

CARNATIONS

Moderators: Charlie Wilton
Dick Schloss

Q. Has anyone answered the problem of splitting?

A theory was prepared last year, but not enough data was collected to give definite proof. The idea was that in the spring when light is increasing there is a sudden increase of light some time in April. All the calyxes formed before this time are small. The petals formed with the sudden increase in light are large. With large petals in a small calyx, splitting occurs. This accounts for the sudden appearance of splitting and also for the comparatively short duration of splitting.

Jake Miller: They also feel that splitting is associated with calyx size, and are trying to breed larger sized calyxes.

Q. When using mist for propagation, is bottom heat needed?

Langhans: A 70°F bottom heat will definitely increase the speed of rooting. In the Cornell greenhouses we use it all year around.

Art Petersen: We propagate all our cuttings under mist in perlite. Bottom heat is used from Sept. until mid-June. Remove cuttings after three weeks with a very large root system.

Q. Has anyone tried mist on growing plants?

Langhans: We used mist on one bench this past summer with excellent results. The rooted cuttings were planted the first of August and immediately mist was started. There was no shade over the plants. The carnations never wilted and began to grow at once. We kept the mist on this bench for one month and during that time the plants were never watered with a hose. Mist seems to have a great potential for this particular operation. It not only saves labor, but will produce a better plant.

Q. Should extra potash be added to the soil during January to help stiffen the stems?

Langhans: Extra potash will not help to stiffen the stems. Extra sunlight will, but there isn't any economical way to increase that. Weakness of stems is directly correlated with lack of sunlight. Toward the end of February your stems will get stronger and if you notice, so will the sunlight.

Q. What percent of peat moss is being used in the soil?

Thomson: Uses 25-35% peat moss and gets better growth than when he used to add manure.

Q. How long can you store cuttings at 31°F?

Thomson: Stored rooted cuttings in polyethylene bags for 7 months. Unrooted cuttings do not root well when stored for over two months.

Q. Has anyone seen growers pinching out the terminal flower to get a spray?

Andreassen: A few growers are allowing the side buds to develop and are getting a nice spray. They get 3 small flowers instead of 1. This will be good for certain kinds of work by the retailer.

Q. What can be done to eliminate rust?

Dimock: If splashing is eliminated and the plants are kept dry, rust should not be a problem. Rust on most plants can be completely controlled with zineb (Parzate or Z78) or maneb (Manzate or M22). Failure is usually due to improper coverage or to spacing treatments too far apart. On a straight protective schedule treatments might be spaced out considerably, but if treatments not started until disease builds up, treatments must be frequent. Materials might be less effective at low growing temperatures; this needs further study.

Q. Does mist cause more rust, botrytis, etc.?

Dimock: If you have disease free material to start with, you shouldn't have trouble with leaf diseases. Mist doesn't start diseases but may keep them going. If you were to use mist after plants came into bloom there is a real danger of botrytis on the flowers.

Q. What would be a good all around, all purpose dust?

Dimock: 5% DDT; 7% Fermate or Dithane Z78 or Parzate; 3/4% lindane; 20% sulfur; and 1% Aramite or 4% Malathion.

Q. What can be done for Rhizoctonia infestation in a benched crop?

Dimock: Use Terrachlor, 1 lb./100 gal., and drench the benches. Exact minimum amount necessary per square foot has never been determined, but 100 gals. applied to 400 sq. ft. has proved effective and safe. Possibly 100 gals. to 800 sq. ft. would be adequate.

Q. Does high temperatures, as we had last summer, affect spider infestation?

Naegele: Yes, the mites will multiply faster at higher temperatures.

Q. What is the best method of control for a small grower?

Naegele: Small growers can use Dithio smoke generators. Dithio kills mites, scales, and aphids. I believe its the best bet for a small grower.