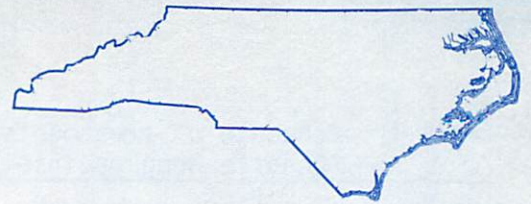


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MAXIMUM RETURN WITH MINI-POINSETTIAS

Roy A. Larson and Bobby G. Hilliard

In 1972 guidelines for producing 4" mini-multi-flowering "Annette Hegg" poinsettia plants were proposed by Paul Ecke Poinsettias, Encinitas, California. Their guidelines stated:

"The idea is to produce a very short-branched plant that is less than 12" total height.

This schedule for central Ohio does allow enough time to produce a good plant with 3 perfect blooms . . . of course, local conditions will require certain modifications."

Four blooming dates were suggested, beginning with November 25th and occurring at weekly intervals until December 15th (Table 1). Temperatures were to be gradually decreased from 75° F day-70° F night at the start of the program until a 65-60° F combination was reached at the time of flowering. The use of Cycocel was also

suggested, as plant height should be in balance with container size, and these plants were to be grown in 4" pots.

In the N. C. State University study 75 plants of the cv. Annette Hegg Supreme were in each group (based on scheduled bloom date shown in Table 1). Each group was further divided into Cycocel-treated, A-Rest-treated, and non-treated plants, with 25 plants in each treatment. The plants were grown in an unshaded greenhouse at a spacing of 2 plants per square foot of bench space. Typical plants from every treatment were photographed on the scheduled bloom dates.

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Table 1. Schedule of treatments for the production of 4" mini-multi-flowering "Annette Hegg" poinsettias.

Bloom date	Direct stick into 4" pot	Lights on	Pinch	Lights off	Start black cloth	Stop black cloth	Growth retardant spray ^b
A. Nov. 25	Aug. 28 ^a	Sept. 1	Sept. 15	Sept. 23	Sept. 23	Oct. 21	Sept. 8 Sept. 23
B. Dec. 1	Aug. 28 ^a	Sept. 1	Sept. 15	Oct. 1	Oct. 1	Oct. 30	Sept. 8 Sept. 23 Oct. 6
C. Dec. 8	Aug. 28 ^a	Sept. 1	Sept. 23	Oct. 6	Oct. 6	Oct. 30	Sept. 8 Sept. 15 Sept. 23 Oct. 6
D. Dec. 15	Sept. 8	Sept. 8	Oct. 1	Oct. 13			Sept. 15 Sept. 22 Oct. 1 Oct. 13

^a Schedule was for September 1st propagation but cuttings in N. C. State University study were stuck directly on August 28th.

^b Schedule was for 2000 ppm Cycocel, but A-Rest foliar spray at 25 ppm and untreated plants were included in the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Optimum-sized plants of excellent quality were obtained when either Cycocel or A-Rest were applied to the plants in the first 3 groups. The plants were salable on the scheduled date, the height was in keeping with pot size, and there were 3 to 4 acceptable flowering shoots on each plant (Table 2, Fig. 1). Plants scheduled for the December 15th bloom date were not uniformly in flower by December 22nd when the experiment was terminated.

Table 2. Response of "Annette Hegg Supreme" plants to various treatments, to produce a mini-multi-flowering poinsettia. Study conducted at North Carolina State University in 1972

Propagation date	Pinch date	Lights off date	Intended bloom date	Actual bloom date	Chemical treatment	Plant height ^a	No. of acceptable shoots
A. Aug. 28	Sept. 15	Sept. 23	Nov. 25	Nov. 21-23	Cycocel	10.2"	3.7
				Nov. 21-23	A-Rest	9.5	4.3
				Nov. 25-26	Control	11.6	4.2
B. Aug. 28	Sept. 15	Oct. 1	Dec. 1	Dec. 1	Cycocel	9.8	4.0
				Dec. 1	A-Rest	9.4	3.4
				Dec. 1	Control	11.1	3.4
C. Aug. 28	Sept. 23	Oct. 6	Dec. 8	Dec. 8	Cycocel	10.6	3.7
				Dec. 8	A-Rest	10.4	3.4
				Dec. 8	Control	12.9	3.4
D. Sept. 8	Oct. 1	Oct. 13	Dec. 15	Not in flower by Dec. 22	Cycocel	9.4	2.5
					A-Rest	8.3	2.8
					Control	10.8	2.8

^a Plant height measured from pot rim to uppermost canopy of bracts.



Photographed
November 22nd

Photographed
December 1st

Photographed
December 8th

Photographed
December 15th

Fig. 1. "Annette Hegg Supreme" plants grown as mini-multi-flowering plants. Plants were treated with 2000 ppm Cycocel spray. The numbers refer to intended bloom dates: 1, November 25th; 2, December 1st; 3, December 8th; 4, December 15th. The same plants were photographed on all 4 dates.

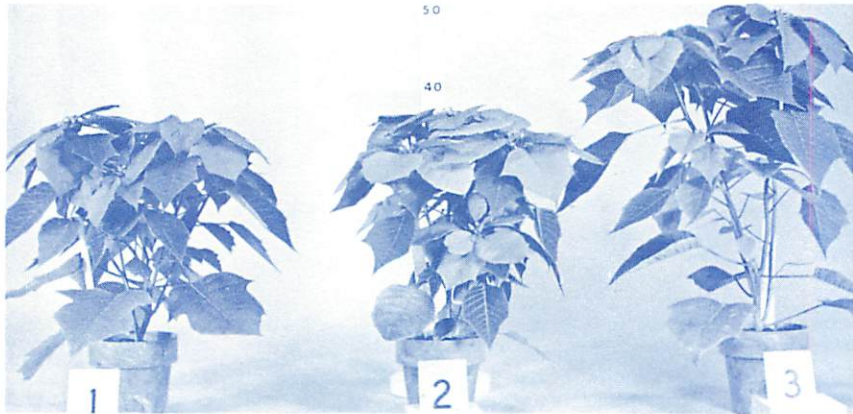


Fig. 2. "Annette Hegg Supreme" poinsettias timed for December 8th and photographed on that date. 1, Cycocel spray at 2000 ppm; 2, A-Rest spray at 25 ppm; 3, control.

Commercial poinsettia growers who saw the plants considered them to be a very salable product as a 4" mass market item or as a "carriage trade" item if shifted to a larger pot just prior to marketing. The intent of the program was to produce a mass market product of low cost-high quality, but the suitability of the plants for other purposes added versatility to the list of features.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Excellent "Annette Hegg Supreme" poinsettia plants were produced in 4" pots at a spacing of 2 plants per square foot.
2. Foliar spray applications of Cycocel at 2000 ppm or A-Rest at 25 ppm were equally effective, and plants in both treatments were superior to untreated plants (Fig. 2).
3. The proposed guidelines (Table 1) for the first 3 blooming dates are satisfactory, but not for the December 15th date. October 1st either is too late for pinching, or the beginning of short days on October 13th is too late.

The authors acknowledge Paul Ecke Poinsettias for the donation of plant material and suggested guidelines, American Cyanamid Company for Cycocel, and Elanco Products for A-Rest.