

# GROWERTALKS

## Culture Notes

8/29/2025

### Begonia Hula

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At PanAmerican Seed, we're proud to bring to market innovative varieties from seed for your growing success. And that includes expanding reliable classes into new forms for versatile uses.

Hula interspecific begonia in the beds outside of the Columbus Convention Center at Cultivate'25.

Our Hula series of interspecific begonia is a unique spreading type. Its trailing habit is perfect for multiple uses, including filling landscapes with high-impact color or spilling out of hanging baskets with easy care and maintenance for the end user for a premium value.

What I love about Hula is that it doesn't disappoint! It's fast to fill in beds, creating a blanket of flowers, and it's one of the earlier flowering interspecific begonias to meet those critical installation time frames and selling seasons. The series is daylength neutral with timing similar to Begonia BabyWing.

Floriferous and highly branched, Hula plants are covered with flowers in all the popular begonia colors: White, Pink, Red and Blush. This creates an instant performance advantage for your landscaper customers with masses of flowers showing on top.

Early-flowering Hula starts to spread at an early stage; it provides greenhouse growers a high-quality, attractive, saleable plant that's covered with blooms at retail in both hanging baskets and smaller pot sizes.

To help get the best germination from your Hula Begonia seed, a few guidelines are below from our experts. These production tips will have you adding Hula to your begonia lineup in no time.

#### **Stage 1: Germination tips**

**Light:** Hula varieties require light for germination—do not cover the seed

**Temperature:** Higher temperatures, up to 77F (25C), improve germination and uniformity

**Moisture management:** Keep moisture high; the minimum is Level 5 (saturation)

**Duration:** Depending on temperature, germination begins on Day 5 to 7 and can continue through Day 8 to 14

## Stage 2: Guidelines

Temperature: Higher temperatures in Stage 2, up to 75F (24C), improve germination and uniformity

Moisture management: At this stage, moisture is again critical. Level 5 is optimal; minimum is Level 4. Keep soil uniformly moist until the first true leaf develops and expands

## Stages 3 & 4

Additional recommendations for the later stages of plug production include maintaining and then lowering temperatures. Stage 3 temperatures at 72F (22C) and Stage 4 lower to 65F (18C). Provide nutrition to the plugs with fertilizer at 100 to 175 ppm N (0.7 to 1.2 EC). Moisture at these stages should not drop below Level 3.

## Growing on to finish

Your finishing temperatures for Hula should be as follows:

Day: 65 to 70F (18 to 21C)

Night: 60 to 65F (16 to 18C)

Plants are day neutral and do not require a specific photoperiod to flower, and no additional feed is required in the finishing stage. Target media to 6.0 to 6.5 pH/1.0 to 1.2 mmhos/cm.

Growers can use PGRs on Hula only when necessary. Hula responds well to a tank mix of daminozide (B-Nine/Alar) and chlormequat (CCC); daminozide (B-Nine/Alar) 2,500 ppm; and chlormequat (CCC) 150 ppm and 300 ppm. Paclobutrazol (Bonzi) also works, but should be used with caution, as it could cause stunting in plants. Under ADT of about 68F (20C), paclobutrazol 2 to 3 ppm spray is recommended.

As an interspecific, Hula thrives in many warm climates, and it's versatile for sun and shade locations. I've seen phenomenal applications and installations of Hula spreading begonia all across North America—and many of you have seen it, too! The large mixed planters all around the Greater Columbus Convention Center during this year's Cultivate'25 show featured Hula and the outcome was impressive (see photos).

Their spread and ability to hold their flowers atop their branches complemented many of the other components in the container while still holding strong with its own structure. The Hula blanketing the in-ground planting also provided vivid color and flower impact. This truly is a new innovation from seed. **GT**

## Crop Scheduling

Container	Plugs/Pot	Crop Time
306 Pack / 1801	1 ppp	6 to 8 weeks
4.5 in./Quart	1 ppp	6 to 8 weeks
6 in./Gallon	1 to 2 ppp	6 to 8 weeks
12 in. pot / HB	3 to 4 ppp	8 to 10 weeks