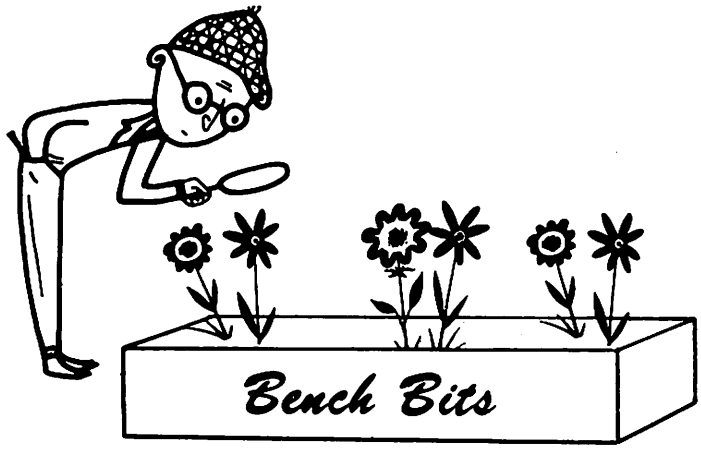


# BEDDING PLANT SALES ANALYSIS 1970 SEASON

*Courtesy: "Bedding Plant News" published by Bedding Plants, Inc. by Alvi Voigt*

What annual had the best sales rating for the 1970 season? Petunias? Guess again. Marigolds? Close . . . guess again! TOMATOES! Let's explain . . .

In a brief survey of the 1970 season, Will Carlson received 121 responses from about 180 commercial grower members of B.P.I. That's a large response . . . two out of three members. Of the B.P.I. survey respondents, the results will be weighted heavily with Michigan members (24) and Ohio (21), but there were: New York (9); Pennsylvania (7); Wisconsin and Canada (each 6); California and Oregon (each 5); Washington and Minnesota (each 4); and there were 19 other states represented with three or less replies. Your state can have a better showing in next year's survey if you get fellow growers to "go with B.P.I. – maybe next year's survey can separate a market analysis by states or regions to make the results more valuable.

## SALES RATINGS OF ANNUALS . . .

How did B.P.I. members rate their 1970 sales of annuals? The alphabetical table, Fig, 1, presents their ratings into percentage categories of **excellent, good, fair, poor** and **"didn't sell."** We added another category of **"no answer,"** and also a category of **"EG"**, combining the percentages of excellent and good. We believe that "EG" is more descriptive of the overall, relatively better sales ratings at a glance. For instance: Tomatoes, 95%; marigolds, 91%; peppers, 90%; impatiens and salvia, 86% grandiflora petunias, 84%; begonias, 78%; geraniums (cuttings), 75%; portulaca, 73%; snapdragons, 68%; cabbage, 64%; double petunias, 62%; multiflora petunias, 60%; zinnias, 57%; pansies, 56%, and so on. Notice the sales ratings for the vegetables! And–the grandiflora petunia looks significantly better than doubles or multifloras. Likewise, the industry has been wondering about the sales potential of annuals other than petunias, such as impatiens and begonias–well, salvia, portulaca and snaps look strong. Marigolds received the strongest sales ratings of the flowers!

These results are intriguing, but let's use some caution in our interpretations. Remember, they represent two of these B.P.I. members (not the nation), and they are not weighed by actual sales figures (a huge bedding plant operation and a small setup would each have only one "vote").

Continuing, geranium sales **from cuttings** are heavily represented by B.P.I.'s excellent and good 75% sales rating. Geraniums **from seed** received only a 28% EG rating, with 15% fair, 16% poor, 19% didn't sell and 22% no answer. Are geraniums from seed a "comer" for B.P.I.? Should B.P.I. members receive help to alleviate the 15% fair and 16% good sales ratings, and perhaps educate the 19% didn't sell and the 22% no answer? (Geraniums are the most important pot plant in the country; geranium sales had the highest rate of growth of any flower crop in the last twenty years, and the wholesale value of geraniums may be in the neighborhood of $60 million.)

