



Dear Growers,

I hope you had a great time at the Tripod Launch.

I would like to offer you a few thoughts on your flowers and growing tips...

If you were lucky enough to get some *Nasturtiums* then you should be in for a beautifully edible floral treat in six varieties. I just love their rich, warm orange that is so full of abundance and creativity. This rewarding and easy to grow annual is a real fighter and will thrive in the most poor and hungry conditions. They are originally from South America where they are perennial. *Nasturtiums* were brought back to Peru considered sacred by the Conquistadores along with the gold of the Incas.

The flower was known as many things in England during 16<sup>th</sup> century 'blood flower of Peru' *Tropaeolum* and Indian Cress. The name *Nasturtiums* actually means 'nose - twisting' from *nasus tortus* as it can have a really pepper smell. Elizabethan and Stuart England prescribed the seeds for Scurvy. In the language of flowers *Nasturtiums* symbolises patriotism. All parts of the plant are edible, tasty and high in vitamin C and iron, minerals and trace elements. The flowers look beautiful in salads.

*Nasturtiums* like well-drained soil when sown outdoors between April – June. It is best to sow about 1.5cm deep into already watered soil. I would sow all the seeds together and wait for the little seedlings to appear about 3-4 weeks. When they are strong enough I would then separate seedlings and give them lots of water until they start maturing in young plants are.

If you want to sow indoors, Feb – May is great for earlier flowers, 1.5cm deep into small pots of moist compost. Plants should gradually be accustomed to outdoors to avoid frost do this between May and June. Leave a round 30cm between each plant.

Do not feed *Nasturtiums* as this will encourage them to grow more leaves rather than flowers.

**Alaska Mixed** –dwarf plant and has a single striking yellow flower and marbled foliage.

**Empress of India** – Dwarf, has rich dark reddish orange blooms and dark foliage heritage variety

**Gleaming Gold** – rich and deep golden yellow double flowers on a semi trailing plant

**Jewel Cherry Rose** – Dwarf, great the create high impact as mainly vibrant fuchsia semi-double flowers.

**Jewel Mixed** – Dwarf, wide range of colours mainly semi-double flowers.

**Trailing Mixed** – Vigorous plant, great for covering screens, fences hanging baskets and ground cover.

### **Sun Flower – *Helianthus annuus* -The Flower of the Incas**

There is no way I can look at a sun flower and not feel happy, it is the reflection of the suns energy in essence and spirit. There tall and proud and powerful The sunflower is Native to Mexico and Peru and was worshiped as an emblem of the Sun God Atahualpa, and carved into crowns and woven into clothes using gold thread.

The names *Helianthus* comes from the Greek, *helios* meaning Sun and *anthos* meaning flowers. The Sun Flower was brought to England in 16<sup>th</sup> century for its economic value. Most parts can be used to make a marketable product edible or not.

