

Kentucky Garden Flowers

Zinnia

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Zinnia

Zinnias continue to be favorite flowers for many gardeners in Kentucky. They are easy to grow from seed in the garden. The traditional large flowered *Zinnia elegans* varieties have striking bright colors. Unfortunately, these plants are typically covered with disease about 4 months after they are planted, so plants can look poor in August and September each year. The disease resistant zinnias perform great in Kentucky but the flowers are typically smaller with fewer colors available.

Thread leaf Zinnia – *Zinnia angustifolia* (*Z. haageana*)

Flower Color	Height	Season	Pests	Uses	Propagation
orange, white	10"- 15"	summer	Japanese beetles	borders and edging	seeds

Performance - An excellent small flowered zinnia for Kentucky gardens. The thread leaf zinnia is resistant to all typical zinnia diseases.

Comments - Many gardeners overlook this plant in garden centers, because it doesn't thrive in cooler spring greenhouses.

Varieties – ‘Gold Star’, ‘White Star’, ‘Orange Star’, ‘Crystal White’, ‘Crystal Yellow’



‘Orange Star’, ‘Gold Star’ and ‘White Star’ at trials at Pan American Seed



‘Gold Star’ at UK Arboretum

Common Zinnia – *Zinnia elegans*

Flower Color	Height	Season	Pests	Uses	Propagation
yellow, red, pink, cream and white	8 - 30"	summer	powdery mildew, Japanese beetles, bacterial leaf spot	border, edging and cut flower	seeds

Performance - Zinnias are good annual flowers for Kentucky gardens and are one of the best summer cut flowers. They do well in hot, dry weather. Zinnias should be planted in good garden soil in full sun.

Comments – Harvest cut flowers regularly for indoor use or remove dead flowers regularly to promote more growth and blooms. Diseases are a major problem, especially powdery mildew. Zinnias are a common and successful summer cut flower often available at summer farmers' markets. Zinnias should not be placed in a cooler, like other cut flowers; best post harvest life occurs when plants are held at room temperature or just somewhat cooler.

Varieties - 'Dasher' mix, 'Dreamland' series, 'Peter Pan' series, 'Pulcino' mix, 'Short Stuff' series, 'Thumbelina' mix, 'Zesty' series
cut flowers - 'Benary's Giant' mix, 'Lilliput' mix, 'Oklahoma' series, 'Ruffles' series, 'State Fair' mix



'Big Sun Red'



'Benary Giant Yellow' in mid July



'Zesty White'



'Zesty Pink'



Powdery mildew on zinnia



Leaf spot diseases on zinnia

Zinnia 'Profusion'

Flower Color	Height	Season	Pests	Uses	Propagation
orange, rose-pink, white	15"- 24"	summer	Japanese beetles	borders and edging	seeds

Performance - An outstanding and recommended annual flower for Kentucky. These plants perform best in our hot, dry weather, and, like all Zinnias, are sensitive to frost.

Comments – ‘Profusion’ zinnias were developed from a cross between *Z. elegans* and *Z. angustifolia*. The new hybrid obtains disease resistance from *angustifolia* and larger flowers from *elegans*; these varieties were developed by Sakata Seed America, Inc. The ‘Cherry’ flowers tend to fade as they age and in the heat of the summer.

Varieties - ‘Apricot’, ‘Cherry’, ‘Coral Pink’, ‘Double Cherry’, ‘Fire’, ‘Orange’, ‘White’ – Orange, Cherry and White were All American Selections winners.



‘Profusion Orange’



‘Profusion White’

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