

## Kentucky Garden Flowers

# Geraniums

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Geraniums may be the most common and most well known bedding plant in Kentucky. This plant has been grown in pots indoors and outdoors for more than 100 years in the state. Geraniums produce large flower heads with red, white, pink or lavender colors and the plants flower continuously as long as they are grown in full sun. Plants are easy to grow; they just need fertilizer regularly to produce large leaves and well-branched stems.

### Geranium, Zonal Geranium, Bedding Geranium – *Pelargonium x hortorum*

Flower Color	Height	Season	Pests	Uses	Propagation
red, pink, salmon, white, rose	12" - 30"	all summer	bacterial wilt, gray mold, root and stem rots	border, bedding, containers, hanging baskets, house plant	seed, cuttings

**Performance** – Geranium is grown as an annual in Kentucky gardens and grows best in full sun with moist, well-drained soil. This is one of the most popular and well known flowers for patio and porch containers. Although they are relatively drought tolerant, they need regular watering and fertilizing for normal growth.

**Comments** – Geraniums have been used in homes and gardens for hundreds of years. They flower continuously, they are quite easy to propagate from cuttings and they are relatively pest-free. The typical zonal geranium has been grown from cuttings, but in the 1970s developments were made to produce hybrid geraniums from seed. Seed geraniums were quite popular in the 1980s and early 1990s, but more breeding has led to better cultivars from cuttings and they again dominate the market. Newer cultivars are generally shorter and have better branching characteristics and require less growth regulator applications. Zonal geraniums require a soil pH of 6.4 to 6.8 for normal growth.

### Varieties –

Seed - 'Elite' series, 'Glamour' series, 'Maverick' series (Violet), 'Multibloom' series, 'Orbit' series, 'Pinto' series, 'Ringo 2000' series, 'Ripples' series.

Cuttings - Many cultivars are available from many different companies, both patented and non-patented varieties.

Oglevee - <http://www.oglevee.com> - 'Candy' series, 'Patriot' series, 'Melody' series, 'Romance' series and many other cultivars.

Fischer USA - <http://www.fischerusa.com> - 'Rocky Mountain' series, 'Tango' series and many other cultivars.



The 'Americana' cutting geranium series from Goldsmith Seed Co.



'Multibloom' seed geraniums



'Score Violet' seed geranium from Pan American Seed in Kentucky Master Gardener trials.



'Score Appleblossom' seed geranium in Kentucky Master Gardener trials.

**Ivy Geranium, Hanging Geranium – *Pelargonium peltatum***

Flower Color	Height	Season	Pests	Uses	Propagation
red, pink, salmon, white, rose	12" - 30"	all summer	bacterial wilt, gray mold, root and stem rots, spider mites	bedding, containers, hanging baskets	seed, cuttings

**Performance** - Ivy geraniums are grown as an annual in Kentucky gardens. They grow best in partial sun with moist, well-drained soil. These plants have been a common hanging basket plant for spring sales in Kentucky for many years. Unfortunately, they are relatively difficult to maintain through the summer because of our warm summer temperatures. Ivy geraniums are native to the coastal areas around Cape Town, South Africa with a climate similar to coastal California. Beginning in the 1990s, gardeners learned that there are better hanging basket plants than ivy geraniums, so sales and production of these plants has decreased dramatically. These plants prefer cool, sunny situations and we simply do not have this type of weather during most Kentucky summers.

**Comments** - Ivy geraniums have been used in gardens for many years. They flower continuously, they are quite easy to propagate from cuttings and they are relatively pest-free. Traditional ivy geranium varieties are sensitive to cool soil temperatures, high pH soils and spider mites. Newer varieties overcome many of these problems and some varieties are great performers in the landscape as well as in containers. Unfortunately many of these new varieties are not tried by gardeners or growers, because they have had problems with the traditional varieties.

**Varieties –**

Seed - 'Tornado' series, 'Summer Shower' series.

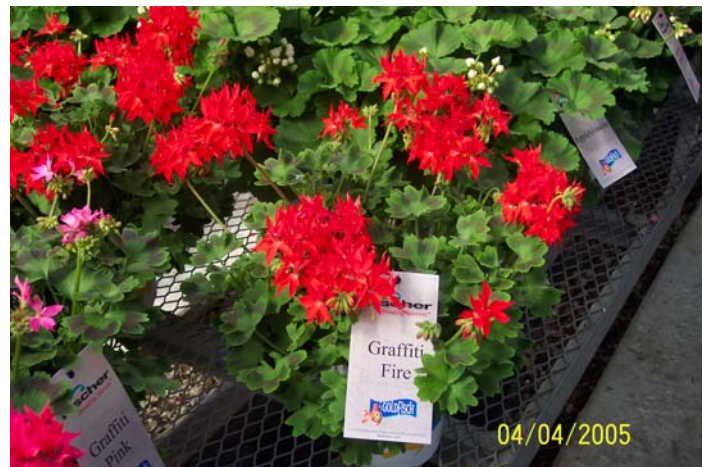
Cuttings - Many cultivars are available from many different companies, both patented and non-patented varieties.

Oglevee - <http://www.oglevee.com> - 'Alpine' series, 'Global' series, 'Standard' series, and many other cultivars.

Fischer USA - <http://www.fischerusa.com> - 'Cascade' series, 'Blizzard' series, and many other cultivars.



Lavender and white single flowered ivy geraniums at trials at Fischer USA.



Star flowered 'Graffiti Fire'

**Regal or Martha Washington Geraniums**

Flower Color	Height	Season	Pests	Uses	Propagation
pink, white, lavender, red, purple	12" - 24"	spring	gray mold	house plant, patio container	cuttings

**Performance** – Regal geraniums are grown as annuals in Kentucky gardens. They have spectacular flower colors when grown properly and are typically used as house plant or given as a gift. They grow best in containers in full sun with well drained, moist soil.

**Comments** – These plants are difficult to grow but beautiful. They need to be grown under cool temperatures and do not flower unless temperatures are below 55°F. These plants are grown by geranium fanciers and do best in a cool hobby greenhouse.



'Elegance' regal geraniums from Oglevee.

### Scented Geraniums

Flower Color	Height	Season	Pests	Uses	Propagation
pink, white, lavender	12" - 24"	summer	gray mold, white fly	house plant, patio container, border, herb	cuttings

**Performance** – Scented geraniums are grown as annuals in Kentucky gardens. They grow best in containers in full sun with well drained, moist soil. These plants are easy to grow and quite drought tolerant. Pinch the stems frequently to promote a bushy habit.

**Comments** – The leaves of these highly fragrant and aromatic plants are used to flavor tea, jellies and sugars. The dried leaves can be added to potpourris. Be sure to place these plants in locations where they will be touched to release the wonderful fragrance.

#### Varieties –

Lemon Geranium – *Pelargonium crispum*

Nutmeg Geranium – *Pelargonium* 'Fragrans'

Rose Geranium, Sweet-scented Geranium – *Pelargonium* 'Graveolens'

Coconut Geranium – *Pelargonium grossularioides*

Apple Geranium – *Pelargonium odoratissimum*

Peppermint Geranium – *Pelargonium tomentosum*