

Propagation of Foliage and Flowering Plants in Guatemala

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As a pioneer country in the export of tropical ornamental plants, Guatemala has geared its production to primary markets, where it has rapidly gained a reputation for consistent quality and service.

Due to its unusually wide variety of excellent climatic conditions, Guatemala offers enormous possibilities for future expansion in the production and export of ornamental plants.

The central part of the country is mountainous and volcanic, excellent for production of *Aphelandra*, *Hedera*, *Cissus*, *Maranta*, and *Peperomia*. The hot and humid weather found in the coastal plains of the Pacific are ideal for the production of *Aglaonema*, *Schefflera* (syn. *Brassaia*), *Codiaeum*, *Dracaena*, *Ficus*, *Polyscias*, *Scindapsus* (see, also, *Epipremnum*), *Syngonium*, and *Philodendron*.

Phoenix and many other taxa of palms grow in the tropical rainforest of the northern region; and *Beaucarnea* (syn. *Nolina*), *Yucca*, *Cordyline*, and *Sansevieria* are being produced in the southeastern region.

Thanks to its many microclimates, Guatemala can successfully produce any type of ornamental plant.

Ornamental plants, flowers, and foliage are produced in Guatemala as part of the nontraditional agricultural export crops. The production of ornamental plants started in Guatemala in the 1940s with only two species in production in a very small area. The ornamental plant production sector has grown considerably since then, so much so that today Guatemala produces around 80 different species and approximately 300 cultivars.

The ornamental plant industry represents approximately 5% of the national income. In the agricultural field, it is in fifth place of importance among the nontraditional export products, which translates to a little more than 50 million dollars annually.

With its wide scope of vegetation, there is great diversity of species. The diversity is expressed in diminutive palms of the *Chamaedorea* genus, picturesque *Cephaelis*, of serene *Eustoma* (syn. *Lisianthus*) in a deep purple color, *Aphelandra*, *Pancratium*, *Zephyranthes*, *Juniperus standleyi*, *Tillandsia*, leather-leaf ferns and roses.

Guatemala, now known as the land of the forest, is the preferred country for wholesalers, amateur growers, and professional growers today because of its range of species and multiplicity of biological forms.

Its diversity covers plants and flowers with growing markets in Europe, North America, and outside the Orient.

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