

Cuphea Purpurea

(*Cuphea hybrida*)

A Ball FloraPlant Product

Propagation

- Choose a well-drained medium with an EC of 0.75 to 0.80 mmhos and a pH of 5.4 to 5.8.
- Stick cuttings within 12 to 24 hours of arrival. Cuttings can be stored overnight, if necessary, at 45 to 50°F (7 to 10°C).
- Soil temperature should be maintained at 68 to 73°F (20 to 23°C) until roots are visible.
- Once roots are visible, the media should be kept moderately wet and never saturated. This will prevent iron deficiency and the associated chlorotic foliage which can develop.
- Begin fertilization with 75 to 100 ppm N when roots become visible. Increase to 150 to 200 ppm N as roots develop.
- As the rooted cuttings develop, high light and moderate air temperatures should eliminate the need for chemical plant growth regulators (PGR).
- **Firecracker** Cuphea do not require pinching during propagation. However, to improve branching and habit, plants can be pinched 7 to 10 days before transplanting.
- Cuphea rooted cuttings should be ready for transplanting 21 to 24 days after sticking.

Growing On to Finish

Media

Use a well-drained, disease-free, soilless medium with a pH of 5.4 to 5.8.

Temperature

- Nights: 59 to 64°F (15 to 18°C)
- Days: 71 to 79°F (21 to 26°C)
- Cool night temperatures will slow crop time dramatically.

Light

- Keep light intensities at 6,000 to 12,000 f.c. (60,000 to 120,000 Lux).
- Low light levels promote poor branching, stem stretch and reduce flowering.
- **Firecracker** Cuphea are daylength neutral and will flower year-round with recommended temperatures.

Watering

Firecracker Cuphea are susceptible to root diseases, yellowing foliage and Oedema-like symptoms if over-watered. Allow the media to dry slightly between watering but wilt should be avoided.

Fertilizer

- Use constant feed with 175 to 225 ppm, with additional iron as needed.
- full complement of minor elements should be provided.
- Leach regularly to avoid the buildup of high soluble salt levels.

Pinching

- Pinch plants 10 to 14 days after transplanting, as needed, to improve basal branching. A 4-in. (10-cm) crop can be produced with no pinch if necessary.
- Plants can be sheared to shape as the crop matures or hold the crop for later sales.

Controlling Growth

- Use high light and recommended temperatures to control growth and produce the best possible habit.
- **Firecracker** Cuphea will generally flower and be saleable well before any plant growth regulators are needed.
- Cuphea are extremely responsive to Florel and great care should be taken with this chemical, even at low rates, with this crop.

Common Problems

Insects: Aphids, thrips, whitefly, leafminer.

Diseases: Rhizoctonia, Pythium.

All **Firecracker** Cuphea cuttings are derived from culture and virus-indexed stock from the **Ball Certified Plants®** program.

Problem: Plant collapse

Causes: Wet media for an extended period (Pythium)

Problem: Delayed flowering

Causes: Low light levels; Excessive Florel application

Problem: Excessive vegetative growth

Causes: High ammonia concentration in the soil;
Over-fertilization under low light conditions; Low light
and over-watering; wet media

Problem: Poor branching

Causes: Low fertilization; lack of nitrogen

Problem: Stretched plants

Causes: Low light

Problem: Chlorosis

Causes: Iron deficiency; High pH; Nitrogen deficiency

Firecracker Cuphea Crop Schedule & Uses

Unrooted cuttings:

4 -In. (10-Cm) Pot 1 PP* 9 - 11 weeks

6-In. (15-Cm) Pot 1–2 PP* 10 - 12 weeks

10-In. (25-Cm) Pot 3–4 PP* 13 - 15 weeks

Rooted cuttings:

4 -In. (10-Cm) Pot 1 PP* 6 - 8 weeks

6-In. (15-Cm) Pot 1–2 PP* 7 - 9 weeks

10-In. (25-Cm) Pot 3–4 PP* 10 - 12 weeks

*PP: Plants per pot or basket

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.

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