

Late Pinching as a possible Means of Avoiding Heavy Fall
Production on Carnations

by T. D. Holley

The carnation varieties White Patrician and Frosted Patrician were stuck in sand March 22, transplanted to a nurse bed April 20, and pinched May 18. These plants were benched June 21, and used in soil mulching experiments and timing studies. The program set up for a second staggered pinch called for not more than one pinch per plant on July 1, July 15, Aug. 1 and Aug. 15.

The shoots on these plants were not far enough advanced to pinch on July 1, but were pinched July 15 and August 1. One shoot per plant was pinched on White Pat August 15, but not on Frosted Pat. This was the only difference between the handling of these varieties.

The distribution of production on these two varieties is presented graphically in Figure 2. The production by months was as follows:

	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Total
Frosted Pat	675	275	264	203	254	175	755	366	2969
White Pat	158	396	383	287	289	217	635	294	2659

	Oct. and Nov.	Dec. thru May	Dec., Jan., and Feb.
Frosted Pat	950	2017	721
White Pat	554	2105	959

The production from October through the week of May 13 was 23.3 blooms per square foot for Frosted Pat and 21.6 for White Pat.

Discussion of Production Curves

The production curve for Frosted Pat in Figure 2 is characterized by extreme peaks on either end of the production year. The October peak was due to shoots originating in May which were not long enough to pinch again by August 1. The low but fairly steady cut through the winter and early spring came from July 15 and August 1 pinches. The high peaks in April and May were caused by the August 1 pinch and the return crop from fall cutting.

The White pat curve differs considerably in that the extreme peak in October is lacking. By pinching the most advanced shoot on each plant August 15, this peak was delayed about one month and reduced by half. The production from November through March is significantly greater although the April-May cut is slightly less than for Frosted Pat. The total cut for White Pat was reduced 1.7 blooms per square foot but the distribution was such that the crop was more marketable.

What Causes Heavy Fall Production?

October and early November carnation production results from May and June pinching. Many of the breaks developing from May pinches are not long enough to pinch again by late July when some growers stop pinching. The top breaks developing from June pinches on the Sim varieties will flower in October.

Is Heavy Fall Production Necessary?

An appreciable quantity of carnations must be cut in the fall since September and October cuts start the return crop for the period from early spring to Mother's Day. On the Sim varieties a mid-November cut returns about mid-April. Other varieties are slower, some by two months.

Some late pinching done August 1 to September 1, especially on varieties not wanted in early fall, will help to reduce the fall cut and still give the flowers during late winter and spring. Late pinches should be made high on the shoot so the developing shoots will get adequate light. These late pinches may reduce the overall production but, with normal market conditions prevailing, they should not reduce income per square foot.

Your editor,

T. D. Holley

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CARNATION TIMING FROM A SECOND PINCH

Variety	Pinch Date	Start of Heavy cut	Date Peak Cut	Weeks to Peak Cut	End of Heavy Cut
White Sim	July 1	Oct. 14	Oct. 30	17	Feb. 11
	July 15	Oct. 30	Nov. 27	19	Feb. 18
	Aug. 1	Dec. 25	Feb. 4	27	May 6
	Aug. 15	Jan. 21	Feb. 4	25	after May 12
Donna Lee	July 15	Dec. 11	Jan. 28-Feb. 11	28-30	Feb. 18
	Aug. 1	Dec. 31	Feb. 4	29	Mar. 25
	Aug. 15	Jan. 28	Feb. 25	28	Apr. 15
White Pat	July 15	Dec. 11	Dec. 18-Jan. 21	22-27	Apr. 22
	Aug. 1	Feb. 25	Apr. 15	37	Apr. 29
Frosted Pat	July 15	Dec. 4	Dec. 11-18	21-22	May 6
	Aug. 1	Jan. 28	Apr. 15	39	after May 12
Miller's Yellow	July 1	Dec. 4	Dec. 31	26	after May 12
	July 15	Dec. 25	no peak	--	after May 12
	Aug. 1	Mar. 4	has not peaked by May 12.		

THE TIMING OF RETURN CROPS

Variety	Date Cut	Start of Heavy Cut	Date of Peak Cut	End of Heavy Cut
William Sim*	Oct. 17-23	Mar. 5	Apr. 16	June 11
	Nov. 26-Dec. 2	Apr. 9	May 7 and June 11	after July 1
White Sim	Nov. 13-18	Mar. 25	Apr. 8	after May 12
Donna Lee	Oct. 30-Nov. 6	Mar. 18	Apr. 1	after May 12
White Pat*	Nov. 26-Dec. 2	Apr. 23	May 14 and	after July 1
			June 11	
Frosted Pat	Oct. 30-Nov. 6	Apr. 15	Apr. 29	after May 12

*This data obtained during the 1949-50 cropping season. All the rest was obtained during the 1950-51 season.

Pinches were made on healthy, well established plants. About 10 to 40 percent of the shoots pinched were clearing side growths at the time of pinching, depending upon the variety and the time pinches were made.

The return crops except on Donna Lee were from cuts made to two side growths, if there were growths present. Otherwise the cuts were made at a corresponding level on unbranched stems. Donna Lee was cut to several side growths.

The number of pinches or cuts in each instance was approximately 100. The production was up to 240 for an individual pinch or cut.

Night temperature - 48-52° F.

Day temperatures - Cloudy days--50-55° F. Sunny days--65-75° F.