

TECH TIP: STRATEGIES FOR HOLDING POINSETTIAS

The Issue:

If your poinsettia crops are ahead of schedule, here are two strategies to slow crop development and maximize quality at shipping.

Temperature, Environment, and Cultural Strategy:

- 1) Reduce your greenhouse average daily temperature (ADT) → **No lower than ~17°C ADT**
 - Avoid the dewpoint! Lowering daytime air temp (DT) is safest.
 - i. Relative humidity (RH) is often lower during the day (heat running, air exchanges happening, etc.), so risk of condensation on bracts/leaves is lower.
 - ii. Reducing nighttime air temp (NT) can be done, but only to an extent → If NT is lowered too quickly at dusk and RH is high, condensation will form on bracts/leaves (or on GH infrastructure and rain down on crops) and *Botrytis* pressure will increase.
[More info on greenhouse dewpoint HERE](#) ↔ [Dewpoint calculator HERE](#)
- 2) Reduce RH and Increase Air Flow
 - Run horizontal air flow (HAF) fans as much as possible → **24/7 HAF is ideal!**
 - “Burp” your greenhouse before dusk to reduce RH and avoid dewpoint condensation
 - i. Cycle simultaneous heat + venting several times ~2–3 hours before sundown to blast humid air out of the greenhouse and reduce potential condensation.
- 3) Make sure all watering is done **EARLY!** → If automated/timer-based watering is possible, set irrigation cycles to start just before sunrise.
 - If watering overhead, early irrigation is critical to reduce potential *Botrytis* infection.

Plant Growth Retardant (PGR) Strategy:

- 1) Apply paclobutrazol (i.e. Bonzi, Piccolo, Paczol) — **Do not use other PGRs!**
 - **Only apply when crops are 99 – 100% done developing!**
 - i. 1–2 ppm drench or 5–10 ppm spray will bring plants to a dead-stop.
 - ii. Note: bracts will darken – not big issue for red, but whites may become creamier, etc.
 - Spray at 5–10 ppm → Apply at ~1–2 L/10 m² for small pots, ~3 L/10 m² for larger pots.
 - Drench at 1–2 ppm → 30 mL per 2.5 cm of container diameter + 30 mL per additional ppp.
 - i. Ex: 20-cm pot w/3 plants per pot = 300 mL → 240 mL (mL/dia.^{cm}) + 60 mL (2 add. cuttings)
 - Check each crop before applying – same cultivar in different GH may not be at same stage!
 - Timing is key! Apply right when pollen is first visible.



← Too early

Just right →

