

PINCHING POINSETTIAS

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Desirable dates for pinching poinsettias depends on your program. Large pans should be pinched the first week in September, 5 1/2-6 inch pots September 10-15 and 4 1/2 inch pots by September 25. A late pinch will reduce quality and may require more heat, thus making it more costly to produce.

When pinching, remove at least 1/2 inch of the stem. Do not remove just the tip since apical dominance* may not be removed and axillary buds may not grow. Pinch correctly by removing at least 1/2 inch of the growing point leaving the number of leaves (usually 3-5) corresponding to

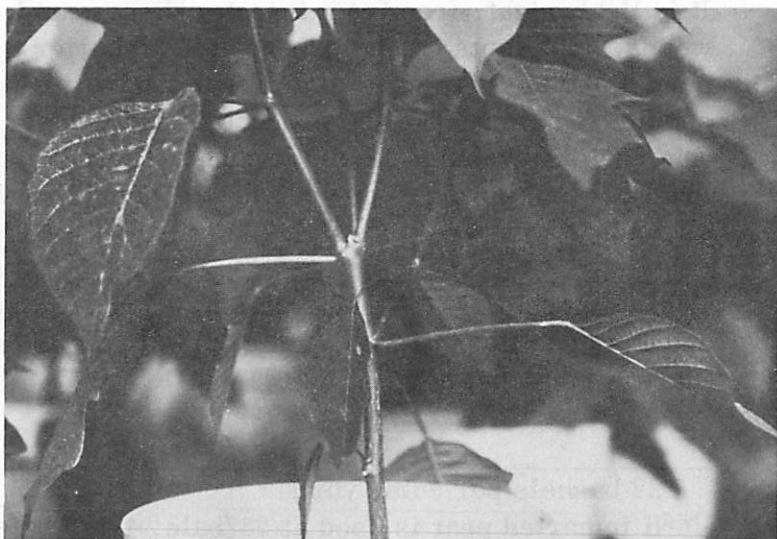


Figure 1. Few breaks high pinch.

*Apical dominance is inhibition of lateral bud growth by the primary growing point through auxins produced by the terminal bud and translocated by the plant.

the number of breaks desired. If the plants are early and becoming too tall, it is better to pinch early and use growth regulators to control height.

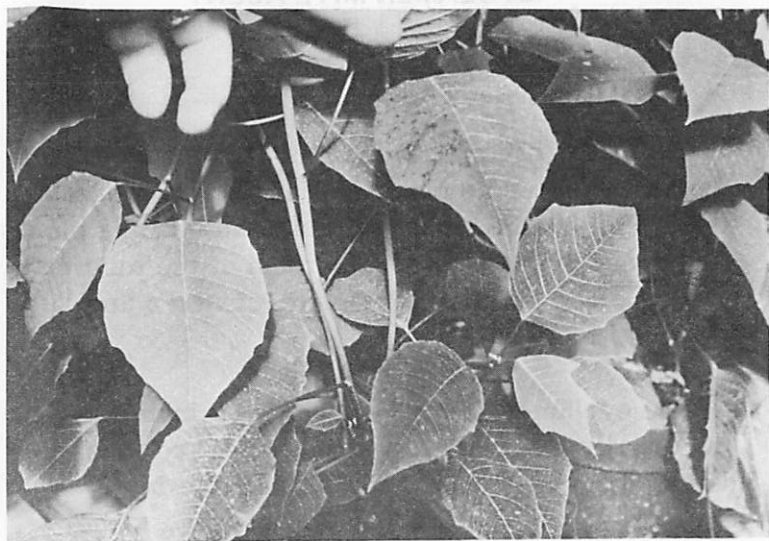


Figure 2. Tall spindly thin growth.



A well-branched poinsettia will be more compact and easier to grow. Review your timing schedules. Propagate and pinch your poinsettias on time.

Figure 3. A properly pinched poinsettia.