

EFFECTIVE USE OF SADH*

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Growth retardants are widely used to reduce the height of mums and other greenhouse plants. However, some growers still have a problem with tall plants. This paper deals with the problems and possible answers to the failures of this dwarfing material when applied in the greenhouse.

Time of Day--An application of B-Nine late in the day has proven to be more successful than one applied in the morning or when temperatures are high. The dwarfing response is more effective when the spray is allowed to dry slowly on the plant. High temperatures created under shade cloth can cause some distortion of the leaves. When spraying B-Nine, leave the cover off the plants to eliminate temperature build-up on warm nights.

Cultivar Response--Cultivars (varieties) respond differently. On tall growing chrysanthemums, such as "Princess Ann," the first application should be two to three weeks after planting and the second application before disbudding. Be sure to check the application schedules for the cultivars you grow. (Concentrations should be increased during summer months for maximum effectiveness.) On petunias, apply when the plants are the size of a silver dollar and repeat if necessary on tall growing cultivars.

*B-Nine or Alar

Spacing--Crowding plants makes them grow tall. A well-grown 6" pot mum should be given 1 1/2 square feet of bench area (spaced 15" x 15").

Light--Insufficient light will cause plants to stretch. Dirty glass or plastic, shade cloth, cloudy days, crops growing under hanging pots, and other conditions will contribute to stem elongation.

Temperatures--Excessive temperatures can cause too rapid drying of the spray material, reducing absorption and effectiveness of the growth regulator. During periods of very low humidity, there is a possibility that effectiveness will also be reduced. Therefore, spray on a cloudy, cool day or in early morning or late afternoon.

Watering--In order to use the growth retardant efficiently, be sure the plants are well watered prior to application to insure turgidity and facilitate maximum absorption of the dwarfing compound. An overhead watering within twenty-four hours after application may wash some of the material from the foliage and reduce the dwarfing effect.