



# Cut Flowers for the Home Garden

With Renfrow Farms  
& Renfrow Hardware

Pressly Williams 07-06-2023

# Today's Topics

Introduction

Types & Categories of Flowers

Planting & Growing Tips

Pests & Disease

Weather Problems

Harvest & Post-Harvest Care

What's Next For Our Farm?

# Renfrow Hardware

120+-year-old family business in  
downtown Matthews

188 N Trade St  
Matthews, NC 28015

Open Wednesdays-Fridays 8am-4pm,  
Closed Saturdays-Tuesdays

[www.RenfrowHardware.com](http://www.RenfrowHardware.com)



# Renfrow Farms

409 West Charles Street  
Matthews, NC 28015

Not open to public except for  
occasional events

[www.RenfrowFarms.com](http://www.RenfrowFarms.com)

Sign up for our weekly Renfrow email  
here:

[www.RenfrowHardware.com/newsletter](http://www.RenfrowHardware.com/newsletter)





How it all began...



How it all began...



Several reasons to grow flowers: Beauty, nature & nourishment



Daffodil 'Replete'; zinnia with butterfly; Sweet Williams adorning a beet salad



# Types of Flowers





Annuals: Bachelor Buttons; Sunflower 'ProCut Gold'; Zinnia 'Benary's Giant Lilac'



Warm-Season Annuals: Zinnia 'Benary's Giant Mix'; Celosia 'Chief Mix'; Marigold



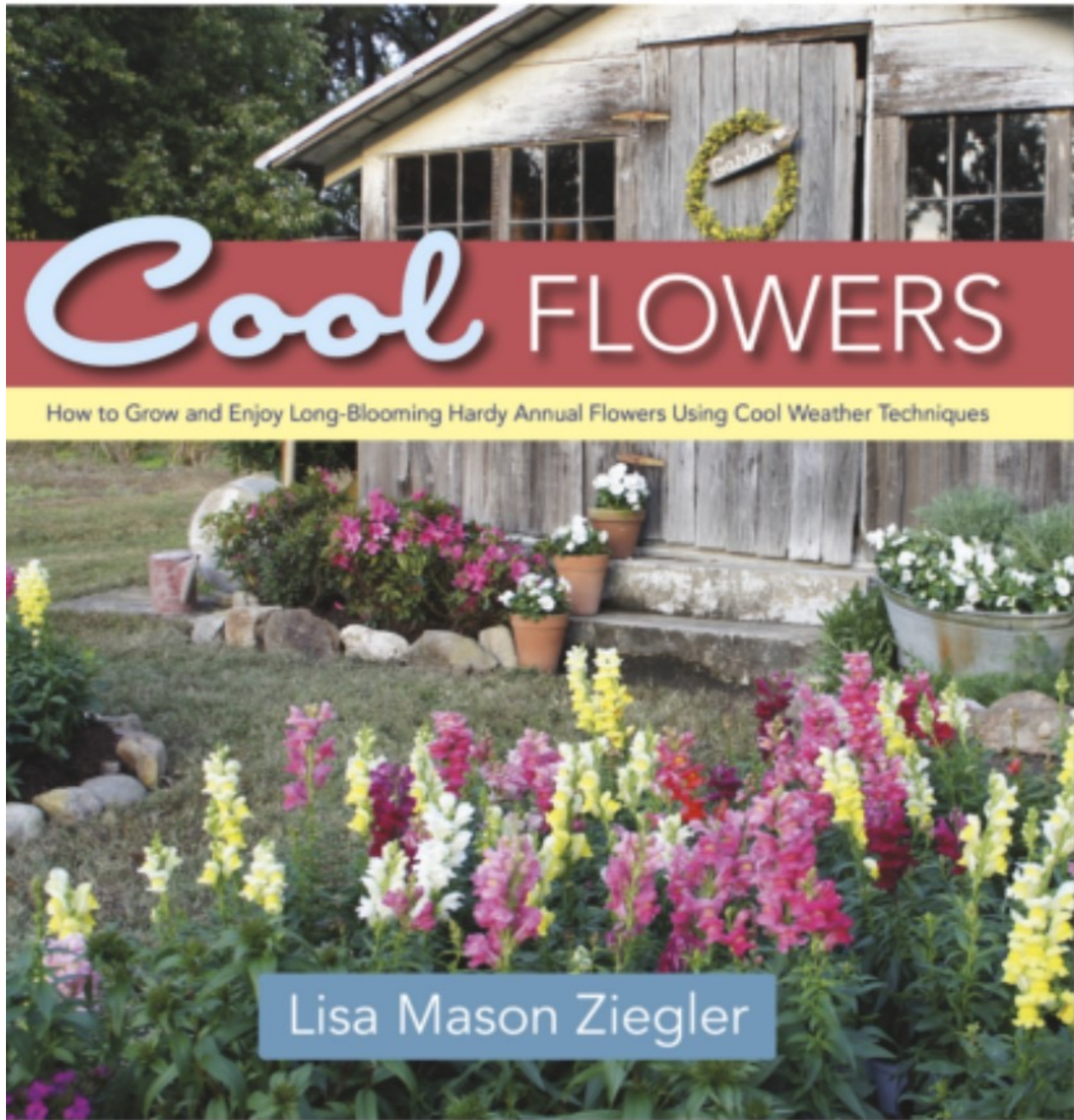
Cool-Season Annuals: Bupleurum, Nigella 'Love in a Mist'; Matricaria (Feverfew)



