

Salvia Mystic Spires Blue

(*Salvia longispicata* X *farinacea*)

A Ball FloraPlant Product

Propagation

- Choose a well-drained medium with an EC of 0.75 to 0.80 mmhos and a pH of 5.8 to 6.2.
- 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.
- Begin fertilization with 75 to 100 ppm N when roots become visible. Increase to 150 to 200 ppm N as roots develop.
- 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.
- As the rooted cuttings develop, appropriate water stress and moderate air temperatures should eliminate the need for chemical plant growth regulators (PGR).
- If needed, apply Bonzi as a drench (0.5 to 3 ppm) 10 to 12 days after sticking.
- **Mystic Spires Blue** Salvia should be pinched 18 to 24 days after sticking, when roots are well developed, to promote early branching and improve habit.
- **Mystic Spires Blue** Salvia rooted cuttings should be ready for transplanting 21 to 24 days after sticking.

Growing On to Finish

Media

- A pH of 5.8 to 6.2 is optimum.
- **Mystic Spires Blue** Salvia prefers a well-drained soil.

Temperature

- Nights: 62 to 67°F (17 to 19°C)
- Days: 71 to 79°F (21 to 26°C)

Light

- **Mystic Spires Blue** Salvia should be grown in high light; 6,000 to 10,000 f.c. (60,000 to 100,000 Lux) is the ideal range.
- Plants will stretch badly at light intensities below 4,000 f.c. (40,000 Lux); branching will be reduced, as will flowering, and the overall quality of **Mystic Spires Blue** Salvia will be reduced significantly.
- **Mystic Spires Blue** Salvia will bloom quicker under short days.

Watering

The medium must be allowed to dry between waterings. However, periods of sustained wilting should be avoided.

Fertilizer

- **Mystic Spires Blue** Salvia has a moderate fertilizer requirement.
- Maintain constant fertilization at 150 to 225 ppm N.
- Excessive phosphorous and ammoniacal nitrogen will promote unwanted vegetative growth. Both should be provided in very limited quantities.
- If new growth is chlorotic, add chelated iron to the feed.
- Slow-release fertilizer can be incorporated at a moderate rate to supplement a liquid program.

Pinching

- **Mystic Spires Blue** Salvia should be pinched 7 to 10 days after transplanting.
- Depending on the pot size, light levels and other cultural factors, 1 to 2 additional pinches will be required. Each pinch should be performed when 4 mature leaves can be left on the stem after the terminal is removed to ensure adequate breaks after the pinch. Plants should bloom 4 to 6 weeks after a pinch.

Controlling Growth

- Maintain recommended temperatures and light levels to avoid stretch.
- Wet media will cause stretching and produce weak growth.
- Do not allow the plants to become crowded on the bench.
- **Mystic Spires Blue** Salvia is responsive to Bonzi (0.5 to 1.5 ppm drench), B-Nine (2,500 to 3,000 ppm) and Cycocel (1,000 to 1,500 ppm) tank mix (spray) applied 1 to 3 times and is effective for toning. Applications should be made 10 to 14 days apart as needed.
- When growing under long day conditions (>14 hr. days), additional applications of PGRs will be required. B-Nine/Cycocel tank mix is most effective.
- These recommendations for plant growth regulators should be used only as general guidelines. Growers must trial all chemicals under their particular conditions.

Common Problems

Insects: Thrips, aphids, whitefly, fungus gnats

Diseases: Botrytis, Pythium, Rhizoctonia

All **Mystic Spires Blue** Salvia cuttings are derived from culture and virus-indexed stock from the **Ball Certified Plants®** program.

Problem: Plant collapse

Causes: Stem canker (Botrytis); Plants grown in saturated media for extended periods of time (Pythium)

Problem: Excessive vegetative growth and lack of flowers

Causes: Excessive ammonia nitrogen in fertilizer; Low light and over-watering; saturated media

Problem: Poor branching and thin plants

Causes: Low fertilization during early stages of growth; low light

Mystic Spires Blue Salvia Crop Schedule & Uses

Unrooted cuttings:

4-In. (10-Cm) Pot 1 PP* 9 - 13 weeks

6–8-In. (15–20-Cm) Pots 1–2 PP* 10 - 14 weeks

10–12-In. (25–30-Cm) Pots 2–3 PP* 13 - 15 weeks

Rooted cuttings:

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

6–8-In. (15–20-Cm) Pots 1–2 PP* 6 - 10 weeks

10–12-In. (25–30-Cm) Pots 2–3 PP* 8 - 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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