Care of mums will make them last longer

Source: Sharon Flynt, UK extension horticulture agent

When buying a mum for fall color, look for the plant with tight buds that haven’t flowered yet. Choose the variety you want based on the ones close to it that have already bloomed.. This will help you have flowers for at least a month after you bring your mum home.

Another key to making your mum last longer is keeping it watered. You can place the mum in a larger pot once you bring it home. This will help it retain more water. If you leave it in its original container, check the soil at least every other day by simply putting a finger into the soil, at least to the first knuckle. If the soil is dry, your mum needs water.

When you water your mum, make sure the water gets good contact with plant roots and the soil. Either water bottom up in a pan or pail of water, or from the sides of the pot with a watering can or garden hose. Watering overhead on the leaves or buds of the mum will cause them to deteriorate more quickly. Also, don’t allow your mum to stand in water very long, as this can cause problems such as root rot. Once flowers begin to fade, “deadhead” or pick off the fading blooms, which will promote new growth and make the plant look healthier, helping to prolong the plant’s beauty.

More information on fall gardening, is available at the (COUNTY NAME) office of the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service.

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