Cool-Season Annuals: Larkspur, Agrostemma 'Purple Queen'; Ammi (False Queen Anne's Lace)



Biennials: Foxglove; Rudbeckia; Dianthus Sweet William



## Book, Cool Flowers

★★★★★ (72 customer reviews)

\$22.95

Learn how-to grow cool-season hardy annuals flowers that are the most beautiful spring bloomers. Are you a flower farmer? Learn even more about growing these flowers and more [here](#)

**Includes the Cool Flower Book Study & free shipping!**

[View the The Cool-Season Flower Chronicles Series](#)

In stock

1

Add to cart

SKU:

<https://thegardenersworkshop.com/product/book-cool-flowers-by-lisa-mason-ziegler/>



Herbaceous Perennials: Intersectional Hybrid Peony 'Bartzella'; Achillea (yarrow)





Woody Perennial Shrubs: Viburnum, Ruscus, Camellia



Foliages: Helleborus (Lenten Rose); herbs; grains and grasses



Foliages: A very creative category - test out all your shrubs & garden greenery



Plants: Lisianthus; Heirloom Chrysanthemums; Lisianthus plugs



**Bulbs, Corms, Tubers &  
Rhizomes**



**Bulbs: Tulips; Tuberose**



Bulbs: *Hippeastrum* 'St Joseph's Lily'; Dutch Iris; Lily Longiflorum Asiatic (LA) 'Royal Sunset'



March 2020; Tulips are treated differently in home garden landscape than in flower farming





**Corms: Anemone; Ranunculus**

How To Grow Anemone Flowers Article:

<https://education.teamflower.org/learn/growing/ssl/anemone-growing-tips?rq=anemone>



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Tubers: Dahlias



Tubers: Dahlias



Rhizomes: Bearded Iris; Calla Lily



Nourishment: Crimson Clover for tea; Pansies and Violas for salads and desserts



Nature & Native Plants



*Pycnanthemum muticum* 'Short-Toothed Mountain Mint'



# Fast Five Chart

*a starting point for some of the primary functions of  
or types of flowers that we grow at the farm and love*

Easy for Beginners	Edible	Pollinator Attractant	Poisonous	Perennials/ Biennials
Bachelor Button	Bachelor Button	Ammi Queen Anne's Lace	Delphinium	Feverfew
Dutch Iris	Calendula	Marigold, "single" petal type	Euphorbia* 'Snow on the Mountain'	Mountain Mint
Marigold	Nasturtium	Mountain Mint	Foxglove	Peony
Sunflower	Pansy/Viola	Oregano	Larkspur	Rudbeckia triloba
Zinnia	Sweet William	Yarrow	Milkweed*	Yarrow

A photograph of a field with young green seedlings growing in reddish-brown soil. The seedlings are arranged in rows, and the soil is cracked and contains some dry organic matter. The text "Planting & Growing" is overlaid in the center in a large, white, sans-serif font.

