

TECH TIP: CORIANDER/SPINACH GERMINATION

Question: Why does this happen? Is the seed not buried deep enough? One of my growers has a theory it's due to reduced vermiculite cover.

Answer: From the photos, this looks like uneven germination. Some of the seeds are germinating more quickly and start to stretch because you didn't dry back the substrate or move them to another cell to promote germination of the others.

To achieve more uniform germination, Spinach and Coriander need to be very wet at sowing (almost saturated) to rehydrate the seeds. Light promotes germination but is not necessary. You need to start drying back at radicle emergence to avoid this kind of stretching. Normally reducing the vermiculite would help to keep the plants more compact and avoid stretching because the substrate will dry back easier.

The root running and hypocotyl stretching is related to too wet substrate moisture and low light levels makes it worse. As you head towards winter, light levels are going down and you might want to start decreasing the moisture levels earlier. Moving the trays 1-2 days earlier from the germination area will help to increase drying back the substrate.

