

STORAGE AND ROOTING OF IMPATIENS CUTTINGS

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The demand for Impatiens has increased rapidly during the past few years. Most bedding plant producers have met this demand through production of plants by seeds. However, recently a few growers have gone to producing Impatiens from cuttings. The original stock plants are produced from seeds but the plants are allowed to grow for cutting production. By producing plants from cuttings, the grower has a little more flexibility in his scheduling program. Cuttings can be taken, stuck direct, and sold in 10-14 days late in the bedding plant season.

Some growers have had problems rooting Impatiens cuttings even though they root quite rapidly. Impatiens cuttings to be rooted successfully must be kept heavily shaded and moist for a few days after sticking. The cutting should not be allowed to wilt and dry out before it is stuck. Most are rooted directly in pots or paks.

An inquiry as to the possibility of storing the cuttings under refrigeration, similar to mums, prompted the following trial. This would allow growers to hold cuttings until needed.

Impatiens cuttings were taken from a red and a white cultivar on 7/15. One hundred sixty cuttings, 80 of each cultivar, were placed in plastic bags, sealed and placed in a refrigerator at 40°F (5°C). Each week a group of 20 cuttings of each cultivar was removed, allowed to reach room temperature and the ends recut. Ten cuttings of each cultivar were stuck in paks con-

taining a peat-lite mix or steam pasteurized soil mix. The paks were placed under a greenhouse bench and syringed twice daily. Survival and rooting readings were taken 2 weeks after sticking (Table 1).

Table 1. Rooting of *Impatiens* After Cold Storage

Weeks in Storage, 40°F	Date Stuck	Date Taken	Number Rooted			
			Soil		Peat-Lite	
			Red	White	Red	White
0	7/15	7/29	10/10	10/10	10/10	10/10
1	7/22	8/5	10/10	10/10	10/10	8/10
2	7/29	8/12	8/10	7/10	9/10	8/10
3	8/5	8/19	All Plants Dead by 8/13.			

From the data, one can conclude that *Impatiens* cuttings can be held for 1-2 weeks in cold storage before rooting.