



# HEDGING ONE-YEAR CARNATION PLANTS

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Haircutting, hedging, or cutting back 1-year-old carnation plants can reduce summer flower production and substantially increase winter and spring production. The practice is only recommended on 1-year-old plants. The new growth can be as good as a new planting. Labor is also reduced while the plants are renewing their growth. The essentials for hedging are as follows:

- Plants must be healthy, with little or no soil disease potential (such as Fusarium wilt or nematodes).
- Hedging must be done early—preferably in May, but not later than June 15. One reason is to have the new flower crop in time for Christmas. Also, regrowth is very dense and the crop must be cut out before short winter days to prevent weak stems and allow sufficient light for spring breaks to develop.
- **Irrigation is critical!** It is best not to irrigate 5 to 7 days before hedging. Reason: hedg-

ing removes most of the leaves, and the plants are at a low water-use level. The root systems must readjust and are susceptible to waterlogging and invasion by soil fungi. After pruning, do not irrigate again until new shoots are ½ to 1 inch long. This may be 4 to 6 weeks after pruning.

- A drench of Benlate®-Dexon® with the final irrigation before pruning and also with the first irrigation after pruning could help prevent root rots.
- Pruning height for 1-year-old plants is about 10 to 12 inches, in sound main stems above the original pinch in firm green-colored “wood.”
- Finally, do not rely on hedging to solve all production problems. It is but one technique. Soil fumigation and replanting are still necessary to stay in business.