**B.P.I. SALES RATINGS, 1970 SEASON**

| | Excellent | Good | EG | Fair | Poor | Didn't Sell | No Answer |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Begonias | 51% | 27% | 78% | 13% | 2½% | 3% | 2½% |
| Browallia | 3% | 12% | 15% | 16% | 10% | 30% | 30% |
| Celosia | 6% | 19% | 25% | 27% | 17% | 16% | 15% |
| Geranium (seed) | 11% | 17% | 28% | 15% | 16% | 19% | 22% |
| Geranium (cuttings) | 53% | 22% | 75% | 2½% | 1% | 6½% | 15% |
| Lobelia | 15% | 28% | 43% | 26% | 14% | 6% | 11% |
| Impatiens | 62% | 24% | 86% | 7% | 0% | 3% | 3% |
| Marigolds | 54% | 39% | 91% | 6% | 1% | 0% | 1% |
| Pansies | 36% | 20% | 56% | 17% | 5% | 3% | 18% |
| Petunias | 40% | 21% | 61% | 11% | 2½% | 0% | 25% |
| (Multiflora) | 33% | 27% | 60% | 21% | 6% | 0% | 13% |
| (Grandiflora) | 57% | 27% | 84% | 10% | 2½% | 0% | 3% |
| (Doubles) | 33% | 29% | 62% | 18% | 13% | 1% | 6% |
| Phlox | 7% | 24% | 31% | 27% | 19% | 9% | 13% |
| Portulaca | 26% | 47% | 73% | 18% | 2% | 4% | 2½% |
| Salvia | 33% | 53% | 86% | 12% | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| Snapdragon | 24% | 44% | 68% | 24% | 7% | 0% | 1% |
| Verbena | 10% | 32% | 42% | 41% | 7% | 2% | 7% |
| Vinca | 21% | 26% | 47% | 26% | 6% | 8% | 12% |
| Zinnia | 21% | 36% | 57% | 26% | 7% | 3% | 6% |
| Tomatoes | 75% | 20% | 95% | 3% | 1% | 0% | 1% |
| Peppers | 67% | 23% | 90% | 5% | 1% | 2% | 2½% |
| Cabbage | 37% | 27% | 64% | 14% | 7% | 7% | 7% |

FIG. 1

Does B.P.I. have a larger responsibility – and opportunity – with geraniums?

The sales ratings missed a few annuals which were not specifically listed in the survey, and which

*continued to page 4*

Illinois State Florists' Association

# BULLETIN

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No. 320 | A. P. Gasior, Editor | DECEMBER, 1970

# WEBER MACFARLAND TO COMMENTATE AT SPRING CONFERENCE I.S.F.A. DESIGN SCHOOL - TRADE FAIR AND GROWERS SHORT COURSE PLANNED

**R. WEBER MACFARLAND** – commentator, writer, TV personality will appear as Guest Commentator at the ISFA Spring Conference.

C. J. Schlosser, General Show Chairman and Jean Williams Design School Chairman have announced the appointment of R. Weber MacFarland as Commentator for the Spring Conference. The annual Illinois State Florists' Association's Spring Conference is set for March 6 and 7 at Springfield, Illinois.

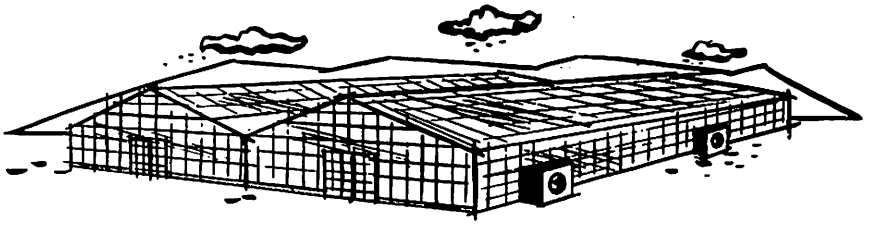
In making the announcement of "Weber" MacFarland's appointment, Mrs. Williams feels "Weber" will make the I.S.F.A. Spring Conference exciting, as well as informative to all members, guests and friends. Mrs. Williams feels "Weber" is one of the industry's most popular and active public relations boosters. He is one of our industries outstanding teachers as well as the owner of the MacFarland School of Floristry. He also is the owner of the MacFarland's Flowers–Gifts in Cary, N. C. The committee feels with this experience he can bring to the school, experience as a teacher, and the practical experience of a shop owner.

Industry members every where know him simply as "Weber" through his more then twenty five years within the industry, plus his distinguished role of Commentator, Lecturer, Writer. He has also appeared on TV and Radio. Along with his varied interests his main concern is to help persons seriously interested in learning professional floristry do so in a short period of time for a minimum personal expense. I.S.F.A. Conference goers can be assured of the best commentary at the Spring Conference.

