

GROWERTALKS

Growing With Griffin

1/1/2018

Incredible, Versatile Cyclamen

Jeanne Svob



Traditionally a premium gift plant, cyclamen is truly one of the most versatile potted plants. From micro to mini to intermediate to standard, there's a cyclamen for virtually every container size—and for nearly every use.

While cyclamen is an elegant and long-lasting gift plant on its own, this crop can also be a colorful addition to Euro baskets and dish gardens. Cyclamen adds color to indoor plantscapes, and in temperate regions, it's often used as a cool-season bedding plant.

If you've been interested in a cyclamen program, but intimidated by its long crop time from seed, consider plugs or liners for a head start. Cyclamen plugs and liners can help you shave weeks or even months off the finish time, enabling you to offer quality plants for any use or occasion.

If you're looking for fragrant flowers, or to offer plants for outdoor use, start with mini and intermediate types. These segments are most likely to be scented and tend to deliver the best weather tolerance.

Pictured: Perfetto Purple Flame Cyclamen, new for 2018. Image courtesy of Syngenta Flowers.

Marvelous minis

Choose miniature cyclamen for 2.5- to 4-in. pots. Here are some outstanding options in the mini category:

- Verano is bred to have good heat tolerance, so it's an excellent choice for summer production and for landscape use. The series has seven new colors for 2018, including three Solar types: Red Solar, Pure White Solar and Deep Neon Flamed Solar, along with a new Solar Mix. The Solar designation indicates varieties with best-of-the-best heat tolerance within the series. Verano Fuji varieties display a prominent and stable flame pattern. Three new Fuji colors are available for 2018: Fuji Neon Pink, Fuji Salmon Pink and Fuji Wine Red.

- The Mini Winter series is bred for winter production and for outdoor use where cool, wet conditions can prevail. Flamed Fuji colors are available here, too, with Fuji Red and Fuji Wine Red being new this season.
- Winfall is an early-blooming mini series with a uniform and tightly mounded habit. Multiple small leaves and central flowering make it ideal for high-density production of quality plants. The series includes eight colors and a mix.
- New in this category is Snowridge Mini. Previously sold as a subset of the Winfall series, Snowridge Mini's four colors feature consistent, stable flame-patterned blooms with thick petals that hold up well through production and transport.

Incredible intermediates

For 4- to 5-in. pots, intermediate types fit the bill. Consider any of these reliable series for your next program:

- Laser is a fast-flowering intermediate for early to mid-season sales. It's also a proven landscape performer. Laser Synchro colors represent the most uniform varieties within the series, for both habit and timing. Choose Laser Synchro when a narrow bloom window is a top priority.
- Snowridge Midi, formerly part of the Laser series, times well with Laser and produces an abundance of flame-patterned blooms. The Snowridge Midi series displays excellent heat and Botrytis tolerance, too.
- Allure isn't the earliest among intermediates, but it's worth the wait. It may take a little longer to flower, but the blooms come in an explosion of color, making Allure perfect for phased growing. For 2018, Allure expands with three new colors—Lavender, Dark Violet Fuji and Wine Red Fuji. The series also picks up an important upgrade with Red Improved.

Superb standards

Standard cyclamen are most often used for potted crop sales in 5.5- to 6-in. pots. The one exception to this rule is Perfetto. Perfetto, a compact standard, has an intermediate plant habit with a standard size flower, so it packs a colorful punch in 4.5- to 5-in. pots. The series spans nine colors and two mixes, including one new color: Purple Flame.

- Meanwhile, back in 5- to 6-in. pot territory, Sierra is a free-flowering series with long-lasting blooms. XL is another solid choice here, with large flowers that are supported by thick, sturdy stems. The XL series has two new additions for 2018: Fuji Red and Flame Mix.
- For an even beefier plant, try Rainier or Mammoth. Both of these series size up nicely for 6- to 7-in. pots and both display large, florist-quality flowers.
- When your program demands something truly unique, take a look at Fleur en Vogue. This novelty series is just the ticket for premium retail sales. Plants are very free flowering and feature umbrella-like blooms with a white calyx that's a beautiful accent on the Pink and Purple varieties. (White is also available.)
- Another stunner to drive impulse sales is the ruffle-flowered Friller series. Friller is up to three weeks earlier and more uniform in flowering than other fringed types.
- In the bicolor category, Snowridge Maxi features stable flame-patterned flowers on upscale-looking plants. Formerly part of the Sierra series and timed to match Sierra Synchro, Snowridge Maxi varieties share the same strong tolerance for heat and Botrytis.

Silver stunners

Silver-leafed cyclamen are a practical pairing of beauty and brawn: They have fantastic retail appeal and deliver excellent landscape performance. You can find silver-leafed options in every size category.

- Among miniatures, you can't go wrong with Picasso or Silverado. The former offers fragrant flowers, while the latter is earlier to flower. Both are solid outdoor performers.

- Intermediate Rembrandt also shines in outdoor applications, with long-lasting flowers. This series offers two improved varieties for 2018 (Dark Violet and Pure White), plus two all-new colors in Light Violet and Orchid.

- Winter Ice fits the standard segment and displays foliage with broad silver bands. It's free flowering with blooms that are supported by sturdy stems.

Consider any of these selections for your next holiday program. Cyclamen make lovely gift plants. Shades of red, accented by silver leaves, are festive alternatives for poinsettia-weary shoppers at Christmastime. They're just as nice on Valentine's Day, too. **GT**

Jeanne Svob is Seed Business Manager for Griffin. She can be reached at jsvob@griffinmail.com.