# Planting & Growing



# Seed Starting Supplies

- Seeds need soil, heat, and moisture to germinate
- After germination they need “eye-hurting-strength” light
- Leggy plants? Not enough light



# Seed Sowing Needs

- Seeds in soil approximately twice the depth of the seed size
- Provide ample space between each plant, whether in rows or clustered groupings or scattered seeds
  - Allows for good airflow for disease-prevention
  - Thin out plants if direct-seeded
  - Keep area around young seedlings weeded to prevent competition



# Transplanting Young Plants

- Set out a new plant you've grown or purchased when the roots fill out the pot
- Water in deeply



# Fertilizer

- Espoma Plant-Tone Organic fertilizer is almost exclusively what we use at the farm
- Don't overcomplicate things - most flowers can use a broad all-purpose garden fertilizer that you already have on-hand for your vegetables
- Compost is always a good idea for improving your soil
- Get your soil tested and make further amendments as necessary



# Mulching

- Composted leaves act as a fantastic garden mulch





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Beware of over-watering: one inch of water per week in the summertime is usually sufficient



Do a droopiness check before worrying about your plants if you see them like this midday.



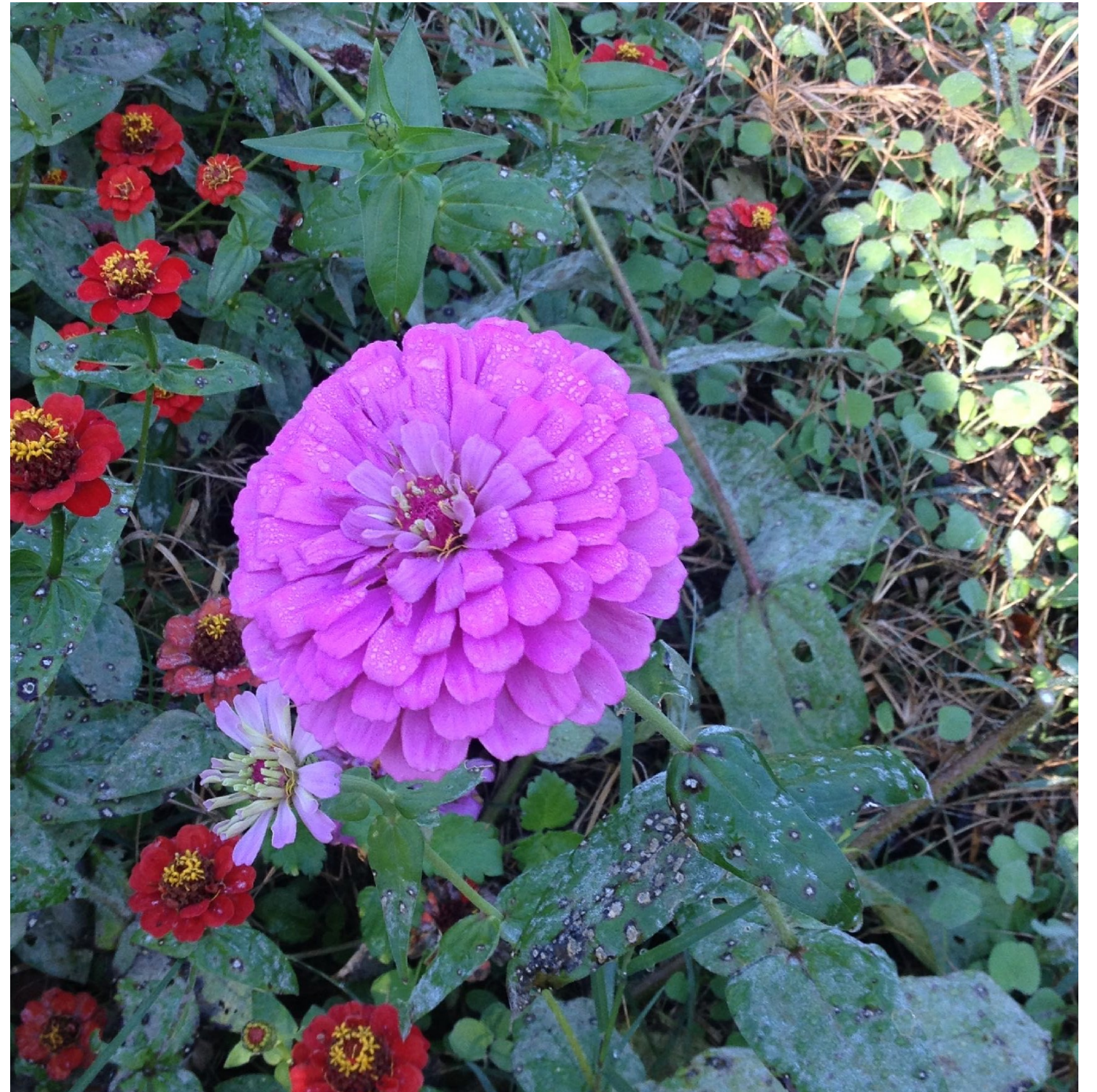
Plants in pots and raised beds will need more frequent watering than in-ground plants



