

New Specialty Annuals Cutting Monitoring Program

Starting this bedding plant season, COPF will be monitoring more closely for restricted varieties of specialty annuals. Customers who receive cuttings of specialty annuals usually pinch them in the fall or winter and many stick the pinches they take. However, most breeders do not allow propagation of specialty annuals. Sticking these cuttings is not allowed in Canada because propagation is legal only with permission of breeders holding Canadian Plant Breeders' Rights. (Similar legislation does the same thing in other countries.)

There are two effects of this practice:

1. Some growers sell the pinches to other customers at bargain basement prices, which depresses market prices.
2. Customers count on bulking up their numbers with the pinches they stick and order fewer legal cuttings.

COPF has developed a program to better educate customers who grow and propagate specialty annuals. In addition to providing a list of restricted plants every three months to COPF members, our representatives will be visiting everyone who receives an order of specialty annuals. These visits will be timed for most effective monitoring and counts, according to the shipment delivery. Customers found to be propagating without permission will be invoiced for all cuttings taken, at a price similar to the breeders' cutting prices. Breeders will also be paying for this program through a levy on all cuttings coming into Canada. This new program will also help level the playing field for those growers who follow the rules.