C. J. Schlosser, General Show Chairman further announced his plans to furnish the Illinois Growers an opportunity to hear some of our industries finest speakers. He is working with Dr. Marv. Carbonneau of the University of Illinois. Dr. Carbonneau and Mr. Schlosser are hopeful of bringing speakers that will cover a wide range of subjects of interest to the ISFA grower segment. The short course will be held in conjunction with the Design School so it is

*continued to page 10*

## Growers' Corner



# thoughts on the 1971 easter lily schedule

*Courtesy: – Jay S. Koths*
*Extension Ornamental Horticulturist*
*College of Agriculture and Natural Resources*
*The University of Connecticut, Storrs*

If your soil is especially low in phosphorus, incorporate not over 3 lbs. superphosphate per cubic yard for varieties other than Croft. Incorporate limestone as recommended through soil test to bring the pH up to 6.5 – 7.0. If the pH is high enough but calcium is below 100 ppm, incorporate gypsum at 2 to 5 lbs. per cubic yard.

Place 1 – 1½" of trap rock or stone in bottom of pot and place bulb ON THE STONE!

Watch watering carefully in early stages of growth. Do not allow to dry out.

For control of some root rot organisms, Dexon 35% WP (8 oz.) and Terraclor 75% WP (4 oz.) are used in 100 gallons of water at the first or second watering when 8 oz. is applied per 6" pot (5 oz./5" pot).

Calcium nitrate (2 parts) may be combined with potassium nitrate (1 part) to make a 15-0-15 soluble fertilizer and used at 1 lb. of the mixture per 40 gallons. If your soil is very low in phosphorus, alternate this mixture with 16-4-12 (1 lb./40 gal.) or 20-5-30 (1 lb./50 gal.)

Feed weekly (at 6 to 9 day intervals depending upon watering requirements) staring when lilies are ½ to 1½" high and continuing until buds tip. The last feed should be about March 28.

NEVER FEED WHEN A LILY IS WET – or even good and moist. Apply liquid fertilizers when you would normally water.

To reduce lily height, shade (Black cloth or plastic) from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. starting January 17 and discontinue February 21. If using Phosfon, apply at 1 1/3 oz./gal. using 8 oz. of solution per 6" pot (5 oz./5" pot). Make certain that your soil is low in phosphorus if you plan to see Phosfon.

To increase height, use mum lights (flashlighting, if you have it) from 10:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. during the above dates. Lower intensities (¾ to 1 watt per square foot of ground area) are also effective.

If your lilies always flower late, or if you didn't plant your bulbs on time, start lights as plants begin to emerge from the soil (about January 3). Light for 8 weeks. This may hasten flowering as much as 7 days.

When a small group of lilies is slow, a plastic tent may be erected over a bench with heat below to keep these plants warmer without affecting the rest of the crop. Do not allow the temperature to go above 85° F.

Storing at 35°–45°F (in the dark) when buds turn white will hold the plants in good condition for 10 days but it is no substitute for proper timing. Water thoroughly before removal from storage and place in a SHADY location to avoid excessive wilting.

Average times for forcing are presented in this schedule. Some growers find this schedule too early, others find it too late. Since Easter is later than normal, the time for forcing might be reduced. Planting may be delayed until just before Christmas by increasing night temperatures to 65° on January 15.

### 1971 EASTER LILY SCHEDULE

| Normal Greenhouse Forcing | Weeks To Easter | |
|---|---|---|
| Nov. 15 | 21 | Have your soil tested!!! (See note on back) |
| Dec. 13 | 17 | Plant bulbs. Apply Dexon-Terraclor drench as second watering (or first). |
| Dec. 20 | 16 | Check to see that no pots become dry. Dryness contributes to a non-uniform crop. |
| Dec. 27 | 15 | Roots forming. |
| Jan. 3 | 14 | Plants breaking soil. If your lilies are usually too short, start lighting. |
| Jan. 10 | 13 | Plants ½" - 2" tall – start feeding program. |
| Jan. 17 | 12 | 1-3" tall – if using Systox, apply first drench. If your lilies are usually too tall, start shading. |
| Jan. 24 | 11 | Test soil again. If using Phosfon to reduce height, apply when plants are 4"-6" high. |
| Jan. 31 | 10 | If not using Systox, use Vapona, thoidan or dithio for insects. |
| Feb. 7 | 9 | 5"-10" tall – grade for uniformity, adjusting temperatures according to advancement. |
| Feb. 14 | 8 | Apply second Systox drench. |
| Feb. 21 | 7 | Check for aphids. Check fertility program with another soil test. Discontinue lighting or shading. |
| Feb. 28 | 6 | Buds can be felt – some of them seen. |
| Mar. 7 | 5 | Buds ½"-1" long – grade for uniformity. |
| Mar. 14 | 4 | Buds 1"-1½" long. |
| Mar. 21 | 3 | Buds 1½"-2" long, some of the pots having one bending down. |
| Mar. 28 | 2 | Buds 2"-4" long – if aphids present, use dithio or DDVP smoke or gas. |
| Palm Sunday | 1 | Cool plants as soon as first bud turns whitish. |
| April 11 | 0 | |

