

Armeria Ballerina

(*Armeria pseudarmeria*)

Germination

Plug Production Media

Use a well-drained, disease-free, soilless media with a pH of 5.8 to 6.2 and a medium initial nutrient charge (EC 0.75 mmhos/cm).

Sowing

Sow 2 to 4 seeds per cell in 288 or larger plug trays. Do not cover the seeds.

Stage 1 – Germination takes 3 to 6 days.

Soil temperature: 60 to 65°F (16 to 18°C)

Light: Needs light to germinate.

Moisture: Keep soil wet (level 4) during Stage 1.

Humidity: Maintain 95 to 97%+ relative humidity (RH) until radicles emerge.

Plug Production

Stage 2

Soil temperature: 60 to 65°F (16 to 18°C)

Light: Can be up to 2,500 f.c. (26,900 Lux).

Moisture: Reduce soil moisture slightly (level 3 to 4) to allow the roots to penetrate into the media.

Fertilizer: Apply fertilizer at rate 1 (less than 100 ppm N; less than 0.7 mmhos/cm EC) from nitrate-form fertilizers with low phosphorous.

Stage 3

Soil temperature: 60 to 65°F (16 to 18°C)

Light: Can be up to 2,500 f.c. (26,900 Lux).

Moisture: Allow the soil moisture to dry to level 3.

Fertilizer: Increase fertilizer to rate 2 (100 to 175 ppm N; 0.7 to 1.2 mmhos/cm EC).

Growth Regulators: Generally not needed.

Stage 4

Soil temperature: 60 to 65°F (16 to 18°C)

Light: Can be up to 5,000 f.c. (54,000 Lux).

Moisture: Same as Stage 3.

Fertilizer: Same as Stage 3.

Growing On to Finish

Container Size

4 to 5-in. (10 to 13-cm) square/quart pots: 1 plug per pot

Gallon (7 in./18 cm): 1-3 plugs per pot

Media

Use a well-drained, disease-free, soilless media with a pH of 5.8 to 6.2 and a medium initial nutrient charge (EC 0.75 mmhos/cm).

Temperature (optimum)

Nights: 50 to 58°F (10 to 14°C)

Days: 60 to 65°F (16 to 18°C)

Note: For early Spring sales, grow in a frost-free greenhouse/tunnel.

Light

No additional light is required.

Photoperiod

Ballerina is a day-neutral plant.

Irrigation

Keep media moisture dry (level 2; substrate color is light brown) to medium moist (level 3; substrate color is brown to dark brown). Ballerina is relatively drought tolerant. For overwinter production, grow plants on the dry side during cold period as overwatering could result in plant loss from root rot.

Fertilizer

Ballerina generally needs low to medium fertilization. Apply fertilizer at rate 1 to 2 (70 to 175 ppm N; 0.5 to 1.2 mmhos/cm). After overwintering, apply an extra fertilizer application (150 to 175 ppm Nitrate fertilizer; 1.0 to 1.2 mmhos/cm) when plants start to grow in early Spring.

Growth Regulators

Generally not needed. If necessary, a Bonzi (paclobutrazol) spray at 5 ppm (1.25ml/l 0.4%) formulation could be effective.

Pinching

Not needed. **Crop Scheduling**

Sow to transplant (288 cell plug): 5 to 6 weeks

Annual Transplant to flower: 12 to 15 weeks

Total crop time: 16 to 21 weeks

Overwintered frost-free Transplant to flower: 28 to 36 weeks

Total crop time: 32 to 40 weeks

Spring production

Sow January to mid-March for natural flowering from mid-May to July.

Overwinter production

Sow August to September for natural flowering late March to May of the following year.

Note: Plants from overwinter production will have a better plant habit with many more flowering stems per plant (approximately 20 to 30 stems per plant).

Common Problems

Insect: Sciara in plug stage

Disease: Colletotrichum

Physiological: When grown too cold during growing season, leaves may turn red-purplish and could twist.

Note: Growers should use the information presented here as a starting point. Crop times will vary depending on the climate, location, time of year, and greenhouse environmental conditions. Chemical and PGR recommendations are only guidelines. It is the responsibility of the applicator to read and follow all the current label directions for the specific chemical being used in accordance with all regulations.

