



**KENNEDY'S**  
**COUNTRY GARDENS**

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## Dogwood Trees

Dogwood trees are considered by many as the best all-round flowering trees. Dogwoods are most known for their outstanding display of flowers in the spring. There are three major types of dogwoods including Spring Flowering (*Cornus florida*), *Cornus kousa*, and the Rutgers hybrid dogwoods.

Most agree the most spectacular flower display is owned by the **Spring Flowering Dogwood**. ***Cornus florida*** is known for its brilliant show of white or pink flowers in the early spring before their leaves emerge. This dogwood species is also valued for its layered branching habit, interesting red fruit, and nice fall color. Unfortunately, this species of dogwood is susceptible to a disease called Anthracnose. See our handout for more info on controlling Anthracnose. This disease killed off a large percentage of dogwoods in the 80's and 90's. While Kennedy's still sells a few of these trees, we recommend choosing varieties that are resistant to the disease.

The **Chinese dogwood (*Cornus kousa*)** is a later flowering form of dogwood. This Dogwood flowers for a long time beginning in late May and often lasts into July. These flowers are a creamy white and they arrive shortly after the leaves emerge. Recently some pink varieties of *Cornus kousa* have been introduced to the market. All varieties of Chinese Dogwood are resistant to Anthracnose and are valued for their fall color, fruit and interesting bark as the plants age.

The third major group of dogwoods are the **Rutgers hybrids**. Due to the Anthracnose disease, researchers at Rutgers University began hybridizing the Spring Flowering Dogwoods with the Chinese Dogwood. The result is several newer varieties of dogwoods that have many of the good traits of each type of tree. The Rutgers Hybrids were bred with the Chinese Dogwood and therefore are resistant to the disease. They also have some of the characteristics of the Florida dogwoods because they flower earlier (just after *Cornus florida* and just before *Cornus kousa*) and they have a more layered branching habit than *Cornus kousa*. See our chart on the reverse for comparisons on the different types of dogwoods.

*Written by Chris Kennedy, MCH of Kennedy's Country Gardens*