# Pests & Disease

# Disease Help

- Utilize an amazing resource - the Help Desk of the of Union County Extension Master Gardeners volunteers - or the similar services of the Master Gardeners in surrounding counties
- [https://  
www.mastergardenersunioncounty  
nc.org/](https://www.mastergardenersunioncountync.org/)



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# Beneficial Insects

- Ladybugs eat aphids, whiteflies, spider mites, and other small pests
- Praying Mantis have a very varied diet which includes many garden pests
- There are other options as well, but these two are usually readily available







# Weather Problems



Hurricane Florence, September 2018



Rain, frost, intense cold



Drought

# Flower Harvest & Care



# Flower Harvest & Care Tips

- Harvest in the cool of morning and/or evening in summertime; flowers are less picky in the spring and fall
- Use **CLEAN** & sharp snips/shears/scissors
- Harvest into **CLEAN** bucket and/or vase of water
- Remove **ALL** leaves that will touch or be submerged in water in bucket and vase



# Flower Harvest & Care Tips

- Change the water every few days and give the stems a fresh trim
- Keep cut flowers in cool place out of direct sunlight
- 'Flower food' is optional but can improve vase life; cleanliness is most economical



# Flower Harvest & Care Tips

- Some flowers stems make the water dirty and need fresh water more frequently
- Occasionally flowers won't mix well together in the vase (ie daffodils excrete a sap from the stems that tulips dislike)





# Flower Harvest & Care Tips

- Flowers have varying lengths of vase life
- Ideal harvest stages vary significantly between flower varieties; it takes time to learn their many nuances
  - Zinnia “wiggle test”
  - Peony “marshmallow bud”





**What's Next For Our Farm?**



One Week's Peony Harvest Spring 2023; white variety is 'Duchesse De Nemours'



The transition of the 'Coral Sunset' and 'Coral Charm' peony blossoms in one week

# My Favorite Flower Seed & Plant Sources

## **Seeds:**

Renfrow Hardware

Johnny's Seeds

Sunflower Selections for ProCut series and several other great sunflowers

GeoSeed (for large scale growers)

## **Peonies:**

We sell bare-root peonies in October-November each fall.

I haven't bought peonies from any online retail supplier but there are lots of options

## **Dahlias:**

Swan Island Dahlias in Oregon (see image →)

## **Heirloom Chrysanthemums:**

King's Mums

## **Cut Flower Plugs:**

Renfrow's sells "cool flowers", some annuals, biennials & perennials in September (feverfew, scabiosa,

Renfrow's sells warm-weather plugs in the spring (celosia, ageratum, gomphrena, others)



# My Favorite Flower Books & Websites

## **Books:**

**The Flower Farmer** by Lynn Byczynski

**Cool Flowers** *“How to Grow and Enjoy Long-Blooming Hardy Annual Flowers Using Cool Weather Techniques”* by Lisa Mason Ziegler

**Vegetables Love Flowers** by Lisa Mason Ziegler

**Fresh from the Field Wedding Flowers** by Lynn Byczynski & Erin Benzakein

## **Websites:**

[www.growingformarket.com](http://www.growingformarket.com)

