

# Cut Flower Kit for Market Growers

Congratulations on your interest in growing cut flowers for profit! Growing beautiful blooms is a sure way to attract new customers and grow your business.

In this kit, we've featured proven varieties of cosmos, sunflowers, and zinnias.

Varieties included:

**Sunflowers:** 1,000 seeds each  
'Sunbright' (F1)  
'Sunrich Orange' (F1)  
'ProCut® Orange' (F1)

**Cosmos:** 5,000 seeds  
'Versailles Mix'

**Zinnia:** 500 seeds  
'Benary's Giant Mix'

*(Varieties subject to change.)*

Includes:

- Growing Instructions
- Sample Planting Guide
- The Basics of Cut Flower Growing for Profit

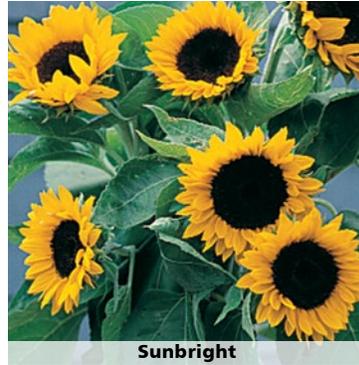
# Cut Flower Kit Growing Guide



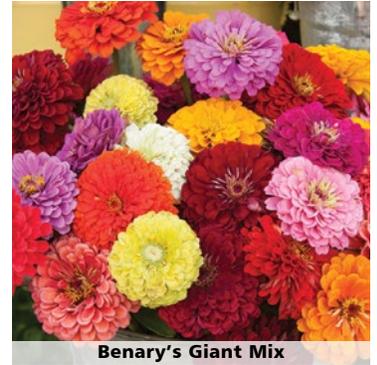
ProCut® Orange



Sunrich Orange



Sunbright



Benary's Giant Mix

## Growing, Harvesting & Marketing Sunflowers

(*Helianthus annuus*)

**1712 PROCUT® ORANGE (F1)** is an early blooming variety, ready for harvest in 50–60 days. Tall and strong, this single-stem is a nice commercial cut. Pollenless. Day length neutral. Ht. 60–72”.

**1314 SUNRICH ORANGE (F1)** is a single-stem, pollenless sunflower. Ideal for cut flower production. 4–6” golden yellow ray blooms with black disk. Ready 10–14 days before Sunbright in 60–70 days. Ht. 48–60”.

**1307 SUNBRIGHT (F1)** is a vigorous, uniform, high-quality flower. Produces 4–6” blooms with short petals and rigid stems. Golden yellow rays with a dark brown disk. Pollenless. Single stem. Ht. 60–72”. Ready for harvest in 70–80 days.

**NOTE:** “Day length neutral” means that day length does not directly influence flowering. These varieties do fine under short days.

Sunflowers normally produce a large amount of pollen. Pollenless sunflower varieties have been specially developed for the cut flower industry and for florists who don’t want to contend with pollen covering their bouquets and vases.

**SEEDING:** Direct sow 500 seeds in a 250’ row (or a block of five 50’ rows). Succession planting at 10–14-day intervals will extend harvest as can planting a number of varieties that bloom at different times. In this kit we’ve included enough seed for two plantings of each sunflower variety.

**SPACING:** Plants should be 6” apart.

**HARVEST:** Cut when the petals are just lifting off the face of the flower. Leaves should be stripped prior to cutting. Cut at approx. 36” from the head down. They should be transported in clean water from the field to an area to be trimmed and bunched. Flowers should be bunched in groups of 3 or 5 with similar size heads. Tie or elastic band bunches in two places: directly under the heads and approximately 4” from the bottom of the evenly cut flowers. Sunflowers can be kept in a cooler to preserve freshness.

## Growing, Harvesting & Marketing Zinnias

(*Zinnia spp.*)

**1346 BENARY’S GIANT MIX** is a vigorous all-season producer that holds up well in summer rain and heat all over the country. Densely petaled blooms are up to 6” across. Colors include: deep red, orange, carmine rose, coral, wine, purple, bright pink, white, salmon rose, scarlet, and golden yellow. 75–90 days to harvest.

**NOTE:** All zinnias need good air circulation to minimize occurrence of powdery mildew.

**SEEDING:** Zinnias are easily direct seeded but can also be transplanted. If you are direct seeding, you can use the cucumber plate of an EarthWay® seeder. 1 oz. of seed will sow 500’. If transplanting, be careful not to let the seedlings get root bound as they dislike root disturbance and may revert to single flowers. Flower production will continue until frost as long as you continue to cut new blooms. Zinnias prefer warm temperatures. Succession planting, every 2–3 weeks, will give you healthier plants at harvest time. Please refer to cultural info on back of packet for further instructions.

**SPACING:** Plants should be 9–12” apart.

**HARVEST:** 75–90 days to flower. Cut before blooms fully open. Stems should be firm. Cut stems as long as possible but leave enough nodes to ensure future production. Store in clean water treated with floral preservative. Zinnias do not need refrigeration. Avg. 20–30 stems per plant, though this can vary depending on how long you cut your stems.

