

Strobilanthes

Persian Shield



NUTRITION

pH: 5.8 – 6.2

EC: (2:1 extraction method) .4 – .8

Constant feeding at 100ppm – 150ppm nitrogen with a fertilizer selected for grower's water quality and soil mix is recommended.

TEMPERATURE

Rooting out: 68 – 72 F

Growing on: 68 – 75 F

Holding: 65 – 68 F

WATERING

Maintain moderate soil moisture. Allow the soil to cycle from moist to only slightly dry. Avoid both severe dry downs/wilting and long periods of wet soil, especially at cooler temperatures. Growing too wet early in the production cycle can cause disease issues while severe wilt conditions can damage root systems and foliage. Controlling moisture levels and growing at moderate to slightly dry is a good practice to also control plant growth.

TIMING

4" – 5": 6 – 8 weeks with one 84 cell plant per container.

6"/1GL Royale: 8 – 10 weeks with one 84 cell plant per container.

8": 9 – 12 weeks with one 84 cell plant per container.

PLANTING

84 liner cell plants should be planted slightly deeper than the liner root ball into a well-drained soil mix selected to match individual water quality and fertilizer blends. Water in thoroughly without saturating the mix and maintain a constant moderate soil moisture level for the first seven to 10 days to establish new rooting. Pinching should not be needed except in the case of taller material at time of planting or for larger containers. Pinching can be given for larger containers usually three to four weeks after planting. For larger containers a second pinch can be performed as needed. Usually a second pinch would be done as a softer pinch used mainly to shape the plant.

LIGHT/LIGHTING

Persian Shield should be grown in a moderate to high light level area of the greenhouse for optimal plant development and branching. **Persian Shield requires long days (+12 hours per day) for vegetative growth.** Persian Shield flowers when grown under short days. From mid-September through April 1 these plants should be grown under long days by providing 14-hour day lengths. This can be done by either day length extension lighting or night interruption lighting. This required lighting can be provided in a manner like that which is applied to mums or poinsettias.

GROWTH REGULATORS

Growing under proper light conditions, with adequate spacing, moderate soil moisture levels and recommended temperatures will produce the highest quality plants and lower the need for any PGR treatments.

If required a spray application of B-Nine® (daminozide) at 2,500ppm is effective.

PEST and DISEASE MANAGEMENT

There should be little instance of disease if basic cultural guidelines are followed. Botrytis and root rots can occur in poor growing conditions if plants are kept too cool or wet. Control excessive humidity levels in the greenhouse, provide good air movement, do not over fertilize, and provide adequate space.

Whiteflies, Thrips, Aphids, and Spider Mites can be pests of concern. Scout crops on a regular basis and use control measures as needed.

OUTDOOR GROWING SCHEDULE

Strobilanthes are tropical type plants and should be grown outdoors only after the danger of frost has past and temperatures have warmed. The foliage can be damaged from a very light frost. At Four Star (Michigan) we would only move these crops outdoors in mid-May if weather allows.



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The rates and chemicals listed are based on our southeast Michigan growing conditions, and are not recommended for nationwide application. Please adjust the rates and spray applications to your location and facility.



OTHER TIPS

For proper plant growth and desired finished quality long days must be provided to plants grown between the months of mid-September and the first of April. In these time periods provide 14-hour day length through either day length extension or night interruption lighting. Without proper day lengths these plants will develop blooms on very small and stunted plants. A measure that can be taken to ensure proper growth and encourage branching is to apply Florel (ethephon) at 250ppm two weeks after transplanting and again if desired two to three weeks later.

Moderate to high light, warm temperatures, adequate spacing, managed moisture levels, slightly higher humidity levels and moderate nutrition levels are all crucial for producing quality crops. Plants should be scheduled and grown in time frames that supply these requirements. In certain areas of the country it is best to schedule Persian Shield for later spring and summer sales.