

"NO PINCH METHOD" FOR GROWING GARDEN MUMS

By Terri Starman, University of Tennessee



This article summarizes the research on the "No Pinch Method" for growing garden mums that Dr. James E. Faust and I did at the University of Tennessee. In our research, we basically found that pinching did not effect plant height or width. More specifically, we found no difference in the height and width of 34 garden mum varieties when they were pinched either once 2 weeks after potting, twice 2 and 4 weeks after potting, or

left unpinched. The main effect of pinching that we found was flower delay of early season varieties. Tennessee flower growers who have tried the no pinch method of growing garden mums have been happy with their results.

Rather than not pinching at all, we are recommending doing one pinch at the time of potting. This first pinch is not labor intensive or expensive and it can guard against production problems that may cause early stretching. In our research, we found that planting date is the best control of plant size. The earlier you plant, the larger your plants are going to be in the end (more about that to come in a later article). Here is a summary of the production aspects necessary to be successful with the no pinch method and a list of the garden mum varieties that we have tried it on successfully. We acknowledge the Fred C. Gloeckner Foundation for their funding of this research project.

1. Choose the right variety.

- The listed varieties that we grew did not need pinching.
- In general, plants with small flowers, lots of leaves, fine texture, and cushion habit do not need pinching.
- In general, plants with large flowers and an open growth habit need pinching.

2. Use optimum fertility and water practices. These include:

- Constant liquid feed with additional slow release fertilizer during rainy weather.
- Drip irrigation.
- Media with good water holding capacity like a peat based media.

3. Promote low branching by:

- Not allowing plants to stretch before transplanting to mum pans.
- Spacing plants early in production.
- Always using adequate spacing. We spaced our plants on 20 X 20-inch centers.

Flower Season

and Cultivar Name¹ Company Flower Color/Type²

Early Season (August)

Cockatoo	GroLink ³	White daisy
Helen	Yoder	Red decorative
Parakeet	GroLink	Yellow button
Jenny Wren	GroLink	Red decorative
Toucan	GroLink	Pink/Lav. spider
Peacock	GroLink	Pink/Lav. decorative
Jean	Yoder	Pink/Lav. decorative
Xanthus	GroLink	Yellow daisy

Mid Season (September)

Donna	Yoder	Yellow daisy
Janice	Yoder	Yellow decorative
Aldo	GroLink	Bronze decorative
Bold Sophia	Yoder	Pink/Lav. decorative
Connie	Yoder	Pink/Lav. daisy
Red Crown Jewel	Yoder	Red daisy
Debonair	Yoder	Pink/Lav. decorative
Linda	Yoder	White decorative
Megan	Yoder	Pink/Lav. daisy
Jessica	Yoder	Yellow decorative
Warm Sandy	Yoder	Bronze daisy
Pidoul	GroLink	White daisy
Hummingbird	GroLink	Pink/Lav. button

Flower Season

and Cultivar Name¹ Company Flower Color/Type²

Late Season (October)

Gold Finch	GroLink	Yellow decorative
Red Start	GroLink	Red decorative
Blue Jay	GroLink	Pink/Lav. decorative
Yellow Sarah	Yoder	Yellow decorative
Ibis	GroLink	Pink/Lav. decorative
Kimberly	Yoder	Pink/Lav. daisy
Denise	Yoder	Bronze decorative
Sunshine	Yoder	Yellow daisy
Kookaburra	GroLink	Bronze decorative
Verona	GroLink	Yellow anemone
Kiskadee	GroLink	Yellow daisy
Diablo	GroLink	Red decorative
Alcala	GroLink	Pink/Lav. daisy

¹ Flower seasons are based on a June 4 planting date and Tennessee growing conditions.

² Flower color and type are based on company descriptions.

³ GroLink is the new name of Van Zanten North America.