

Cultural Instructions for a Fast Finish™ Perennial

1. Upon Arrival

Open the boxes immediately and inspect the plants. Allow the plants to reach room temperature gradually. Water liners carefully if any are dry on arrival. Depending upon the month received, liners may not have any top growth upon arrival! Shipments are being sent from a greenhouse where product was maintained slightly above freezing, and is arriving dormant at the beginning of the shipping season. Fast Finish™ perennials have been vernalized by the supplier and are programmed to begin active growth, mature, and flower when they are grown under the proper temperatures and photoperiods.

2a. Breaking Dormancy for a Fast Finish™ The Fast Finish 21 Cell is a fully established input designed to finish quickly if grown under warm conditions. Please note different Genera may break dormancy at different times. The following suggestions are provided to help growers break dormancy and begin their Fast Finish™ perennial program. (To allow plants to finish under natural conditions, see section 2b.)

Allow the liners to begin active growth before transplanting them into pots. Keep liner trays together and bring up to warm temperatures immediately: ambient air temperature should be raised to a minimum of 60°. Initiate top growth FIRST then transplant into soil. For continued rapid finish, have filled pots at a similar temperature. Transplanting into cold soil will set growth rate back.

If necessary, they can be grown pot-tight several weeks before spacing. Space each variety as needed to avoid stretching. Most varieties can be grown under at 60 to 70° days and 50 to 60° nights to continue forcing a fast finish time. Growth regulators and pinching are not usually necessary.

2b. Breaking Dormancy for a Traditional Finish For plants to finish without forcing outside their normal ready date, transplant without breaking dormancy first. Allow product to warm up with natural environment conditions, being careful to protect new growth from frost. Initially lower temperatures between 45 and 50 will benefit root growth but will dramatically increase the finish time.

3. Soil Type For most growers, a commercial, bark-based, soil-less mix is best. Bark allows for greater air porosity and helps avoid overwatering.

4. Finishing Water carefully. Water thoroughly after planting. During production, the moisture levels to maintain will vary by variety; in general, keep them adequately moist until the plant become established and then water them accordingly. Once transplanted, the amount of water they use will vary tremendously depending if they are grown “Fast” or with normal temperature increase.

Fertilizers are not necessary until the plants have active growth present. Most perennials perform well when they are watered with a balanced water soluble fertilizer using rates of 50 to 100ppm Nitrogen at every watering or 150 to 200 ppm as needed. Controlled release fertilizers can also be used to deliver nutrients- typically using low to medium rates.

Fungicide drench A fungicide drench applied on plant material one to two weeks-is often beneficial and helps the perennials get off to a good start.