



Topic: Replace Ixora Hedge with Original Variety When Possible

Question: Our community has many, many hedges of Ixora some of which are more than 18 years old and have never needed replacing. Several years ago, the frost killed a few of these plants. We cut all the bushes low and all but a few survived. We are considering replacing the few damaged plants with Ixora to match the existing hedge. We have heard that planting Ixora is not recommended near foundations due to high pH soil conditions and the plants susceptibility to disease. It would be very expensive to replace the entire row where a damaged plant exists. Do you have any suggestions for us?

Jan, V., email

Answer: Eighteen years is about the maximum useful lifespan of cultivated Ixora in our area. Ixora do best in acidic or low pH soils. If your ixoras grew satisfactorily for that many years, chances are the pH was sufficiently acidic. If that were not so, then the plants would probably have exhibit yellow leaves, to avoid this, regular applications of fertilizer that include iron as a plant nutrient would have had been applied to the soil to keep the plants green. It is likely that the cold of two and three winters ago may have led to a slow demise of these few plants. Another contribution factor may be nematodes feeding inside the roots of the plants. Do the following: First, bring a soil sample from the area of plant decline to our office for pH testing. Second, bring roots of a declining plant with the soil attached for nematode analysis. Third, bring in a sample of the plant; stems, leaves and flowers to determine its varieties. Chances are, based on the history of your plants, the soil pH and nematode assays will be satisfactory. Thus, replacing with Ixora would be recommended. However, these plants are 18 years old and taste by growers in Ixora varieties have changed. Recommending the original variety would avoid differences in plant appearance because of varietal dissimilarities.



Useful Links

[Hedges and Screens Fact Sheet](#)

[Stephen's Webpage](#)

Stephen Brown is a horticulture agent with the Lee County Extension Service. Submit questions by calling the horticulture desk at 533-7504 between 9 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. or by e-mailing brownsh@leegov.com. Visit his Web page at <http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/hort/GardenHome.shtml>. For native plants click on Publications A-Z.

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