

# Wave<sup>®</sup> and Tidal Wave<sup>®</sup> Series Spreading Petunia Landscape Tips

## Important Notes for Growing & Using Wave<sup>®</sup> and Tidal Wave<sup>®</sup> Petunias in the Landscape

■ **Pick the right Wave petunia for your needs.** Wave and Tidal Wave have distinct habits. Wave offers a thick, ground-hugging ocean of color. Tidal Wave grows outward, then up for a big, shrublike shape. Tidal Wave looks great growing alongside a fence – plants will grow up and over the fence!

■ **Start with “fresh” plugs.** Avoid starting from rootbound plugs. Plants grown from rootbound plugs may not be able to generate enough roots to adequately sustain themselves when planted outside. Wave and Tidal Wave plugs that have been scheduled and transplanted promptly will root out better in the container and perform better when planted in the landscape. Allowing the containers to dry out slightly between watering encourages better root development. Do not let plants wilt.

■ **Plant well-rooted plants.** Avoid planting poorly rooted plants into the landscape. Poorly rooted plants may wilt quickly if the temperatures become very warm soon after planting.

■ **Acclimate plants before planting.** As a general rule, greenhouse or nursery-grown plants will adapt better in the landscape if they are hardened off prior to planting. Exposing plants to the outside temperatures and light allows the soil to dry between watering and helps reduce transplant shock.

■ **Follow good soil preparation practices.** Wave and Tidal Wave petunias tolerate a wide range of soil conditions. However, tilling the soil for good aeration, adding amendments, raising the beds to provide good drainage, maintaining the proper pH (6.5 to 7.0 is optimum), and using a broad spectrum fungicidal drench all contribute to successful landscape plantings. Plants will take off more quickly if a liquid feed is used before planting. See “Provide Adequate Nutrition” for more details.

■ **Petunias prefer sun.** Wave and Tidal Wave petunias thrive in bright, sunny locations with at least 6 hours of direct sunlight. Sun is a MUST to keep these plants covered with blooms and looking terrific all season long.

■ **Space adequately.** For fast fill, space Wave petunias 12 to 18 in. (30 to 45 cm) apart in the landscape. Wave petunias spread 3 to 4 ft. (90 cm to 1.2 m), so they can be spaced as far as 24 in. (60 cm) apart. Spacing plants closer than 12 in. (30 cm) can lead to overcrowding and contribute to disease. Space Tidal Wave a minimum of 12 to 15 in. (30 to 38 cm) apart. At this spacing they will form dense mounds of 18 to 24 in. (45 to 60 cm) in height. When spaced at 18 to 24 in. (45 to 60 cm), Tidal Wave will spread more like a ground cover from 2.5 to 4 ft. (75 cm to 1.2 m).

■ **Irrigation.** Wave and Tidal Wave petunias are excellent landscape performers. However, like any other plant, they need adequate water after planting in order to get established in the landscape. During the season, do not overwater. Night watering is not recommended. Morning watering is preferred.

■ **Water Management.** Do not let Wave or Tidal Wave petunias dry out to a wilt between waterings as too severe of wilt may lead to increased susceptibility and may limit nutrient uptake. Do not over-water or allow the plants to continually have wet roots. This can lead to disease. Mulching plants can help through conserving moisture.

■ **Provide adequate nutrition.** Wave and Tidal Wave petunias are vigorous growers and benefit from heavier feeding than standard petunias, therefore give plenty of feed throughout the life of the planting. *Before Planting:* A good way to get the plants off to a fast start is to water the plants with a liquid fertilizer, such as Daniels, prior to planting. *At Planting:* A slow-release fertilizer (such as NutriCoat or Osmocote), which is released by temperature, is recommended. For best season-long growth we suggest the following: incorporate slow release at half rate at installation. Too much fertilizer too soon will cause plants to put on leaves, but not flowers. At approximately the half-way point in the life of the landscape, apply another half rate of the slow release formula. In regions where temperatures are elevated, utilize the 8 to 9 month release formulation as this will provide fertilizer longer into the season. *During the Growing Season:* Because Wave and Tidal Wave are vigorous growers, using a liquid feed throughout the season, in addition to slow-release fertilizer, will give best plant performance. Fertilize with a liquid feed such as Daniels 10-4-3 (1 tablespoon per gallon, approximately 300 ppm) for approximately 6 waterings and water with plain water on the 7<sup>th</sup>

watering. Later in the season, if the plants start to turn yellow, one or two liquid feeds with a higher nitrate level such as 20-10-20, (15-2-20 or 10-10-10 at 250 ppm N High nitrate, low ammonium) can be applied. Always follow the rates recommended on the label.

■ **Mulching.** Use at least 2 in. (5 cm) of mulch. Mulch helps by keeping soil temperatures down through insulation and reflection of light, keeping weeds in check and conserving moisture for possible fewer irrigation cycles.

■ **Rotate plantings.** While it is tempting to use **Wave** and **Tidal Wave** petunias every year due to their exceptional garden performance, it is not recommended that any petunias be planted in the same beds every year so that the build-up of harmful disease pathogens specific to all petunias may be avoided. This can occur whenever the same types of plants are used in the same bed year after year. Here are some other high-impact, low-care plants to try in your sunny gardens in the alternating years when you aren't using **Ride the Wave** varieties. Try tall and stately Purple Majesty Ornamental Millet as a backdrop for bright Dakota Gold Helenium or Bonanza Marigolds. Plant lush, ground-hugging Silver Falls Dichondra along with vibrant Vista Salvias. Other great varieties to try include Serena Angelonia, DragonWing Begonia, Pentas Butterfly, and Ornamental Pepper Black Pearl, which is particularly nice mixed with **Tidal Wave** Silver.

## Additional Tips for Using Wave and Tidal Wave Petunias in Containers

■ **Wave** and **Tidal Wave** petunias are multi-purpose! In addition to making a wonderful color impact in gardens, they're spectacular in large containers, street planters and large window boxes. For fantastic showings in hanging baskets, choose **Easy Wave** petunias.

■ Containers dry out more quickly than ground plantings. Since containers need to be watered more frequently, nutrients are likely to be leached from the containers more quickly. As a result they may also require more frequent feeding.

■ Keep your **Wave** and **Tidal Wave** petunias well-fed and don't let them dry out between waterings. Apply a liquid fertilizer once a week or use a combination of liquid and slow-release fertilizers, following the rates recommended on the labels.

For more information on all **Ride the Wave** spreading petunias, visit [Wave-Rave.com](http://Wave-Rave.com) or [BallLandscape.com](http://BallLandscape.com).

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