

Caladium

Artful®



NUTRITION

pH: 5.5 – 6.5

EC: (2:1 extraction method) .4 – .6

Caladiums are very low feeders. Do not grow using a constant fertilizer program. Feed once with a balanced fertilizer blend at 200ppm nitrogen at time of “spike development” and again 2 – 3 weeks before shipping. If possible, a fertilizer blend with additional potassium can be helpful.

TEMPERATURE

Rooting out: 70 – 75 F (minimum)

Growing on: 70 – 78 F (minimum)

Holding: 65 – 68 F

WATERING

Maintain moist soil moisture levels at all times. Avoid dry soil, even as a method of holding plants or controlling growth. Ensure water temperatures are 60 F or warmer. Cold water can greatly delay plant development. Also, water pH levels above 6.5 can lead to leaf spotting and burning similar to overfeeding.

TIMING

4" – 5": 8 – 10 weeks (finish January – April) and 5 – 6 weeks (finish May – July) with one #1 Tuber per container.

6"/1GL Royale™: 8 – 10 weeks (finish January – April) and 5 – 6 weeks (finish May – July) with one Jumbo tuber per container.

8": 8 – 10 weeks (finish January – April) and 5 – 6 weeks (finish May – July) with 1 – 2 Jumbo tubers per container.

10" – 12" Hanging Basket: 8 – 10 weeks (finish January – April) and 5 – 6 weeks (finish May – July) with two to three Jumbo tubers per container.

PLANTING

A soil mix with a high percentage of peat moss included is recommended. Plant the tubers 2 – 3 inches below the soil line of the container. Water in thoroughly. The soil can be covered with clear plastic, if desired. High humidity levels of 90 – 100%, combined with **recommended or even higher temperatures of 80 – 85 F**, will speed “spiking” of the tubers. Remove plastic, if used, as spikes appear.

Tubers do not need to be de-eyed. Fire and Ice® grown in 4 – 5" containers might benefit from de-eyeing. To avoid confusion the tubers should be planted with the “eyes” facing up. This eye side of the tuber is covered with a dried and wiry root-type growth. The underside of the tubers are slightly concaved and smoother in appearance.

LIGHT/LIGHTING

Moderate light levels are fine for both varieties: 2,500 – 4,500 foot candles. Light is not necessary during the forcing time, which is generally 3 – 4 weeks. After *Caladiums* start to show spikes of 1 – 2 inches, they can be spaced appropriately on benches. Please note that both Fire and Ice and Heartfire® are tolerant of full sun conditions.

GROWTH REGULATORS

If proper growing practices are followed, plant growth regulators should not be required. *Caladiums* are very responsive to PGRs. Trials should be done at individual growing sites before widespread use is put in place. PGR experts generally recommend application of paclobutrazol (Piccolo®, Bonzi® or Paczol®) or flurprimidol (Topflor®) products as a drench. Growing under proper light conditions, with adequate spacing and recommended temperatures, will produce the highest quality plants and lower the need for PGR treatments.

PEST and DISEASE MANAGEMENT

Caladium problems in production are usually related to letting the plants get too dry, too low temperatures, or too high fertility. They are generally pest and disease free, but problems can occur. Aphids, Thrips, Mealy Bugs, Two-spotted Spider Mites, and Whiteflies can be problems. Avoid using emulsifiable concentrates on *Caladiums*. Also, Fungus Gnats and Shoreflies may be pests of concern due to warmer growing temperatures and higher soil moisture levels.

OUTDOOR GROWING SCHEDULE

Caladiums finish best in a controlled greenhouse environment, and should only be moved outside after conditions have become consistently warmer than 60 F – 65 F (early June in Michigan).



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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.

Caladium Continued



They are sensitive to cool temperatures.

OTHER TIPS

- Inspect tubers upon delivery. They should be rubbery and firm. If they feel spongy, they have been exposed to cold temperatures and should not be used.
- **Grow at recommended temperatures. *Caladiums* are tropical plants and require consistent high growing temperatures. Cool temperatures can greatly increase crop times or lead to plant loss.**
- Maintain moist to wet soil levels. Drying/wilting can severely damage the plant.
- Do not over-feed. Only two feedings throughout the crop time are recommended.
- **Tubers are very sensitive to low temperatures. Delivery of orders may be delayed due to weather conditions.**
- Crops planted for later May will finish much faster than early plantings.

