

Online Extras

Short and Sweet – Growing Dwarf Flowers Part I

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Keep flowering plants short with this helpful guide. Although many dwarf flowers will stay short thanks to their genetics, adhering to specific growing conditions, utilizing certain training techniques and using growth retardant sprays will encourage a shorter and higher quality flowering dwarf.

Growing Conditions

Maintain reasonably good levels of light

- Without good light, dwarf plants will stretch and become thin and weak.
- Light levels should be similar to those provided to young tomato or capsicum plants indoors as they head out of the seedling stage and start to form flower buds.

Nutrition and EC control

- Provides some growth control.
- Hydroponic growers have a significant advantage over soil-mix production.
- Careful use of root zone EC control can help restrict vegetative growth in favor of flowering development
- Provides maximum nutrition for a long vase life of the blooms after cutting.

Bloom/Bud Promotion

- High potassium/calcium boosters, nutrient supplements, beneficial elements (silica) and other products developed for flowering plants will produce truly magnificent blooms if applied at the right stage of growth.

Training

Many true genetic dwarfs (F1 hybrids) of many species don't need any form of plant training or manipulation and will branch naturally. However, some species do benefit from some form of training in the form of:

Light pinching back of growing tips

- Removal of this apical dominance forces the plant to produce many side shoots, all of which should produce flowers, giving a more bush plant and better display of color.
- Not all species respond well to this and it's a good idea to check the production guidelines given by seed companies about pinching and trimming

Growth Retardant Sprays

- Widely used in the nursery industry to produce short and compact flowering plants on tall varieties.
- Advances in plant breeding and the production of true genetic hybrid dwarf flower types means this practice is much less common, although there is still potential there for use of these plant growth compounds.

“Those with limited space or indoor areas that need some brightening up don't have to miss out on these fun and colorful crops.”

