

# GROWERTALKS

## Culture Notes

2/27/2014

### Surdiva Scaevolas Shine In Summer Programs

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Suntory has transformed one of the most heat-tolerant bedding plants by making scaevolas more manageable to grow and maintain. Native to Australia and Polynesia, scaevola is grown as an annual, but is a perennial by nature. While the native species has a wild, rangy habit, Surdivas have a mounded, semi-trailing habit, producing distinctive fan-shaped flowers on short terminal spikes. While growers used to have to rely on a lot of pinching to keep scaevolas in check, Surdivas are naturally compact.

The three colors—Blue, Light Blue and White—are very uniform and fill out containers nicely. For 2015, Suntory is introducing Surdiva White Improved and a new Surdiva Variegated Blue with variegated foliage to bring new interest to landscapes, containers and baskets.

Surdiva scaevolas are recommended for 4-in. production, window boxes and baskets. They're easy to grow and excellent in combination plantings. For a striking, heat-tolerant blue-and-yellow combination, try mixing Surdiva Blue with Suntory's Silver Leaf Yellow chrysocephalum. Both plants are drought tolerant, making them ideal for low-maintenance situations.

#### General culture

Rooted cuttings should be planted as soon as possible into 4-in. pots or larger. Use a well-drained peat/perlite mix with a pH of 5.6 to 6.0 and maintain a substrate EC of 2.0. In addition to liquid fertilizer, slow-release fertilizer is recommended with longevity of three to four months. Water plants prior to wilting and allow substrate to dry out between waterings to reduce the risk of root rot.

Extra iron applications may be required to promote good leaf color. Apply as iron sulphate drenches (avoid foliage contact) or iron chelate sprays or drenches. Purpling of the foliage can be a result of low phosphorous and is more prevalent in some colors. Moderate or high levels of phosphorous can cause yellow-red coloring in older foliage.

## Plant growth regulators

The use of growth regulators on this crop is not necessary. Pinching can encourage the correct shape and act as a form of growth control. B-Nine (paclobutrazol) drench and Sumagic (uniconazole) work well on scaevola.

## Crop timing

4-in. pots—Six to seven weeks with one liner and one pinch

6-in. pots—Seven to eight weeks with one liner and two pinches

10-in. baskets—12 to 15 weeks with three liners and two to three pinches

Less pinching is required when plants are grown cool.

## Pests & diseases

Monitor plants for whiteflies, thrips, leaf miners, aphids and mites. Prevent Botrytis, Rhizoctonia and Pythium. A broad-spectrum fungicide drench is recommended after planting. **GT**

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## Choose plants that perform!

Surdiva scaevolae are capturing attention and recognition at leading university trials.

**Surdiva Light Blue**—2013 and 2012 Prairie Star Winner, Kansas State University and 2011 Classic City Award, University of Georgia

**Surdiva Blue**—2011 Top Performer, Dallas Arboretum

**Surdiva series**—2011 Best Scaevolae, Penn State University

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## More production pointers

Got a question about your vegetative annuals? Suntory Flowers has developed useful digital resources with busy growers in mind.

**Grower's Guide App for iPads**—Convenient and portable, this is where you can find complete cultural information for the entire Suntory catalog. It also includes a video library and links to YESS! marketing solutions. Sort crops by temperature, light and fertility requirements. View crop times at a glance. Customize by choosing the plants you grow and sell.

**Mobile Sites for Smartphones**—Prefer your phone to an iPad? Suntory has developed phone-friendly mobile sites that allow you to check production information when you need it. Go to [m.suntorycollection.com](http://m.suntorycollection.com) and choose the Grower or Gardener menu. You can use the gardening content to arm retail employees with the knowledge to help customers on the spot!

**Video Channel**—Suntory has developed nearly 300 informative videos that can be found at [www.suntorycollection.com](http://www.suntorycollection.com) and are also hosted on YouTube. Choose grower or gardener content. Topics include a video catalog, production tips and benefits for growers, planting and care tips for gardeners, and before and after projects in the home makeover channel.

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