

# SOIL TEST INFORMATION SHEET NO. H-810

Prepared by Extension Horticulturist Allen D. Owings and modified by Assistant Professor of Landscape Horticulture Damon Abdi

## Flowers – Annual

1. Fertilize warm season bedding plants at the rate of one pound of nitrogen per 1000 ft<sup>2</sup>
2. Fertilize cool season bedding plants at the rate of one pound of nitrogen per 1000 ft<sup>2</sup> at or prior to planting. Fertilizer can be broadcasted or incorporated into the top 1-2” of the soil surface.
3. A complete (i.e. nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium fertilizer in plant-appropriate ratios such as 3-1-2) slow-release fertilizer is preferred over a balanced (8-8-8 or 13-13-13 fertilizer with N,P,K in even amounts), or a 34-0-0 (N only fertilizer).
4. Water-soluble liquid fertilizers can be applied with irrigation water to supplement a regular fertilization program. This is most commonly done on container grown plants. Note that water-soluble fertilizers may not provide lasting nutrition to plants and should be used to provide a fast supplementation to slow-release fertilizers.
5. Annual flowers being maintained over an entire growing season (example: March through late summer/early fall) benefit from a re-application of fertilizer about halfway through the growing season. Apply at the rate of 0.5-1.0 pounds of nitrogen per 1000 ft<sup>2</sup>.
6. Maintain good cultural practices (insect and disease control, weed-free beds, proper irrigation, removing dead flowers) to optimize performance of annual flowers.
7. New landscape beds having high contents of organic matter (pine bark, etc.) may need additional fertilizer applications during the first season in use. Landscape beds with a high soil fraction or that have been in place for several seasons may already have sufficient phosphorus present.
8. Maintain the proper soil pH for the annual flowers being grown. Recommended pH varies from 5.5 to 6.5. Modify soil pH by lowering with sulfur or aluminum sulfate or raising with dolomitic limestone. Note that pH changes may take several weeks to months to take effect.
9. Contact your county agent for additional information and help in your fertilization program. The agent also receives a copy of this report for the parish office files.