

## AFMC's Promotional Film Available for Industry Use

A new 14-minute film depicting the 1983-84 advertising and public relations program of the American Florists Marketing Council (AFMC) is now available for use at industry meetings.

The film shows AFMC's current television spots and examples of advertising materials that are available for use by local industry members, and gives a report on the public relations activities conducted by AFMC on behalf of flowers and plants.

According to AFMC, the film fits any meeting format and is perfect for use by state, local and regional floral associations, as well as by groups of producers and wholesalers.

In addition, AFMC will provide a speaker with the film who will answer questions and receive comments from the audience on AFMC activities.

There is no charge for the use of the film, and several copies are currently available from AFMC.

AFMC, the marketing arm of SAF — The Center for Commercial Floriculture, promotes non-occasion use of flowers and plants. AFMC's 16,500 participants are retail florists, growers, wholesalers and allied trades firms.

For more information on how you can use the film at your next meeting, contact AFMC Director David Weaver or AFMC Manager of Field Services Grant Sharff, toll free at (800) 336-4743. In Virginia and Hawaii, dial (703) 836-8700.

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## TIMING FUCHSIA

Each year more and more fuchsia plants are being grown. Their splashy display of color, interesting growth habits, ease of production, and consumer demand all make it very easy for growers to produce them or want to produce them. All too often, the question arises, "Why aren't my fuchsia flowering?"

To help answer this question one must discuss two areas: temperature and photo-period.

**Photoperiod:** Fuchsia are long-day (LD) plants. This means if this crop is exposed to daylengths longer than 12 hours, the plants will initiate and develop flower buds in the leaf axils. Conversely, if daylengths are shorter than 12 hours, the plants remain vegetative.

The daylength is naturally long between March 1 and October 15; therefore, it is during this period of time flower buds can initiate and develop. Conversely, between October 15 and March 1, the natural daylengths are too short; therefore only vegetative growth develops. Because fuchsia are responsive to photoperiod (daylength), we can therefore artificially provide LD during the winter-time (October 15–March 1) by illuminating the plants with 10-20 ft-c from incandescent light (chrysanthemum lighting) which will provide a LD for fuchsia and thus induce flowering. However, if the reverse is desired, i.e., vegetative growth only, then lights are not needed October 15–March 1; but, they must be shaded by artificially shortening the day (chrysanthemum short-day shading requirements) between March 1 and October 15.

It is also of interest to know that the terminal bud remains vegetative regardless of the daylength.

**Temperature:** Fuchsia are also very responsive to temperature. At 73°F flowering will occur after plants have been exposed to 40-45 LD. If lower temperatures are maintained, add approximately one day for every degree lower than optimum (73°F) to calculate the approximate time of flowering. Research has determined fuchsia should not be grown at temperatures less than 60°F.

Also, keep in mind fuchsia are heavy feeders, especially during the spring and summer months.

**Summary:** In this brief presentation, we have tried to review some of the basic information regarding the flowering of fuchsia. This crop is a long-day plant, very responsive to not only photoperiod but also temperature. In fact, the optimum growing temperature for fuchsia is 73°F. Often crops flower late because they are grown at temperatures below optimum.

*Ralph Freeman*

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