

## Tree Poinsettia Production

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Tree poinsettias offer a method to increase your Christmas sales by offering your customers a wider choice of plant styles. Tree poinsettias are a long season crop, typically requiring 6 to 7 months to produce, although smaller versions can be produced with shorter schedules. For the past 2 years, tree poinsettias have been grown at Purdue University to compare the adaptability of cultivars. Below is the schedule used in 1992 (Table 1) and a summary of the size characteristics of the plants (Table 2).

**Results** Of the white cultivars grown, Angelika White was the most attractive. The overall shape of the plants were symmetrical and well proportioned. The Top White plants were the tallest of the cultivars grown, but the distribution of the bracts within the plant canopy was uneven and

sparse. V-14 White was a smaller sized plant than Angelika White, but the stem caliber was the largest of all the cultivars.

Supjibi was not as symmetrical in shape as it was in 1991, but the plants still had an attractive round shape. The Freedom trees were well rounded and had an appealing contrast between the deep red bracts and the dark green foliage. Angelika Marble trees were similarly shaped as Angelika White and also made an attractive plant. The Pink Peppermint plants made an attractive tree, but the extent of bract coloration was less when compared to the other cultivars.

All of the cultivars grown in 1992, except Top White, produced attractively shaped trees. With wholesale prices currently at \$30 to \$60 per pot, this crop may be feasible for your operation.

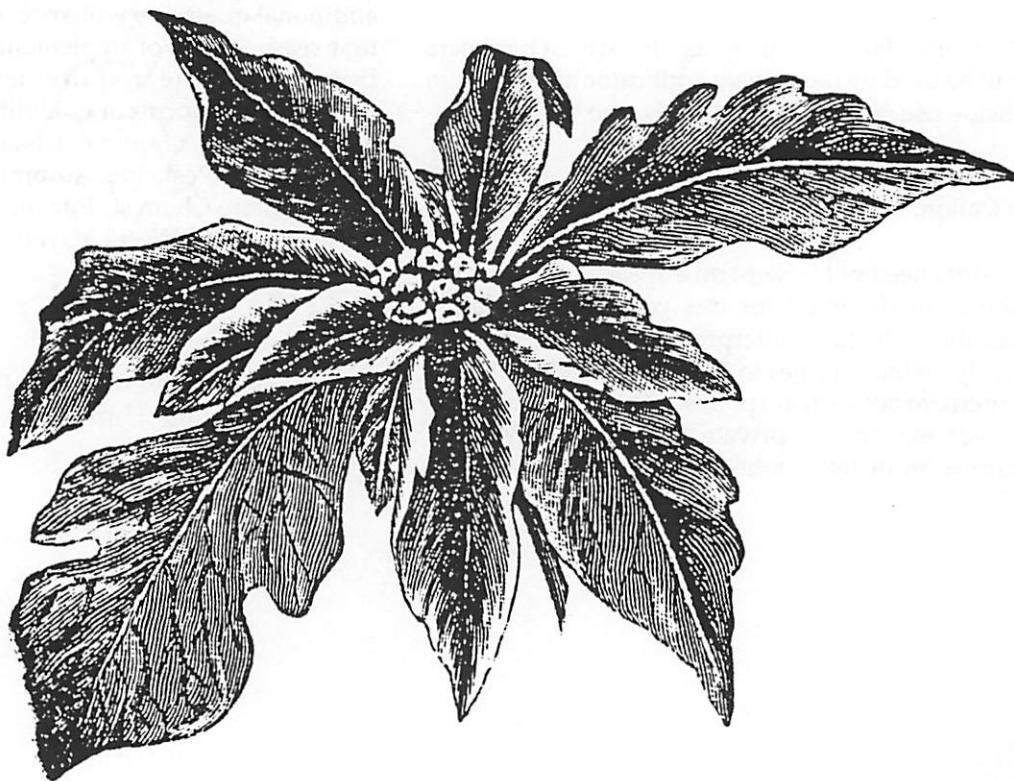


Table 1. Schedule for growing tree poinsettias, 1992<sup>1</sup>.

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May 14	Rooted cuttings potted in 4" pots
July 2	Plants shifted to 7" pots Remove any major axillary shoots that may develop on lower stem
August 13	Pinch the terminal growth, removing the top 1" Remove any large lower leaves to limit whitefly development
September 2	Remove all but the top 10 axillary shoots Remove any large lower leaves on the axillary shoots
September 18	Pinch the remaining 10 axillary shoots Keep removing any undesirable axillary shoots that may develop
October 14	Start short days
December 15	Bract coloration complete
Monthly fungicide applications provided. Insecticide sprays applied as needed.	

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<sup>1</sup> Schedule modified from the Tips on Growing Poinsettias, Bulletin FP-764.

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Table 2. Growth characteristics of tree poinsettias, 1992.

<u>Cultivar</u>	<u>Height (in.)</u>	<u>Diameter (in.)</u>	<u>Stem Diameter (in.) (3.9 in. above rim)</u>
<u>White Cultivars</u>			
Top White	53.3	40.6	0.67
Angelika White	42.1	42.0	0.75
V-14 White	36.5	34.1	0.83
<u>Red Cultivars</u>			
Supjibi	35.7	32.3	0.79
Freedom	32.2	31.3	0.75
<u>Other Colors</u>			
Angelika Marble	43.6	41.7	0.71
Pink Peppermint	39.7	33.2	0.63
Significant	***	***	*

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\*, \*\*\*: Averages significant at the P=0.01 or 0.0001 levels, respectively, within columns.