

GROWERTALKS

Culture Notes

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A “Fresh Look” at a Popular Celosia

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In 1935, Flame of Fire from Sakata (left) was the first celosia to win an All-America Selections award. The last one to win was Fresh Look Gold from Benary in 2007 (right).

Celosia Fresh Look Gold—a 2007 All-America Selections winner—offers bold color that stays clean and bright all season. Fresh Look Gold has large, clean bright plumes on densely branched plants that show off well at retail or in the garden. It doesn't brown as it matures, giving it a long shelf life and instant consumer appeal. Here are some tips on how to grow Celosia Fresh Look Gold:

Uses

Pack, 6-in. pot or color bowls for mass plantings, specimen plant and mixed containers.

Plug culture

Germination: 7-14 days at 72-77F (22-25C). Sow in a well-drained media that has good water-holding capacity. Do not cover seed; light is required for germination. Maintain relative humidity levels of 90-95%.

Stage II: Maintain temperatures and humidity levels near germination levels. Begin fertilizing at 30-50 ppm nitrogen, but avoid excessive salt build-up.

Stage III: Begin reducing temperatures gradually to 64-68F (18-20C). Increase fertilizer rates to 100 ppm nitrogen in a well-balanced fertilizer mix. Maintain soil EC levels between 0.75-1.0. Avoid fluctuations in soil moisture.

Stage IV: Lower temperature to 62-65F (17-18C). Continue feeding at 100 ppm nitrogen in an ammonia-based mix that is also rich in phosphorous and potassium. Maintain uniform soil moisture levels. Keep plugs actively growing to prevent premature flower initiation. Do not hold plugs past maturity.

Growing on

Grow on at 60-65F (16-18C). Low temperatures can cause premature flowering and poor garden performance. Fertilize weekly at 150-200 ppm nitrogen in a well-balanced fertilizer.

Crop time

Total crop time: 12-15 weeks from sow to 6-in. pot, depending on the season

Plug crop time: 4-5 weeks for a 288 tray

Packs: 8-9 weeks from a 288 tray

Flowering Pots:

- 4-in. (10-cm) pots: 8-9 weeks (from a 288 tray)
- 6-in. (15-cm) pots: 9-10 weeks (from a 288 tray)

Culture hints

Keep light levels below 2,500 f.c. (27,000 Lux), especially in the plug stage to avoid flower initiation before plants have reached sufficient size. Avoid stress of excessive drying back in the plug stages. **GT**

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