

VINCA CORA XDR ADVISORY

In 2020, Syngenta Flowers introduced Vinca Cora XDR, which has high resistance to Phytophthora blight. This is a significant breakthrough as Phytophthora is a leading cause of failure in the landscape. Many growers and consumers were successful with this new introduction, though some growers experienced challenges.

In the plug stage, some growing conditions can result in reduced yields and uneven root development. This was observed in several varieties within the series. It is difficult to identify the plants with reduced or uneven root growth without removing plugs from the tray. Therefore, there is not a cost-effective way to remove the affected plants during plug production. The plants with reduced or uneven root growth can represent up to 30% of the plants in a given tray. This lack of uniform root development persists after transplant and has caused grow-out issues -.

Numerous customers observed uneven plant development and grow-out in spring 2020. The finishing times from first to last salable plant extended over a 3+ week period. With optimal vinca cultural practices, Cora XDR finishes uniformly, but when temperature, moisture, or fertilizer practices were outside of the recommendations from Syngenta Flowers, delayed plant development can occur. Refer to Syngenta Flowers' culture guides for detailed recommendations.

Finishing vinca, regardless of series, is challenging with suboptimal growing conditions. Good cultural conditions make vinca an easy crop to finish. For maximum success, dibble the soil and place the plug into the dibbled hole. Then, use water to firm the soil around the plug. Forcing the plug into the soil can damage the root system, which makes roots more susceptible to Pythium and other soilborne diseases. Excess fertilizer (liquid or slow-release) can burn the roots, and abnormal pH can affect plant vigor. Vinca are "warm-blooded", so maintaining night temperatures at >63F (>17C) keeps them growing vigorously. Avoid saturated soil after transplanting, as this will reduce root growth and can promote root diseases.

