

Cyclamen Cultural Reminders

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By the time you receive this newsletter, the cyclamen crop will be shifted into the final pots, 4" to 6" size depending upon your market.

Disease

Unfortunately, as you already know, cyclamen are susceptible to a number of disease organisms. Probably the most devastating organism is *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *cyclamintis*, known more commonly as *Fusarium* wilt.

No resistant cyclamen cultivars exist to *Fusarium* wilt. Sanitation; a superclean growing environment must be precisely maintained to eliminate this pathogen. No shortcuts here.

The most important cultural practice to follow is preparing and using the correct growing medium. Research and observations indicate that growing media containing composted hardwood or pine bark suppress *Fusarium* wilt. These barks should be incorporated into all cyclamen growing media from seeding to finished pot.

Fungicides such as Benlate, Topsin-M or Banrot do have some effect on *Fusarium* but do not stop the spread of the disease or cure the crop.

Proper fertilizer selection will also aid in reducing *Fusarium*. Use high-calcium, high-nitrate nitrogen and low-ammonium nitrogen fertilizers to avoid severe *Fusarium* infestations.

Finishing Tips

Gibberellic acid (GA) accelerates flowering by about two weeks and results in the flushing of blooms (more flowers open at one time). Apply gibberellic acid at 15 to 25 ppm about eight weeks before the desired flowering date. Direct the spray below the leaf canopy towards the top of the corm

and wet the flower buds to run off. You may need to apply a second application of GA about October 15 (for Christmas sale).

Maintain finishing temperatures about 62° F with good air circulation to reduce *Botrytis*.

References

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