



November 9, 2021

Contributed by Susie Middleton

COOL FLOWERS

A couple of years ago I had the opportunity to hear Lisa Ziegler, cut flower farmer, talk about her unique method for growing what she calls "Cool Flowers." She went on to write a book about it called *Cool Flowers; How to Grow and Enjoy Long-Blooming Hardy Annual Flowers Using Cool Weather Techniques*.

Basically, when she was a new grower, she discovered that you could plant cool-season hardy annuals in the fall and very early spring. Because I just heard her speak, her book went on my shelf only to be rediscovered when I moved.

Here are a few highlights:

- She describes hardy annuals as plants that typically produce a crop of flowers for one year but are hardy enough to survive cold temperatures of winter. She says in many regions these flowers can be planted in the fall to winter-over and bloom in the spring.
- She said to think of pansies as a hardy annual and it will help you understand the concept.
- She says optimal time for fall planting is 6-8 weeks before your first frost date – oops, I'm a little behind with this article as that date on the shore is November 1st.
- Most seeds can be planted directly in the garden.
- Here is a list of some flowers she recommends for Fall Planting outside:
 - Bachelor buttons
 - Bupleureum
 - Canterbury bells
 - Corn Cockle
 - Larkspur
 - Love in a Mist/Nigella
 - Iceland Poppy

So while you are planting your spring bulbs, think of topping them off with some seeds.