# Spring Flowering Poinsettias

*Courtesy: Kenneth Sink & William Carlson, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Mich.*

THE POINSETTIA varieties Mikkelpink and Mikkeldawn, bract color sports of Paul Mikkelsen with exceptional keeping quality, have brought a grower interest to produce spring-flowering poinsettias.

An experiment was conducted to determine the general cultural requirements and consumer acceptance of spring-flowered poinsettias. A total of 144 6-inch clay pots, each containing three 2¼" plants of the Mikkelpink or Mikkeldawn variety obtained from the orginator, were panned on Feb. 22. Four replications were used and the three nutrient rates were 2, 3, or 4 lbs. of 20-20-20 soluble fertilizer per 100 gal. applied weekly. Daily watering was done through an automatic system. Observations were made on pinched and non-pinched plants of the two varieties.

The plants were lighted from midnight to 2:00 a.m. starting on the panning date and a minimum of 65° F. day-night temperature was maintained. On Mar. 7 one group of plants was pinched leaving 4 to 5 mature leaves on the 2¼" plants and the 9-hour short day treatment was also started. The height, bract diameter, and number of branches were recorded on May 8, (Table 1). On May 10, the Wednesday before Mother's Day, fifteen plants of each variety (pinched and single-stem) were placed in a "supermarket" or "garden center" sales situation and priced at $3.50 and $5.50. respectively.

## Results

The single-stem plants reached a height of approximately 16 inches and the pinched plants approximately 10 inches. There was no difference in height or number of branches due to fertilizer treatment. The average bract diameter of the pinched plants was 6 inches while the single-stem plants were 12 inches. There was an average of 8 branches per pan on pinched plants versus the 3 single stem plants per pan. The Mikkelpink variety was taller than Mikkeldawn. A limited number of plants were sold, mostly the single-stem ones with no preference toward either variety. The spring poinsettias were not a "hot" item in the stores in which they were placed. The plants were also promoted by a television show and a newspaper article. In view of the success several Michigan flower growers have had with spring-grown poinsettias and the partial success obtained in the present trial, and if a concentrated effort to inform the consumer about these plants is initiated, poinsettias will have a place in the spring market.

## Recommendations for Spring-Flowering Poinsettias for Mother's Day

1. Allow approximately 10 weeks from the start of short days until full bloom. Pinched plants will require about 1 week longer.
2. Temperature – 65° F. minimum day and night.
3. For pinching, wait 10-14 days after panning.
4. Use black cloth starting March 1 to 5 for late spring flowered poinsettias.
5. Fertilize–same as for Christmas, 3 lbs. of 20-20-20 per 100 gal. resulted in fine quality plants.
6. Drench the soil with Dexon–Terraclor the first week of panning.
7. Try small containers–single stem in 4-inch pot or 2 plants in a 5-inch azalea pot, pinched or grown single stem.

Table 1. Height and bract diameter in inches and number of branches of spring-flowered Mikkelpink and Mikkeldawn poinsettias.

| | Height | Bract Diameter | Number of branches |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Fertilizer** | | | |
| 400 ppm N | 13.8 | 9.0 a* | 5.4 |
| 600 ppm N | 14.2 | 9.3 ab | 5.2 |
| 800 ppm N | 13.4 | 9.5 b | 5.2 |
| **Culture** | | | |
| Branched | 10.5 x | 6.2 a | 7.6 x |
| Single-stem | 16.9 y | 12.2 b | 2.9 y |
| **Variety** | | | |
| Mikkeldawn | 12.5 x | 9.2 | 5.4 |
| Mikkelpink | 14.5 y | 9.4 | 5.2 |

* Identical Letter or unlettered indicates no difference. A and b; x and y are differences at the .05 and .01 levels of significance, respectively.