

GROWERTALKS

Culture Notes

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Growing New Marineland Lobularia

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The first vegetatively propagated lobularia was introduced just six years ago, yet today, the genus is a mainstay of ornamental greenhouse production. Its success can be attributed to its pleasant sweet fragrance, its flowing plant habit and its ability to grow well with other species in an endless array of combinations. Perhaps the most important attribute is its ability to flower continuously from spring through fall.

For 2017, Green Fuse Botanicals is pleased to introduce Marineland Lobularia, available in two colors, White and Lavender (pictured). Marineland Lobularia exhibit a controlled growth, maintaining their compact habit throughout the growing season. Lobularia will flower early in the spring—even under short days and cool temperatures—yet these vegetative hybrids are naturally heat tolerant, providing excellent summer performance. No trimming, pinching or flower removal is necessary to maintain the naturally tidy, free-flowering performance. Marineland White and Lavender combine well with each other and with other genera to create stunning mixed containers and hanging baskets.

Propagation

Marineland Lobularia is available as unrooted cuttings or as rooted liners. Unrooted cuttings will root easily in 4 to 5 weeks (25 mm liner). The optimal root zone temperature is 68 to 72F (20 to 22C) until roots are visible. At that point, reduce misting and provide slightly cooler temperatures. Begin feeding at 50 to 75 ppm nitrogen using calcium nitrate-based fertilizers to minimize soft growth (EC of 0.6 to 0.8 is optimal). On day 7, apply a fungicide spray to protect young plants from Botrytis.

Finishing

Transplant the liners into a well-drained soil mix with a pH of 5.6 to 6.0. The optimal growing temperature is 65 to 75F (18 to 24C) days and 55 to 64F (13 to 18C) nights. Enhance finished plant quality with cooler night temperatures of 55 to 58F (13 to 14C). Feed with a balanced fertilizer at 100 to 200 ppm nitrogen at every irrigation to maintain a soil EC of 0.9 to 1.2. The fertilizer stock solution may require additional iron (Fe) to ensure a deep green foliage color. Maintain moderate soil moisture levels since plants that wilt to an extreme will develop yellow leaves. Conversely, avoid overwatering during periods of cloudy weather.

Scheduling:

Pot Size	Plants per pot (pp)	Finish Time (weeks)
4-in. pot (10 cm)	1 pp	5 to 6
5-in. pot (12 cm)	1 pp	6 to 7
6-in. pot (15 cm)	2 pp	7 to 8
8-in. bowl (20 cm)	3 pp	7 to 8
12-in. hanging basket (30 cm)	4 pp	7 to 9

Pinching and growth regulators

Marineland Lobularia don't require a pinch since they're naturally self-branching and compact. The plants will develop and maintain a mounded plant form throughout the production stage. They will also flower under short days without any additional lighting or daylength extension. In regions with low light levels, supplemental lighting at the liner stage will improve plant quality for transplant.

PGRs aren't required if Marineland is grown with cool night temperatures and high light levels. We recommend the use of growth regulators to tone plants or if you need to hold plants for sale. Options to control height include a spray application of daminozide (B-Nine) at 2,000 to 2,500 ppm or uniconazole-p (Sumagic) at 2 to 3 ppm. Drench applications of paclobutrazol (Bonzi & Paczol) at 0.5 to 1 ppm are also effective to hold plants. Be certain to read labels for correct product application and use.

Insects and diseases

Integrated pest management is becoming more important in protecting crops against destructive insects. The number of production facilities implementing beneficials to fight problematic insects is increasing yearly. An IPM program will be highly effective in controlling insects of Lobularia. Aphids, thrips, fungus gnats/shorefly along with whitefly are the main concerns for this genus.

Botrytis and mildews are the primary fungal concerns, along with Pythium and Phytophthora, secondarily. Apply a broad spectrum fungicide once roots are established and spray to prevent Botrytis in periods of poor weather and conditions of high humidity. To reduce disease pressures, irrigate early in the day to allow foliage to dry before dusk and provide proper air movement. **GT**

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