



Successful Succession Planting

With Dave Dowling

Succession Planting is the method planting the same crop, over, and over, and over, and over, throughout the season so you can harvest the same crop all season.

Succession planting is like compounded interest. The longer you do it, the higher the return.

The most common cut flower that is succession planted is sunflowers. Sunflower seeds are cheap, about \$25.00 per 1,000 seeds, or about 2.5 cents per seed. Sunflowers sell for \$1.00 to \$2.00 per stem, or more, depending on where, and how you sell them. (To a wholesaler, a retail florist, farmers market, etc.)

Example A One planting of 500 sunflower seeds on May 1st:

Stems Sold 400 x \$1.50 \$600.00 (figure you'll sell 80% of what you plant)

Example B Weekly succession planting of 500 sunflowers from April 1st through August 15th (20 weeks)

Start even earlier in March if growing in a high tunnel.

Planting 500 sunflowers every week vs just one planting, can create *\$11,400.00 in increased sunflower sales.*

That is a nice vacation, a new tunnel, *and* a big payment on the mortgage.

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Sunflowers are a crop *everyone* should be succession planting *weekly*.

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How to keep the succession going all season?

Have a set day of the week for sowing seeds, and/or transplanting succession crops. Make planting succession crops a priority. Never miss a succession planting day.

Missed plantings = reduction in sales/income. (No vacation?)

Cut Flowers to Succession Plant

Sunflowers – every week until August 15th.

Crested Celosia/Cockscomb – every three weeks until August 1st.

Wheat Celosia – every three weeks until August 1st

Plume Celosia – every four weeks until August 1st

Zinnias – every three weeks until August 1st

Ageratum – Start a second planting in mid-July by rooting cuttings from the first planting

Gomphrena – Every three weeks until mid-July

China Asters – Sow seeds March 15, and April 15th. Asters started after May 1st need night interruption

lighting from the seedling stage until they are almost the desired height.

Strawflower – Every three weeks until mid-July

Amaranthus – Second planting in early July

Cosmos – Every three weeks until mid-July\

Gladiolus – Every three weeks until mid-July

Marigold – Every three weeks until Mid-July

Snapdragon – Every three weeks until mid-July. Plant Group 4 in March to June, Groups 3 or 4 in July.

Lily – Plant every two or three weeks. Starting three weeks before last spring frost date, until 14 weeks before

first fall frost.

Calla – Plant every four weeks from just after last spring frost, through late July.

