

Cool Season Annuals



Always a welcoming sign on the front porch is a container of colorful cool season annuals! Often, they are paired with the greenery of cool season veggies!

Annuals are classified as hardy or tender, depending on cold tolerance. Hardy ones, such as pansies and violets, are tolerant of frosts and have color through the winter.

When the annual transplants become available at the local nursery that signals the soil is cooling and it's time for planting. However, cool season annuals cannot tolerate heat.

Speaking of pansies, they are arguably our best bedding plants for winter landscapes. They tolerate all seasons except the hot summer. You may plant pansies in fall or spring, but October is best because it allows a head start on root growth before exploding with color in the

spring. Active root growth occurs as long as the soil temperature is above 45 degrees.

Like many plants, they need regular watering and well-drained soil. Most plants and lawns that have not been irrigated need water and, if water is not replaced, this greatly increases chances of winter plant damage.

A thick layer of mulch will help reduce water loss from the soil. Loose mulch, such as pine straw, or cloth covers over plants can be helpful to reduce water loss and cold damage during particularly severe cold snaps.

Most annuals benefit from well composted organic material worked into the planting bed or container. Use a slow release balanced fertilizer - one having all of the three major nutrients—nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium. As with most plants, loose mulch added to the top after planting will conserve moisture, moderate temperatures and help prevent weeds.

Cool season annuals in the Tulsa area include – snapdragons, dusty miller, violets, pansies, and dracaena or spike.

Vegetables with lovely greenery include flowing kale, arugula, beets, broccoli, carrots, and cauliflower. Let your imagination go wild!



For an expanded list of cool season plants and additional information:

<https://www.extension.umn.edu/garden/yard-garden/landscaping/best-plants-for-tough-sites/docs/08464-cold-tolerant-annuals.pdf>

http://www.tulsamastergardeners.org/lawngarden/annuals_list.html

http://www.tulsamastergardeners.org/lawngarden/lg_annuals.html