

GROWERTALKS

Culture Notes

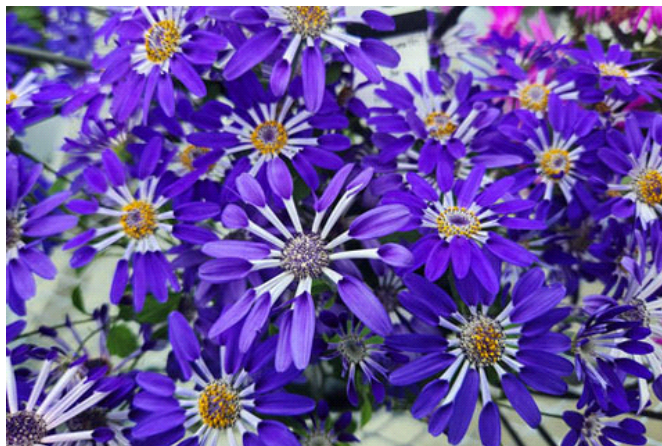
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Scoop Up Impulse Sales With Senetti Blue Spoon

Delilah Onofrey

If you look closely, you'll see the new Senetti variety has a whimsical flower form—white quills with dark blue spoon-shaped petals. While we've seen spoon-shaped flowers in other genera, like *osteospermum*, in Senetti it creates a striking bicolor look, like the top-selling Senetti Blue Bicolor that's blue and white.

Production wise, Senetti Blue Spoon times with the rest of the series, finishing with the top colors: Blue Bicolor, Magenta Bicolor, Violet Bicolor, Magenta and Deep Blue. But the growth habit is more upright and vasselike, like a V, holding the flowers above the foliage.



Production planning

With the early spring sales window, Senetti has its own season, beginning in January in the South and March in the North. Plants will tolerate cool temperatures down to 35F (1C). This also gives growers the option of growing Senetti “low and slow” under cooler temperatures, as an energy-saving crop. Crop time is 10 to 20 weeks depending on final size, temperature and number of cuttings transplanted.

Crop times:

- 4-in./qt. pot (1 liner): 9 to 12 weeks (recommended only for Baby Senetti varieties)
- 6-in./1 gal. pot (1 liner): 10 to 12 weeks, 1 pinch
- 10-in. pot (2 to 3 liners): 12 to 14 weeks, 1 pinch
- 12-in. pot (3 to 4 liners): 12 to 14 weeks, 1 pinch

Establish plants at 65F (18C) and then reduce temperatures—35 to 45F (1 to 7C) for cool, 50 to 55F (10 to 12C) for moderate.

Table 1 compares growing plants warm at 53F (11C) versus cool at 41F (5C).

Table 1. Senetti Flowering Period			
Plants grown at 53F (11C)		Plants grown at 41F (5C)	
Potting Date	First Flower	Potting Date	First Flower
WK 49	WK 11/12	WK 47	WK 12/13
WK 51	WK 12/13	WK 49	WK 14/15
WK 01	WK 13	WK 51	WK 15/16
WK 03	WK 14/15	WK 01	WK 15/16
WK 05	WK 15	WK 03	WK 16
WK 07	WK 16	WK 05	WK 16/17
WK 09	WK 17	WK 07	WK 16/17

Note: Timing varies with location. These guidelines represent an average. Cultural information provided is based on research and grower trials in Europe, North America and Japan. Growth will be dependent on total environment and cultural practices (location, climate, soil, etc.). Where fertilizer and chemical applications are necessary, please follow the manufacturer's label guidelines and requirements. Application trials are recommended.

Propagation

Root initiation: Within 14 days. Rooting media should have a pH between 5.6 and 5.8. Set aerial temperature to 75F (23C).

If growing with bottom heat, set to 68F (20C). Set humidity at 90%.

Root development: 14 to 21 days. Mist is no longer required. Mist only if wilting occurs when plants are transferred to a brighter environment. Set humidity between 60% to 70%. On brighter days in higher light regions, 30% to 40% shade may be required.

Finishing liner: 21 to 35 days. Cease misting and keep relative humidity and temperature the same as the root development stage. At seven to 10 days prior to shipping or transplant, give cuttings a light pinch to encourage branching.

Potting

Transplant liners into well-drained growing media. Keep pH between 5.5 and 6.0. Optimal growing temperatures post-transplant is from 40 to 50F (4 to 10C) with relatively low humidity. Senetti can be grown warmer, between 55 to 65F (12 to 18C), but keep in mind this will affect flower timing and possibly stretch flower stems.

Fourteen to 21 days post-transplant give plants a pinch to ensure optimal branching/soil coverage and overall shape.

Senetti is daylength neutral. Ideal light conditions are between 5,000 and 6,000 foot candles. Above 6,000 foot candles, plants develop stress symptoms.

Irrigation/fertility

Right after initial transplant, hit plants with a strong application of 250 ppm nitrogen 20-10-20. Continue this feed for the next four weeks of crop time. Senetti is a heavy iron feeder. A monthly drench application of STEM (or similar product) is recommended.

Senetti does best when grown on the dryer side. This helps to develop a strong, dense plant and helps minimize diseases. However, due to its vigorous root system, Senetti will require heavy watering on brighter and warmer days. Achieve this with clear water only.

Finish the last few weeks of production on higher phosphorous fertilizer to support flower production (10-30-20).

PGRs

Senetti is very responsive to B-Nine, which can be used every 14 to 21 days at 2,000 ppm. Florel can also be used at the rooting stage to promote lateral shoots. Bonzi can be applied as a late drench once plants are fully established at 2 ppm.

Pests & diseases

Aphids are the number one pest for Senetti. Spider mites and whitefly can also be present during production. Scout for thrips during flower development.

Thielaviopsis (black root rot) is the biggest disease problem for Senetti. Subdue/Cleary's tank mix is recommended, rotating Terraguard or similar product every four weeks. **GT**

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