

Penstemon Little Bells

(*Penstemon hybrida*)

Propagation

- Choose a well-drained medium with an EC of 0.75 to 0.80 mmhos and a pH of 5.8 to 6.2.
- Stick cuttings the day of arrival if possible. Otherwise, store at 45°F for not more than 18 hours before sticking.
- Soil temperature should be maintained at 70 to 72° F (21 to 24°C) until roots are visible.
- A rooting hormone basal dip containing 500 ppm IBA should be applied to promote early, uniform rooting.
- Mist at moderate to high levels for the first 24 hours to rehydrate cuttings. Use a low mist setting after this period.
- Begin fertilization with 50 to 75 ppm N when roots become visible.
- During root development maintain moderate moisture levels in the soil. Avoid saturation of media.
- Recommend one pinch in liner stage.
- Rooted cuttings should be ready for transplanting 35 to 42 days after sticking.

Growing On to Finish

Media

- Use media with good aeration and drainage.
- A pH of 5.8 to 6.2 is optimum.

Temperature

- Nights: 55 to 70°F (13 to 21°C)
- Days: 60 to 80°F (16 to 27°C)
- Vernalization not required

Light

- Will perform best under moderate to high light levels of 3,000 to 5,000 to 8,000 (32,000 to 53,000 Lux).
- Finish Penstemon outside under full sun conditions for best quality.

Watering

- The media should be allowed to dry moderately between watering and never saturated. However, plants should not be allowed to wilt at any time.
- Leach regularly to avoid the buildup of high soluble salt levels.

Fertilizer

Use a balanced fertilizer at a rate of 125 to 150 ppm.

Pinching

Benefits from a trim after transplant. Plants can be cut back to encourage re-blooming and extend market season.

Controlling Growth

Under most conditions, will not require growth regulator treatments.

Common Problems

Insects: Spider mites

Diseases: None noted

Key Tips

None

Problem: Plant collapse

Causes: Plants grown in saturated media for extended periods of time (Pythium,); Rooted cuttings transplanted too deeply

Crop Schedule & Uses

(Crop Schedule in Weeks – Spring planting is recommended.)

1 PPP* 1-qt. (10-cm) Pots

Unrooted cutting 10 - 14 weeks

Rooted cutting 8 - 10 weeks

1 PPP* 1-gal. (15-cm) Pots

Unrooted cutting 15 - 17 weeks

Rooted cutting 10 - 12 weeks

3 PPP* 2 to 3-gal. (25 to 30-cm) Pots

Unrooted cutting 19 - 22 weeks

Rooted cutting 12 - 14 weeks

*PPP: Plants per pot or basket