



Heat and Hanging Baskets – Not A Marriage Made In Heaven

This is about the time of year when we wonder why we planted so many flowers! Primarily heat stress, lack of fertilizer and intermittent missed watering schedules make for bleak looking hanging baskets. The key to successful container gardening is consistent watering and plenty of fertilizer. There is such little soil in the pots and with constant watering, very few nutrients stay in the soil. Because the soil is nutritionally depleted, the plants – which have become very large by this time of year – lack the adequate nutrients to remain viable. Also, the plants have grown so long that the center or top of the basket can become sparse looking. Here are some tips to breath new life into your hanging baskets for continued enjoyment for the remainder of the season.

Trim

In the early morning or late evening, cut off excess foliage hanging beyond 3 inches past the bottom of the pot. Lightly mist the plant with water. This will stimulate more growth from the top of the plant yielding a fuller look.

Water

Water when soil is dry to touch and then saturate soil. It is good when the water



runs through the drainage holes in the container because it washes out any salts that have built up in the soil and you know that you have saturated the soil. When temperatures exceed 90 degrees, twice daily watering is a must.

Fertilizer

Feed **every week** with one of the following: Peter's Super Blossom Booster 10-50-10 or Shultz Bloom Plus 10-54-10 (1 TBSP to 1 gallon of water).

1. Be sure to fully water each container with clear water.
2. Water again with the fertilizer/water mixture.

If the soil is too dry the fertilizer and water mixture will just run out the bottom.

In Addition . . .

Due to more air circulation and limited root space, hanging baskets and outdoor planters will dry out fast; so check them frequently, (more than once a day when it is hot). The hotter it is, the harder it is for a plant to tolerate long periods of time exposed to the sun. Also, when temperatures are over 95 degrees, some plants will stop blooming in order to survive. Remember, it is warmer closer to the house because the air circulation is limited and the heat is reflected off of

the wall. After it cools down the plants will again begin to bloom.

All plants will flower more often if the old flowers are physically removed. This is real beneficial to Ivy Geraniums, Fuchsias, Lantana, Verbena and Marigolds. To remove old flowers, just follow the flower stem down to where it attaches to a branch and then pinch it off.

Check weekly for insects because you never know when these critters will decide to make your plant their next home!

Enjoy Your Plants!

If you have any questions, please email me at jim@gainans.com