

Alternanthera Red Threads

(*Alternanthera ficoidea*)

A Ball FloraPlant Product

Propagation

- Chose a well-drained medium with an EC of 0.75 to 0.80 mmhos and a pH of 5.4 to 5.8.
- Stick cuttings within 12 to 24 hours of arrival. Cuttings can be stored overnight, if necessary, at 45 to 50°F (7 to 10°C).
- Soil temperature should be maintained at 68 to 73°F (20 to 23°C) until roots are visible.
- Begin fertilization with 75 to 100 ppm N when roots become visible. Increase to 150 to 200 ppm N as roots develop.
- Once roots are visible, the media should be kept moderately wet and never saturated. Excess water in propagation will encourage unwanted plant stretch.
- Appropriate water management, air and light levels should eliminate the need for chemical plant growth regulators (PGRs).
- A Bonzi spray of 1 to 3 ppm 1 to 2 weeks after sticking can help to control excess stretch.
- A pinch in propagation will help to encourage early branching.
- Red Threads Alternanthera should be ready for transplant 3 to 4 weeks after sticking.

Growing On to Finish

Media

- A pH of 5.4 to 5.8 is optimum.
- Red Threads Alternanthera prefers a well-drained soil.

Temperature

- **Night:** 59 to 64°F (15 to 18°C)
- **Day:** 65 to 73° (18 to 23°C)

Light

- Red Threads Alternanthera should be grown under moderate light levels; 4,000 to 8,000 f.c. (40,000 to 80,000 Lux) is the ideal range.
- Plants may scorch under high light and high temperatures.
- Foliage colors will be more pronounced under moderate light levels.

Watering

The medium should be allowed to dry between waterings. However, periods of sustained wilting should be avoided. Excess water will result in unwanted stretch.

Fertilizer

- Red Threads Alternanthera has a moderate feed requirement.
- Use a constant liquid feed program of 175 to 225 ppm.
- Regular leaching with clear water will help to reduce buildup of excess salts in media.

Pinching

- Red Threads Alternanthera should be pinched 7 to 14 days after transplant to encourage basal branching. Additional pinching can be done as needed.
- A 4-in. (10-cm) crop can be produced without a pinch in finish production provided it received a pinch in propagation or at transplant.

Controlling Growth

- Maintain recommended temperatures and light levels to avoid stretch.
- Excessive moisture in media will encourage unwanted stretch. Water management is an excellent tool in producing high-quality Red Threads Alternanthera.
- Chemical plant growth regulators are generally not needed.
- Do not use Cycocel.
- These recommendations for plant growth regulators should be used only as general guidelines. Growers must trial all chemicals under their particular conditions.

Common Problems

Insects: Whitefly, spider mites.

All Red Threads Alternanthera cuttings are derived from culture and virus-indexed stock from the **Ball Certified Plants®** Program.

Problem: Plant collapse

Causes: Stem canker (*Botrytis*); Plants grown in saturated media for extended periods of time (*Pythium*)

Problem: Poor branching and thin plants

Causes: Low fertilization during early stages of growth; low light

Red Threads Alternanthera Crop Schedule & Uses

(Crop Schedule In Weeks)

Unrooted cuttings

4-in. (10-cm) Pot 1 PP* - 7-10 weeks
6 to 8-in. (15 to 20-cm) Pots 1 to 2 PP* - 9-12 weeks
10 to 12-in. (25 to 30-cm) Pots 2 to 3 PP* - 11-14 weeks

Rooted cuttings

4-in. (10-cm) Pot 1 PP* - 4-6 weeks
6 to 8-in. (15 to 20-cm) Pots 1 to 2 PP* - 6-8 weeks
10 to 12-in. (25 to 30-cm) Pots 2 to 3 PP* - 8-10 weeks

*PP: Plants per pot or basket

NOTE: Growers should use the information presented here as a starting point. Crop times will vary depending on the climate, location, time of year and greenhouse environmental conditions. Chemical and PGR recommendations are only guidelines. It is the responsibility of the applicator to read and follow all the current label directions for the specific chemical being used in accordance with all regulations.

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