



CARE OF IVY GERANIUMS



A popular and colorful hanging basket for a sunny location is the ivy leaf geranium. Many of the newer and improved hybrid ivy leaf geraniums will tolerate dry and hot conditions. These hanging baskets will be full of color right up to the first frost as long as you follow these simple suggestions.

LOCATION Ivy geraniums thrive best in areas of full sun. They can flower well if given a half day of sun, but shady areas should be avoided. Protect from any chilly springtime winds and temperatures below 40 degrees. Never keep a basket indoors for any long periods of time, since the leaves will start to turn yellow.

LOCATION Ivy geraniums thrive best in areas of full sun. They can flower well if given a half day of sun, but shady

FERTILIZING AND WATERING Ivy geraniums do better under slightly dry conditions. Allow the basket to become slightly dry before watering again. Avoid watering in the afternoon, since wet foliage encourages disease. Ivy-leaf geraniums are heavy feeders, so feed about every ten days with a recommended liquid fertilizer, such as Rapid Grow or Peters. Occasionally an iron deficiency shows up. This problem effects the newer growth; the veins in the leaves remain green while the margins of the leaves turn a light green to white. Adding an iron supplement takes care of the problem. Exposing ivy geraniums to very high temperatures will sometimes 'bleach' the new growth as well. As soon as the plants are returned to a cooler location, this problem disappears.

INSECTS AND DISEASES Few insects bother ivy leaf geraniums. The worst insect is mealy bug which lay cotton like masses of eggs in the leaf axils. Red spider mite could be a problem in hot dry weather. They dislike humidity so an occasional hosing of the foliage will discourage them. Any recommended insecticide will control pests like mealy bugs. During cool and damp conditions, botrytis or gray mold will cause the leaves to yellow and rot. Clean off any old flowers and leaves. Odema which is a blistering of the foliage is caused by watering too late in the day, and keeping the basket too wet.

Ivy geraniums may be brought indoors during the winter, but they bloom rather sporadically. The baskets can be trimmed back next spring and placed outdoors when the danger of frost has passed.