

## Growing Spectacular Hanging Baskets and Showcasing Horticultural Excellence

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### INTRODUCTION

Under the Research and Horticulture Department at Gardens by the Bay, a team of growers produce novel and spectacular plants and flowers to be showcased in cooled conservatories. Singapore, a non-agricultural county, has limited options for purchasing finished flowering plant material. To mitigate supply and delivery risks, and to showcase our horticultural excellence, the team of growers produce plants in glasshouses throughout the year for breath taking floral displays.

### Growing Facilities

Located at the Gardens, 9 state-of-the-art glasshouses equipped with air conditioning, shade systems and photoperiod lighting enhance 3,000 m<sup>2</sup> of premier growing space. Singapore's equatorial location provides outdoor conditions that consist of high daily temperatures, high humidity and day neutral photoperiod.

Our air-conditioned glasshouses with photoperiod lighting provide the team with

cooler temperatures that are necessary for our herbaceous flowering plant material. These glasshouses are also used for orchid collection and breeding, plant production, flower trials, quarantine, and imported plants holding areas.



**Figure 1.** Part of the growing facilities at Gardens by the Bay.

## **Producing Spectacular Hanging Baskets**

Logistically, importing hanging baskets can be costly and often results negatively on overall plant quality. Producing hanging baskets within our growing facilities allows for greater control on quality and helps the growers to achieve the necessary specs for our in-house end users and customers.

### **Production Goals**

In order to achieve a desirable final product, we strive to reach goals that are driven by our carefully curated standard operating procedures. Having a structured process in place ensures uniformity and quality. Schedules are created with the production tasks and growing times in mind to finish the hanging baskets for our internal customers and floral designers. With the partnership and collaboration of international breeders we are able to produce high quality with the newest genetics available on the market. The use of numerous plant growth habits, forms and textures gives us the freedom to create combinations that are difficult to procure and not available in the marketplace.

### **Keys to Growing Spectacular Hanging Baskets**

Before a production begins the Research and Horticulture growers will carefully plan what is required to successfully grow hanging baskets. Spacing, grow time calendars, and culture guidelines are carefully drafted and implemented prior to the beginning of production. The cultural guidelines include substrate needs, pot size, plant material and quantity, moisture management, nutritional

programs, photoperiod requirements and pest and disease programs. Having a detailed plan in place before production begins allows for a smooth growing season.



**Figure 2.** An example of a finished hanging basket

### **The Hanging Gardens**

The Flower Dome, a glass biome that replicates the cool-dry climate of the Mediterranean, hosts 7 annual changing floral displays each year at Gardens by the bay. In September 2020 the 1<sup>st</sup> ever hanging basket display, “The Hanging Gardens”, will be showcased at the Gardens. The Research and Horticulture growers will be supporting the show by producing 1,000 – 40 cm baskets of spectacular flowering material for the floral designer. This opportunity to showcase our horticultural excellence will be on display for all of our local and international visitors to admire.