



TIP SHEET

3038 Ewings Road • Newfane, NY 14108
(716) 778-0026 • Fax (716) 778-9711
www.heimillergreenhouses.com

Annuals, Perennials & Biennials....What is the Difference?

Annual plants complete their life cycle in one year. Although annuals last only one year their color display makes them worth the investment in your landscape. Some plants that are perennial in their native lands are treated as if they were annuals in regions too cold for them to complete their life cycle. (See tender perennial below)



Annual - Lantana
'Bandana Cherry'

Perennial plants complete their life cycle in three or more years. Perennials, whether evergreen or deciduous, are classified as hardy (survive frost), or tender (damaged by frost). In our region, perennials will be hardy if they are labeled for USDA zone 5 or 6. Tender perennials can add variety and beauty to your garden when you grow them as you would annuals. To grow them again next season, put them in a sheltered place for the winter. At Heimiller Greenhouses we carefully select perennial varieties that will do well in our Western New York Gardens.



Perennial - Hellebores
'Royal Heritage Strain'

Biennial plants complete their life cycle in two years. Biennials often reseed themselves and can live happily in your garden for more than two years. In our garden center you can find biennials in the perennial section. Among the popular biennials are Forget-Me-Nots, Foxglove, Hollyhock, Sweet William, and Zebra Mallow.



Biennial - Malva Syl-
vestris 'Zebrini'

When purchasing your annuals, biennials and perennials, select vigorous specimens having completely hydrated leaves and a healthy green color. Root tips should be a creamy-white color; check their condition by sliding the root ball out of the pot, then, of course, carefully replace the root ball. Avoid plants with broken stems; dry, wilting, or yellow leaves; or damage from insects or disease. The plant should fill out the container but the roots shouldn't hang out the drainage holes. Dangling roots are likely late in the season, after plants have been held too long in the same size pot. As tempting as it is to buy annuals in full bloom, a far better choice is compact, well-branched, and well budded plants. Flowering will be delayed for a while but with the bonus that the plant will live longer and ultimately flower more profusely.