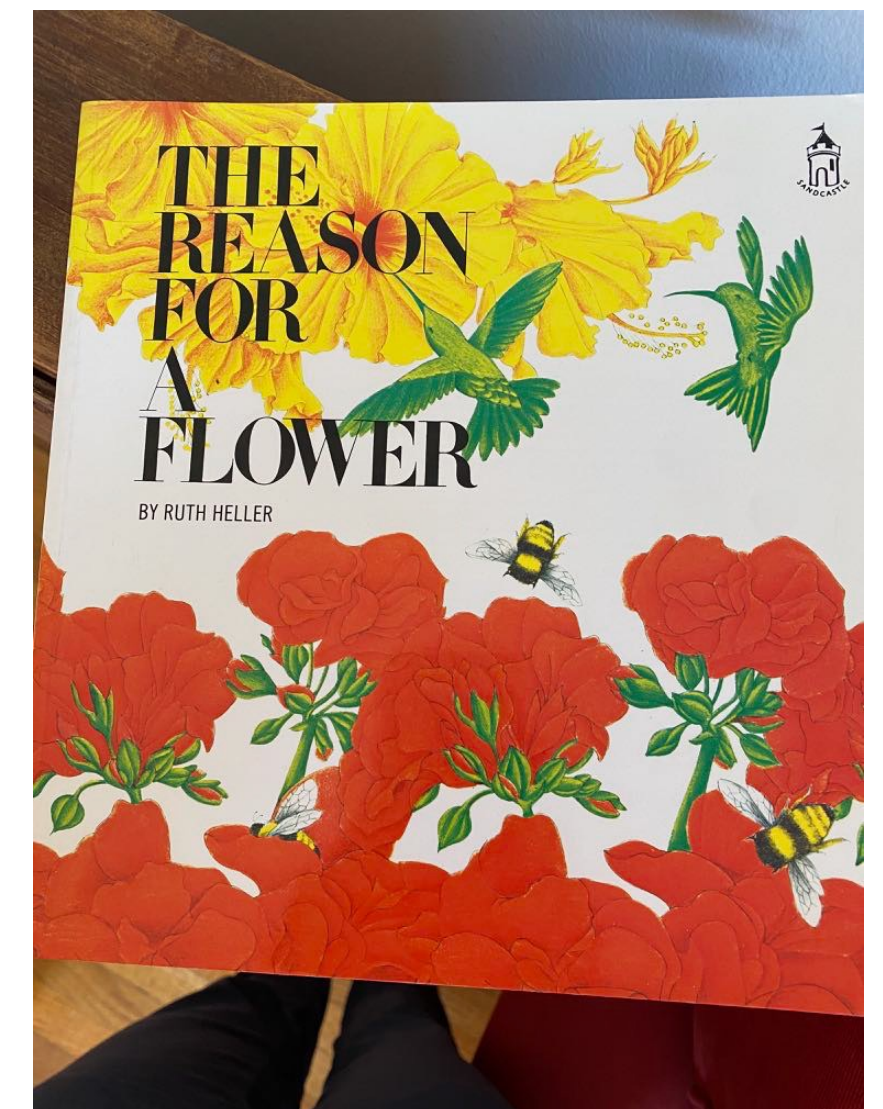
<https://thegardenersworkshop.com/>

[www.floretflowers.com](http://www.floretflowers.com)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/flowerfarmers> (many members of this FB group are gardeners and not really farmers; helpful topics here around specific plant growing conditions, diseases, etc)

## **Books for Children:**

**The Reason For A Flower** by Ruth Heller



# An Invaluable Professional Organization for Flower Farmers of any level:

*Visiting my flower  
farming mentor,  
Leah Cook of  
Wild Hare Farm in  
Cedar Grove, NC*



*Association  
of*  
Specialty  
Cut Flower  
Growers

[www.ascfg.org](http://www.ascfg.org)

Thank you so much for your time! Any questions?



'ProCut Orange' Sunflower; 'Benary's Giant Red' Zinnia; 'Sea Shells' and 'Double Click' Cosmos