

POINSETTIA VARIETY TRIALS— A PROGRESS REPORT

Poinsettia variety trials run over the 1969 and 1970 seasons showed that the new poinsettia introductions differ in their temperature requirements. The temperature conditions varied from warm (68^o F and up) nights at Manoa, Oahu, to cool (60^o F) nights at Kula, Maui, with Waiakea, Hawaii, somewhat intermediate. Crops were grown either with one pinch (2 cuttings/pot) or single stem (3 cuttings/pot) from terminal stem cuttings. Rooted cuttings were provided by Paul Ecke Poinsettias and Mikkelsens, Inc.

Reds

1. Eckespoint C-35. This cultivar had the widest tolerance range to temperature and performed well at all three locations. Its color

- is a warm red, and it has medium-sized bracts. A unique feature is the color development in the leaves just below the normal inflorescence. It was satisfactory as both a pinched and single-stem crop. One disadvantage is the early maturation of the crop under our normal daylengths.
2. Eckespoint D-3. With intense red bracts of nearly a foot in diameter, this was another cultivar to be recommended. At warm temperature, it has a tendency to split but less so than other cultivars. It does not fade badly in warm temperatures. As a single-stem crop it was excellent, and as a pinched crop it was a very showy display.
 3. Annette Hegg. While recommended as a pinched crop because of its ready branching, Annette Hegg could be grown single stem. It does best with cool nights which help to keep it compact and more intensely colored. Dark Red Annette Hegg is an improved color selection, but still is not suitable for warm growing conditions.
 4. San Diego (Eckespoint D-1). While blooming too early, this cultivar still has much to recommend it because of good color (intense crimson red) and compact growth. It has a slight tendency to split under warm temperatures but this is minimized with 65° F or cooler nights.
 5. Mikkel (TM) Rockford. This cultivar breaks heavily and bears large bracts on a compact plant. It is best suited to cool nights.
 6. Mikkel (TM) Blaze. Although tending to be a little tall, this red can be managed with the use of Cycocel. Its wide full bracts are somewhat "textured," that is, wavy. It performed well as a pinched crop.
 7. Mikkel (TM) Glow. As a single-stem plant, this cultivar produced spectacular inflorescences 13 to 14 inches across on 15-inch stems. It was, however, a little early but could be delayed by lighting.
 8. Eckespoint C-1. A large bract with medium red color in warm conditions to intense red with a cool finish, this cultivar performed well with warm night temperatures. It has a vigorous root system and a sturdy habit of growth. As a pinched plant it averages 3 breaks per cutting, but it is even more spectacular as a single-stem plant.

Pinks

1. Eckespoint C-54. While its color ranges from a medium pink under warm conditions to deep pink under cool conditions, Eckespoint C-54 is recommended because it is compact, does not split, and performs well under all conditions.
2. Mikkel (TM) Twinkle. Under cool conditions, this cultivar maintains large bract size.

It tends to be a bit early, and some fading and splitting occur under warm conditions. It is best grown with a pinch.

3. Eckespoint C-1 Pink. A lighter pink than C-54, C-1 Pink has a large inflorescence. It is a good, sturdy plant and performs well under warm temperatures. It may be grown single stem or with a pinch.

*White

1. Mikkel (TM) Sprite. Both as a pinched plant and single stem, this cultivar performed well under cool conditions. It has a tendency to be too tall. It matures just about right for Christmas.
2. Eckespoint C-64. As a pinched plant, C-64 still is early for Christmas. It is, however, compact with medium-sized bracts and less tendency to split than other cultivars evaluated.

All of the new introductions hold their lower leaves better and have a longer house-life when sold than the old cultivars which have been widely grown. The bract sizes are larger and the habits of growth sturdier. Because of their rapid growth, these new introductions may be planted as late as mid-September and satisfactory plants produced for Christmas if suitable temperature control and cultural methods are practiced.

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