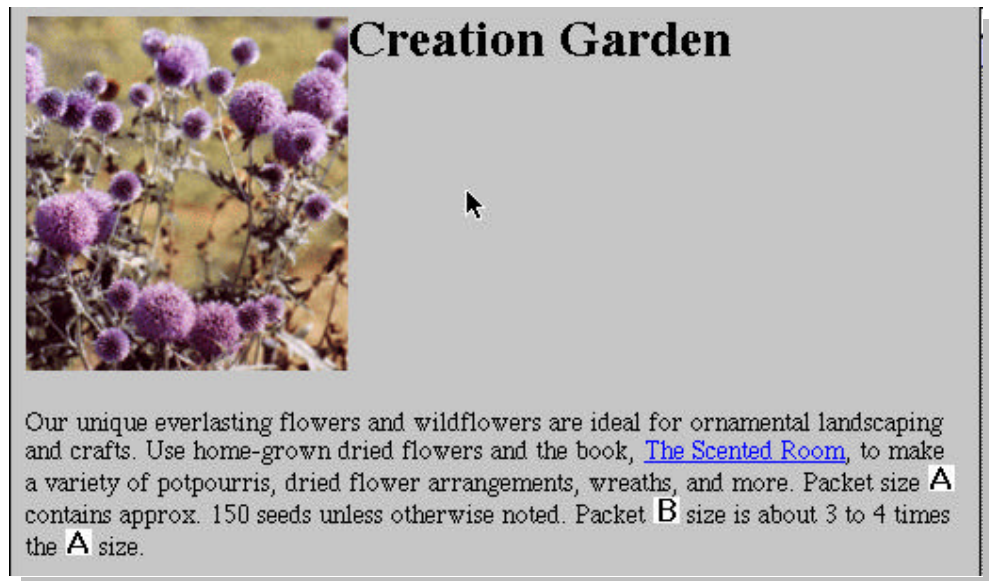
New ideas worth considering

A selection of some of the more unique marketing strategies that firms are considering:

Having a cutting garden for customers to pick their own, presenting awards to homeowners who design exemplary gardens, hosting press and garden parties, hosting a plant party in which someone invites friends to their home and talks are given with various plants being sold, maintaining a reference library for customers, produce and host a weekly TV gardening show, hosting a perennial exchange program...bring one, get one, perennial plant calendar with important gardening dates-tips, running video programs at the checkout counter, offer a perennial 12 pack with design included, promote the culinary and medicinal uses of perennials,

Marketing perennials on the Internet

Creative firms are looking at increasing their sales and exposure to customers by promoting perennials over the Internet. Using their own computer or leasing time from a vendor, companies can now inform customers about their products and services through the use of color photos, audio and video clips and in-depth explanations. This medium is extremely cost effective and represents the future of electronic marketing for all consumer retailing.



Creation Garden

Our unique everlasting flowers and wildflowers are ideal for ornamental landscaping and crafts. Use home-grown dried flowers and the book, [The Scented Room](#), to make a variety of potpourris, dried flower arrangements, wreaths, and more. Packet size **A** contains approx. 150 seeds unless otherwise noted. Packet **B** size is about 3 to 4 times the **A** size.

Marketing Perennials

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