**MARKETING:** Zinnias can be bunched and sold separately by color or variety or they can be used in mixed bouquets. Zinnias look very nice in 10-stem bunches. You may consider including a packet of flower food with your zinnias. A product like FloraLife® Fresh Flower Food will significantly increase vase life.



FloraLife® Clear 300  
#9691



Versailles Mix



Dara



Autumn bouquet with Frosted Explosion

## Growing, Harvesting & Marketing Cosmos

(*Cosmos bipinnatus*)

**1095 VERSAILLES MIX** cosmos are an easy-to-grow favorite. Will produce under short days. Strong stems can withstand considerable handling. Blooms are 2 1/2" across. Ht. 40–48." Blooms are ready in 90–110 days.

**SEEDING:** Direct seed or transplant.

**SPACING:** Plants should be spaced 9–12" apart.

**HARVEST:** 90–110 days to flower. Cut when petals on the first flower are just opening. Avg. 15–20 stems per plant but varies depending on how long you cut your stems.

**MARKETING:** Can be sold in bunches or mixed with other flowers. Cosmos don't store as long as other varieties. Be sure to cut right before sale and store in a cool location.

## Bouquet Fillers

The following products are not included in this kit, but you may want to consider planting some of these varieties to add beauty and volume to your bunches.

### Amaranthus

**3786 RED SPIKE** *Amaranthus cruentus*  
Ideal color and form for late summer and fall arrangements. More useful than other upright types because of its gracefully arched, feathery plumes. 48–60" tall. 65–75 days to harvest.

### Ammi

**1968 DARA** *Daucus carota var. sativus*  
Attractive 3–5" lacy umbels atop strong, sturdy, upright stems. Flowers in shades of dark purple, pink, or white. Highly productive with 7–15 stems per plant. Long lasting in bouquets.

### 1034 WHITE DILL

*Ammi majus*  
Plants bear numerous lacy flower heads that can be used in all sorts of bouquets. 65–75 days to harvest.

### Bupleurum

**1045 GREEN GOLD** *Bupleurum rotundifolium*  
An elegant green filler that can be used with flowers of any color and has a long vase life. 80–90 days to harvest.

### Dill (Organic)

**920G BOUQUET** *Anethum graveolens*  
Most widely grown dill. Good seed and leaf yields at a height of 38–42" tall. 40–45 days to leaf harvest.

### Ornamental Grass

#### 1855 FROSTED EXPLOSION

*Panicum elegans*

Airy flower plumes seem to burst from the center of the plant. An excellent filler for bouquets, and a striking bedding plant when several are planted together. 84–112 days to harvest.

For more varieties that add texture, interest, and depth, visit [Johnnyseeds.com/bouquet-fillers](http://Johnnyseeds.com/bouquet-fillers)

## General Tips for Successfully Selling Your Flowers: Presentation Is Important!

You'll want to make sure that your flowers are properly prepared and attractive for your customers. After harvest, flowers can be stored in clean buckets. Scrub and bleach your buckets before each use. Clean buckets and containers are the most important factor in giving your flowers the longest life possible. Fresh water and a floral preservative such as FloraLife® are also key components. Water should be changed daily in any containers you are using to store cut flowers. Bouquets and bunches should be easy for your customers to access. You may choose to present your bouquets in flower sleeves before purchase, or you can have flower sleeves at the ready to quickly wrap a customer's purchase. Dropping a packet of FloraLife in the sleeve, along with a word to the customer about the benefits of proper care, will go a long way in keeping the flowers healthy and your customers happy. Make sure your display area is neat and keep your buckets and containers tidy at all times. Buckets that are full are more attractive than sparse ones, so keep your buckets well-stocked.



