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**FOLDING TO REDUCE HEIGHT
OF TALL POINSETTIAS ***

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Figure 1. Folding operation for reducing height of tall poinsettias. Length of fold governed by height of finished plant.

taller than folded plants although the folding operation originally reduced the height of the plants 50 per cent.

Tall plants were folded by crushing approximately two inches of the stem in one plane above the woody region at the base of the plant. After crushing, the stem was folded over the forefinger with care to avoid snapping the stem. The crushing and folding operations were repeated at another point on the stem above the original fold. The position of the second fold was determined by the height desired for the finished plant.

The folded stem was maintained in position by tying to the main shoot. Because of the rigidity of the folded plants, staking was unnecessary. The completed operation is illustrated in Figure 1.

All leaves reversed by the folding operation naturally returned to their normal position in approximately 5 to 7 days after a twisting of the petiole occurred. No wilting was observed and few to no leaves dropped because of the folding operation.

The data of height, bract diameter, date of flowering, and growth after folding are presented in Table 1. The figures represent the average of six plants per treatment. Rooted cuttings (Improved Albert Ecke) grown in six inch pots to a single stem were planted in sterilized soil on August 5, 1952. The plants were fertilized every two weeks with a solution of ½ pound potassium nitrate and ½ pound ammonium nitrate per 50 gallons and grown with a normal daylength until flowering. Although these plants were folded on October 1, the date of folding did not appear to be a critical factor from observations of other folding dates.

Folding the stems of poinsettias to reduce the height of tall plants delayed flowering approximately three days but did not affect bract diameter. Growth from October 1 to December 3 (after folding) was reduced six inches (20 per cent) because of the folding operation when compared to unfolded plants.

Quality was similar for both treatments except for height. Unfolded plants at the time of flowering were 40 per cent

* Cuttings obtained from stock plants donated by Paul Ecke, Encinitas, California.

FOLDING POINSETTIAS -

(Continued from Page 1)

TABLE 1. Height and days to flower of folded and unfolded poinsettia plants. Variety - Improved Albert Ecke
TREATMENT

	Check Unfolded	Folded
Height in inches at time of folding	35.6	34.9
Height after folding	- - -	17.4
Height at flowering	60.4	36.2
Growth in inches after folding (Oct. 1 to Dec. 3)	24.8	18.8
Bract Diameter in inches	16.6	16.5
Days to show color (From October 1)	40.0	44.7
Days to flower (From October 1)	61.0 Nov. 30	63.2 Dec. 3