



Hechtia

Hechtia scariosa

Plant Height: 12 inches

Flower Height: 3 feet

Spread: 18 inches

Sunlight: ☐ ☒

Hardiness Zone: 8b

Other Names: Mescalito, False Agave, syn. Hechtia texensis

Description:

This stunning variety produces clumping rosettes of long, tapering green leaves that turn bright red in sun; perfect for containers, or hot, dry, sandy sites that are well drained; tolerates brief cold spells; flowers infrequently

Planting & Growing

This plant is native to the tropics and prefers growing in moist environments with evenly warm conditions all year round. In our climate, it is usually grown as an outdoor annual in the garden or in a container. If you want it to survive the winter, it can be brought in to the house and provided with special care, and then returned to the garden the following season. In its preferred tropical habitat, it can grow to be around 12 inches tall at maturity extending to 3 feet tall with the flowers, with a spread of 18 inches. However, when grown as an annual or when overwintered indoors, it can be expected to perform differently, and its exact height and spread will depend on many factors; you may wish to consult with our experts as to how it might perform in your specific application and growing conditions.

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers dry to average moisture levels with very well-drained soil, and will often die in standing water. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for a low-water garden or xeriscape application. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in sandy soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This species is native to parts of North America.



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Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Hechtia is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor containers and hanging baskets. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.

-- THIS IS A TROPICAL PLANT AND SHOULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO SURVIVE THE WINTER OUTDOORS IN OUR CLIMATE --