

Scheduling Alstroemeria as a 6-inch-pot crop

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In the spring of 1985, we obtained 100 rhizomes of the first dwarf Alstroemeria to be introduced into the United States. This Alstroemeria, called 'Rosy Wings', is not protected by patents or grower agreements. Since the growing of Alstroemeria as a 6" pot crop was unique, we began several experiments to evaluate an optimum growing schedule.

From our trials in 1986, we suggest the following schedule:

- Oct. 1 - Nov. 1 - Divide stock plants or buy in divisions.
- Plant rhizomes shallow with 2 to 3 growing shoots per division in a well-drained medium.
- Drench pots with a fungicide 1 week after planting.
- Allow plants to grow vegetatively in cool houses (50-60°F nights).
- Dec. 1 - 15 - Place pots in refrigeration at 40°F or in cold frames that do not get below 32°F.
- It is good procedure to drench the Alstroemeria with a fungicide one week before refrigeration and allow them to moderately dry out.
- Jan. 20 - 26 - Remove pots that are to flower for Easter [for Mother's Day remove Feb. 10-20].
- Cut off any foliage that is damaged or has Botrytis.
- Place plants under a short night photoperiod in a cool house 55-60°F nights/65-75°F days.
- Feb. 9-13 - Cut back 1/4 of the existing stems to ground level.
- Pinch off the top halves of all other shoots. This encourages new shoot production and helps to dwarf the plants.

March 2-6

- Remove any stems that have died from the pinching.
- If light intensities have been low, the stems may stretch. Pinch back new shoots halfway down the stem.
- This is the last time floral shoots should be pinched; vegetative shoots may continue to be pinched or cut back to pot level as long as this does not damage the overall shape of the plant.

April 6 - 10

- Flowering should commence.
- Remove any stems with yellow foliage.

Reminder:

- Fertilize plants weekly with 400 ppm N during the pre-refrigeration period and 200 ppm N during the post-refrigeration period.
- Allow these plants to moderately dry out between waterings. They are sensitive to overwatering.
- You should remove blind stems i.e. stems with smaller leaves on top or with spindly growth habit.
- High temperature causes stretching.
- Keep the crop pinched back to reduce height.
- Low light intensity may retard flowering of the plants.
- Inform your customers that these flowers are excellent as cut flowers and the plants may be planted outside in the garden after the danger of frost is past.
- We are conducting growth regulator experiments this year to help control height in low light areas; information on this will be available next year.
- Good Luck!