

Rhodanthemum Casablanca

(*Rhodanthemum hosmariense*)

Propagation

- Choose a well-drained medium with an EC of 0.8 to 1.0 mmhos and a pH of 5.5 to 5.8.
- Stick cuttings the day of arrival if possible. Otherwise, store at 45°F (7°C) 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 of 300-500 ppm should be applied to promote early, uniform rooting.
- Mist at moderate levels for the first 24 to 48 hours to rehydrate cuttings. Avoid over-application of mist after this period. Minimal mist or tenting will yield the best results.
- Begin fertilization with 50 to 75 ppm N after 7 days.
- During root development, maintain moderate moisture levels in the soil. Avoid saturation of media to ensure faster rooting.
- Soft pinching in the propagation tray at 21 to 25 days after sticking will promote a well-branched finished plant.
- Rooted cuttings should be ready for transplanting 28 to 35 days after sticking.

Growing On to Finish

Media

- Use media with good aeration and drainage. Rhodanthemums are native to the hills of North Africa and prefer well-drained media.
- Prefers a medium that is high in organic matter.
- A pH of 5.8 to 6.2 is optimum. EC of 0.8 to 1.0 mmhos.

Temperature

- **Nights:** 45 to 50°F (8 to 10°C)
- **Days:** 50 to 60°F (10 to 15°C)
- Temperatures below those recommended will slow plant growth.
- An average daily temperature of 55°F (13°C) is optimal, but plants will tolerate a wide range of warm temperatures.
- Rhodanthemums do not require a vernalization period for bulking or flowering. They will flower naturally in early to mid-Spring and continue flowering until night temperatures exceed 70°F (21°C).

Light

- Will perform best under moderate to high light levels of 3,500 to 5,000 f.c. (35,000 to 50,000

Lux).

- Rhodanthemums flower best when given daylength in excess of 12 hours.
- Finish Rhodanthemum plants outside in full sun conditions for best quality and shortest penduncles.

Watering

- The media should be allowed to dry moderately between watering and never saturated. Once plants are reaching maturity, slight water stress will help avoid stretch. However, over-dry plants will develop yellow lower leaves.
- Leach regularly to avoid the buildup of high soluble salt levels.

Fertilizer

Use a balanced neutral fertilizer at a rate of 150 to 175 ppm.

Pinching

Rhodanthemum Casablanca and Marrakech have been selected for excellent natural branching habit. Fuller and larger plants can be achieved by pinching once in the propagation tray; can be pinched a second time 1 to 2 weeks after transplant to create very full plants.

Controlling Growth

Under most conditions, will not require growth regulator treatments. Plants will respond to B-Nine at 2,500 ppm/CCC at 800 ppm tank mix if growing conditions cause stretch. However, flower size may be negatively affected. It is best to grow cool and use negative DIF if possible.

Common Problems

Insects: White Fly, Spider Mites

Diseases: Botrytis

Problem: Plant collapse

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

Problem: Excessive vegetative growth and lack of flowers

Causes: Excessive ammonium-based fertilizer; Over-fertilization under low light conditions; Low light and over-watering; saturated media

Problem: Yellowing of young foliage

Causes: Saturated media

Problem: Foliage necrosis

Causes: High soluble salts in media; Excessive water; Pesticide application

Problem: Poor branching and thin plants

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

Crop Schedule & Uses

(Crop schedule in weeks for Winter planting. Single pinch 1-quart. Larger containers can be single or double pinched.)

1 PPP* 1-quart (10-cm) pot
Unrooted cutting 12 - 14 weeks

Rooted cutting 8 - 10 weeks

1 PPP* 1-gallon (15-cm) pot
Unrooted cutting 14 - 16 weeks

Rooted cutting 10 - 12 weeks

3 PPP* 2 to 3-gallon (25 to 30-cm) pot
Unrooted cutting 16 - 18 weeks

Rooted cutting 12 - 14 weeks

*PPP: Plants per pot

Schedule for traditional Fall planting: For best results, plant liners into final container prior to week 48 in the South and week 42 in the North. Plants should be well-established in final containers before exposure to freezing or near-freezing temperatures.