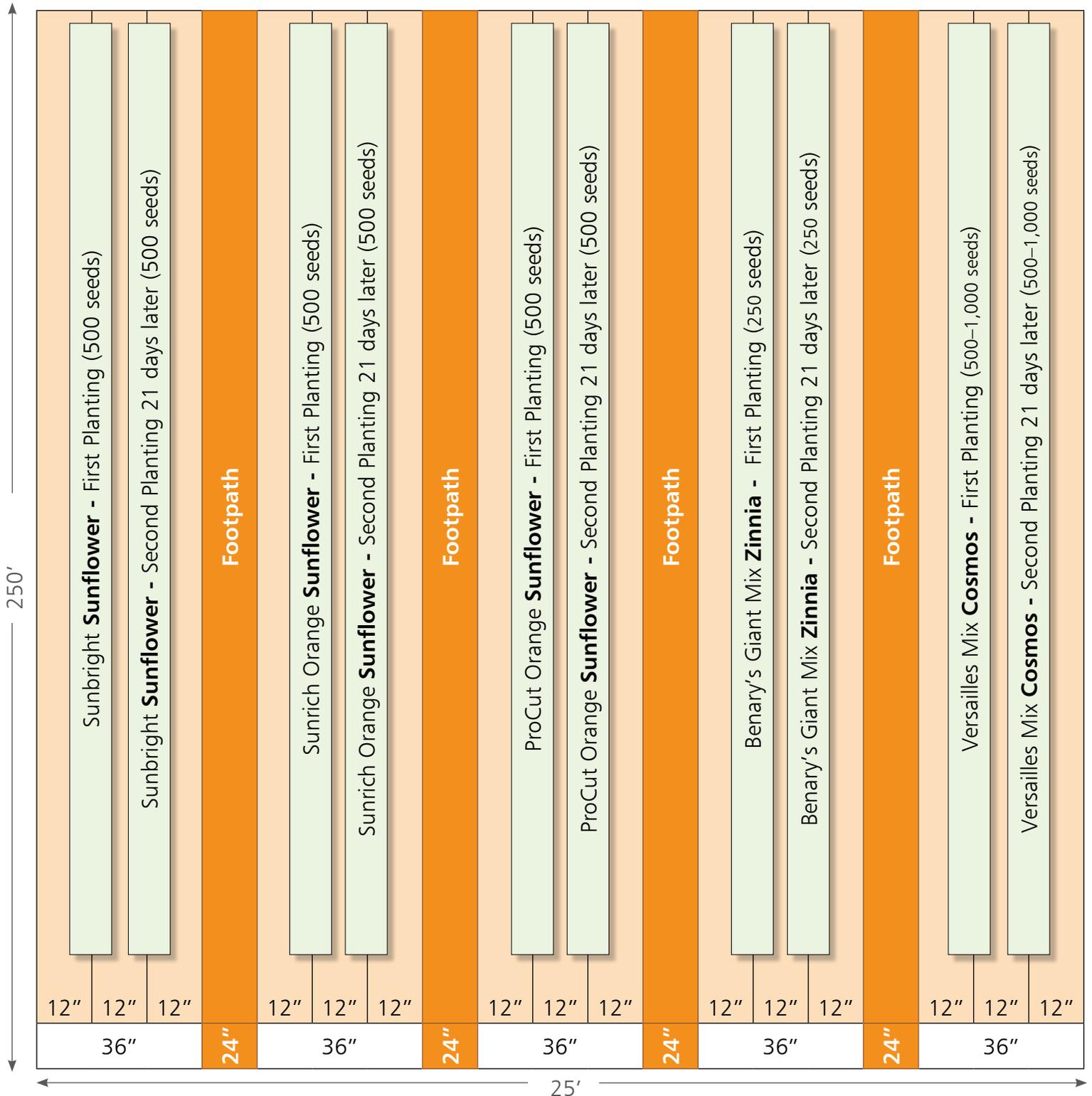
### MORE ONLINE

For all our cut flower supplies, including flower buckets, protective sleeves, and our Floral Stem Cutter, visit [Johnnyseeds.com/cut-flower-supplies](http://Johnnyseeds.com/cut-flower-supplies)

Best of luck as you begin to grow and market your own cut flowers! If you need assistance or have questions, call Johnny's at 877-564-6697.

# Cut-Flower Plot

This is an example of how you can set up a quarter-acre of cut-flower production using the seeds included in this kit.



# The Basics of Growing Cut Flowers for Profit

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Why grow cut flowers?

Growers may be reluctant to try growing cut flowers because they think it is difficult and time consuming. The reality, however, is that cut flowers can be an incredibly profitable crop, especially for those growing on small acreage. The initial investment in growing cut flowers is comparatively small, and you can often make a good return on your efforts in a single season.

### What will cut flowers add to my existing operation?

Cut flowers offer the opportunity to expand your market. You can sell flowers at the farmers' market or a roadside stand. U-pick flower operations are increasingly popular. And, many restaurants where you already deliver produce may be interested in fresh flower displays. It is also possible to sell flowers to wholesale and retail florists, as well as hotels and inns.



### What flowers are good for a first-time flower grower?

Start with cuts that can be direct seeded (direct seeding is simpler and less time-consuming than transplanting) and are easy to grow. You'll also want to start with varieties that provide high-density yields, are easy to harvest, and have a long harvest period and long vase life. Popular common annuals to consider include sunflowers, zinnias, and cosmos.

### Should I just grow one type of flower?

Unless you have a market for just one type of flower, it is usually less risky to try several different types of flower crops. After only one year you should have a good idea of what is popular and will sell in your area.



### What should I think about before starting a cut-flower program?

Some questions to consider include: What markets do you think will work best for you? Are your customers interested in flowers? How many other cut-flower growers are in your area? Have you talked with your local Cooperative Extension about growing cut flowers? Have you familiarized yourself with the cultural needs of the flowers you plan to grow?

### Where can I get more information?

There are many excellent books available on growing cut flowers. *The Flower Farmer* by Lynn Byczynski is excellent, and Allan Armitage's book, *Specialty Cut Flowers* is also a good resource. The Association of Specialty Cut Flower Growers is another source of information. Visit [www.ascfg.org](http://www.ascfg.org) to learn more. Johnny's is here for you, too, with a Flower Grower's Library containing over 200 learning resources and a knowledgeable call center team ready to answer your questions!