**Dahlia**

**BOTANICAL NAME**
Dahlia
(DAL-yuh, DOLL-yuh, DOLL-ee-uh; also DALEY-yuh or DAY-lee-uh, especially British)

**COMMON NAME**
These flowers are known commonly by their botanical name, Dahlia.

**DESCRIPTION**
Dahlias have many bloom forms, which range in diameter from about 1 inch to 10 inches or larger. The American Dahlia Society (ADS) categorizes these flowers into 20 groups based on size and form. (See variety glossary on opposite page for photos of these classifications). Dahlia stems are leafy, hollow and woody, and, as cut flowers, usually range from 12 to 24 inches in length.

**COLORS**
The ADS recognizes 15 colors or color combinations of Dahlias including white, yellow, orange, pink, dark pink, red, dark red, lavender, purple, bronze, flame blend, light blend, dark blend, variegated and bicolor.

**VASE LIFE**
Flower longevity varies widely, from four to 10 days, among cultivars and is dependent on bloom maturity at the time of sale, care from farm to florist and environmental conditions at the consumer level.

**AVAILABILITY**
Cut Dahlias are most available from about April through November from both U.S. and Holland growers, but some producers offer crops as early as February.

**Vase-life extenders**

**IMMEDIATE ATTENTION**
Unpack Dahlias immediately, and check quality. Remove all sleeves and stem bindings as well as any foliage that would be under water in storage containers. Because these flowers are usually field grown, rinse stem ends under cool running water.

**STEM CUTTING**
Recut the stems on an angle with a sharp, sterile blade, removing at least 1 inch of stem.

**HYDRATION AND NUTRITION**
Immediately after cutting, dip or place stem ends into a hydration solution, then into storage containers partially filled with properly proportioned flower-food solution. Because these flowers are grown from tuberous roots, you can use bulb-flower food.

**STORAGE**
Allow Dahlias to hydrate at room temperature for at least two hours before using or selling. These flowers are chilly sensitive, so refrigerated storage is generally not recommended, especially long term, so use or sell these flowers quickly. If absolutely necessary, you can store Dahlias in a floral cooler at no lower than 40 F but for no more than two days. Extended cold storage can reduce vase life by as much as 30 percent.

**ETHYLENE SENSITIVITY**
These botanicals’ sensitivity to ethylene gas is generally considered to be low; however, make sure your purchases are treated with an ethylene inhibitor at the grower or during shipping, and take precautions to reduce ethylene levels in your facilities.

**CONSUMER ACTION**
Advise customers to recut the stems on Dahlias every two to three days and replace the flower-food solution in vases as well.

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**WHAT’S IN A NAME**
The genus name Dahlia was given in honor of Swedish botanist Dr. Anders Dahl (1751-1789). Based on the pronunciation of Dr. Dahl’s surname, DOLL-yuh or DOLL-ee-uh logically would be the most appropriate pronunciation of the flower name.

**FAMILY MATTERS**
Dahlias are members of the huge Asteraceae (Compositae) family. Close relatives of Dahlias include Gerberas, Calendulas, Zinnias, marigolds, marguerites, sunflowers, black-eyed Susans, China asters and dozens of other flowers.

**HOME SWEET HOME**
These flowers are native to Mexico, Central America and Colombia.
Do you need a quick and easy reference for information about other cut flowers?

Designed to fit on your countertop, desk or design bench, *Flower Flip — A Guide to 50 Favorite Flowers* provides information on care, vase life, availability, pronunciation and more in a handy 5.5” x 6.5” flip-chart format. FRFB1010  $12.95

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