

CUT POINSETTIAS*

Peter B. Pfahl

Many florists are finding that cut poinsettias have considerable appeal for their customers when used in floral work. Table centerpieces, mantel piece arrangements, and other table decorations are just a few of the places where florists can use cut poinsettias.

A study at Penn State has shown that cut poinsettias will last fourteen days at room temperature after being cut. Whether you place the flowers in tap water, warm water, boiling water, or singe over a flame, they will all last longer if the leaves are removed. However, when the leaves are necessary and form an integral part of the design, then it is best to place the cut stem in warm water (70-90° F.) or singe over a flame.

In order to make certain that the heavy flowers do not break off, tie the cut poinsettias in small groups for the first six hours of treatment. Placing them in tall cans will also help to keep the stems straight and from being broken. Then the flowers are ready for use as cut flowers in design work. These will not hold up unless the stems are in water. Not recommended for wedding bouquets.

Three cut poinsettias 15 and 18 inches in length were used in each of 10 different treatments. Half of the treatments used flowers with all leaves on the stem, and half used flowers with every leaf removed.

Treatments	Results:		
	3 days	9 days	14 days
1. Check - tap water, leaves on	dropping	dead	dead
2. Tap water, leaves off	excellent	good	<u>good</u>
3. Water 75-90° F. leaves on	excellent	good	<u>good</u>
4. Water 75-90° F. leaves off	excellent	good	<u>good</u>
5. Stems flame singed, leaves on	good	dead	dead
6. Stems flame singed, leaves off	excellent	good	<u>good</u>
7. Stems boiling water 30 sec. leaves on	good	dead	dead
8. Stems boiling water 30 sec. leaves off	good	dropping	dead
9. Water 90°, to 35° refrig 18 hrs., leave on	dropping	dead	dead
10. Water 90°, to 35° refrig 18 hrs., leaves off	dropping	dead	dead

The flower stems were placed immediately after cutting in mason jars of water. They were all held at room temperature throughout the experiment except treatments 9 and 10 which were in a refrigerator for 18 hours.

* Condensed from Pennsylvania Flower Growers 94, November 1958. P. 12.

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Pennsylvania Retail Florists 85, October 1966, P. 8.

As shown four treatments contained flowers in good condition for 14 days after cutting. All of the flowers were dead in 18 days. Flowers in the control group did not hold up even for one day. Cut poinsettias will last longer after being cut if all of the leaves are removed regardless of the treatment.