Key elements for success

Why SunPatiens?

The truly unique genetic background of SunPatiens delivers unsurpassed garden performance like no other flowering annual. What makes them so special?

- Strong roots that take hold quickly and are resistant to soil pests
- Plants that thrive under high heat, rain and humidity
- Full-sun to shade versatility
- Continuous, non-stop blooming from Spring through Autumn
- Carefree, low-maintenance plants (low fertilizer requirements, self-cleaning, less weeds)
- Strong insect and disease resistance (not impacted by Downy Mildew, no snails)

Acclimatization

SunPatiens tolerate cooler temperatures better than traditional New Guinea Impatiens, but cooler night temperatures (less than 13°C) can severely restrict growth. When planting in early spring, care should be taken to acclimate the plants for cooler night temperatures to avoid cold damage, (characterized by bronzing foliage). In addition, plants should be exposed to 53,800 lux, 970 mmd, at least one week prior to planting outdoors to condition the plants for higher outdoor light levels.

Getting Started / Soil Preparation

The first key to success with SunPatiens is providing a healthy foundation. Coarse-textured soils (sandy) have good drainage and plenty of oxygen for root development but retain little water. The opposite is true for fine-textured soils (clay) where drainage and aeration are poor, but water is easily retained. Heavy soils may also increase the susceptibility to many soil borne diseases such as Rhizoctonia. Whether the soil bed is coarse or fine textured, SunPatiens will benefit from the addition of organic matter. Consider supplementing the bed with rice hulls, peat moss, pine bark, compost or other organics to improve the balance of oxygen-to-water availability. The percentage of organic matter depends on soil type and local climate, but target a range of 10-20%.

After the addition of organic matter, test the soil to determine nutrient levels and whether pH falls between the recommended levels of 5.8 to 7.0. Soil pH is critical to the uptake of nutrients so adjust accordingly if needed. Prepare beds by removing weeds and applying pre-emergent herbicide if desired. Beds should be tilled to at least 15 to 20 cm to create a uniform soil texture. If possible, crown the bed to eliminate low areas and promote good drainage. Heavy, poorly drained soils are to be avoided.
Fertilizer Programme

SunPatiens are very light feeders and excessive fertilizer may result in reduced flowering and weak stems. If applying liquid fertilizers, use a nitrate based fertilizer at 75 to 100 ppm once every 3 to 4 weeks. Another option is to apply a well-balanced slow release fertilizer at ½ the typical rate. This works best when the granules are incorporated into the soil; especially on sloped areas where heavy rains are frequent.

Irrigation Programme

SunPatiens are vigorous plants with strong root systems. Maintaining adequate soil moisture during the first 2 weeks after transplanting is critical to get roots established and provide the substance to withstand climatic stress. Drip irrigation is highly recommended to provide more frequent watering (2-3 times daily) in the early stages and for more efficient delivery after the plant canopy is established. Once established, adjust irrigation schedule as temperature and light exposure dictate. SunPatiens are very tolerant to wilting and are quick to recover without the loss of flowers or buds should irrigation timing prove inadequate.

Mulching can assist with water retention and to prevent weeds from establishing as well. Similar to other bedding plants, SunPatiens are sensitive to compacted soil from foot traffic. A light mulch can help maintain soil aeration if workers need to access beds for periodic maintenance. When applying mulch be sure to leave a few inches of clearance around the plant base to prevent stem rot.

Light Exposure

As their name suggests, SunPatiens perform extremely well under high light, full-sun conditions. They also continue to flower under shaded settings providing strong flexibility with your design and layout options. Filtered light (65% +) or limited sun exposure (4-hours of direct light) will not reduce the flowering ability of SunPatiens.
Plant maintenance

Once established, SunPatiens are virtually maintenance free. SunPatiens are highly resistant to disease (including Downy Mildew) and many insects. However, soil borne diseases, such as Rhizoctonia and Phytophthora, may result from poorly drained, heavy and compacted soils (see soil prep above). SunPatiens will continue to flower until heavy frost. One installation will last from spring to fall without the need to replant.

For more information, inspiration images, the complete assortment with SunPatiens Compact and Vigorous varieties, visit:

www.SunPatiens.eu

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