

Romantic and long-lasting, the new waxflower hybrids offer fantastic value.

What do you want in a filler flower? Dense clusters of small yet abundant blooms, perched at the top of sturdy yet flexible stems? A romantic, five-petaled flower form, surrounded by attractive yet unobtrusive piney foliage? A range of blush colors that harmonize beautifully with roses?

Waxflower can offer all of these, plus—when it is properly grown and prepared for market—an excellent vase life. Old-timers in the industry may remember when it was not uncommon to open a box of waxflower and find that most of the blooms were on the bottom of the box. That's rare nowadays. But wax is a flower that varies widely in quality and price, from one supplier to the next as well as seasonally and by variety. It pays to be a savvy buyer.

WHEN AND WHERE Waxflower has two seasons. It is native to Australia—and in the land Down Under, it is harvested from July through December. During that time period buyers in the U.S. and other countries in the Northern Hemisphere also receive waxflower from South Africa and Peru. The second season is from January through June; this is when wax blooms on flower farms in southern California, Portugal and Israel.

"Waxflower requires a very specific, semi-arid climate," says Steve Dionne, president of Wafex USA, a company formed as a sister company to the largest exporter of Australian native flowers, also called Wafex. "You need sandy soil, hot days in the summertime, certain temperature ranges in the winter months, and no excessive rainfall."

Southern California has one of the environments perfect for growing waxflower, as growers there realized about 35 years ago. That's when southern California avocado and citrus farmers



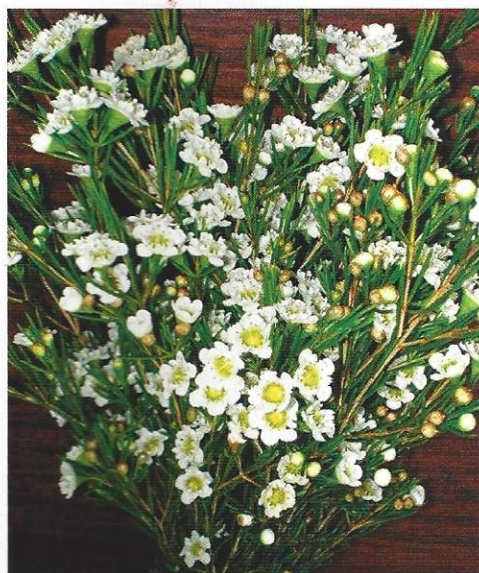
Esperanza



Madonna



Majestic Pink



Chantilly Lace



Moonlight Delight



Painted Lady



Revelation



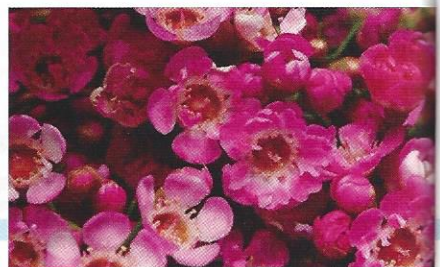
Romance



My Sweet 16



Sarah's Delight



Strawberry Surprise