



GERANIUM CULTURE (FROM SEED)

GROWING PLANTS FROM SEEDS:

Sow seeds in a sterilized, well-draining potting soil or in a "soil-less" mix. Seeds may also be sown in vermiculite but should be planted into soil when the seedlings have four leaves.

Sow seeds 1/4" apart in a row, 1.5 to 2" between the rows and cover the seeds with vermiculite or soil. Maintaining uniform moisture during germination is very important. The best germination occurs with a mist system. The soil can be watered with a fine spray and then covered with plastic.

Check the container daily for dryness and signs of green, which should appear within a week. Until the seeds sprout, the soil temperature should be high, about 80F. You can achieve this by applying heat, using heating cables or by placing the tray on the highest shelf of a warm kitchen.

To grow compact, bushy plants, place geraniums in an area where they will receive intense light. That means the sunniest windowsill you have, regular turning of the pots will keep growth even. If you grow them under lights, provide up to 18 hours of light daily, and keep the pots on blocks so that the tubes are less than 6" above the top leaves, adjust frequently as plants grow. Cool night temperatures (62F) will also help to promote bushy growth.

Transplant the seedlings into the next largest size container as they become pot-bound. From the seedling tray, they may then be planted into 2.25" pots and then 4" pots, ready for planting outdoors.

After geraniums are established in 4" pots, a regular fertilizing program can be started, provided the plants are actively growing. Use Plant-Prod 20-20-20.

Acclimatize your plants to natural conditions before planting them outside. Provide a shady area protected from the wind at first. Bring geraniums in at night until the temperatures are frost-free and expose them gradually to temperature extremes and full-sun locations.