

Digitalis Foxlight

(*Digitalis hybrida*)

Propagation

- Choose a well-drained medium with an EC of 0.75 to 0.80 mmhos and a pH of 5.8 to 6.2.
- Stick cuttings the day of arrival if possible. Otherwise, store at 45°F (7°C) for not more than 18 hours before sticking.
- Soil temperature should be maintained at 70 to 72°F (21 to 24°C) until roots are visible.
- A rooting hormone basal dip of 500-1,000 ppm IBA should be applied to promote early, uniform rooting.
- Average days with mist: 10 to 12.
- Begin fertilization with 50 to 75 ppm N when roots become visible.
- During root development, maintain moderate moisture levels in the soil. Avoid saturation of media.
- Can be pinched after roots have been established. Be sure to leave 8 or 10 leaves.
- Rooted cuttings should be ready for transplanting 6 weeks after sticking.

Growing On to Finish

Media

- Use media with good aeration and drainage.
- Prefers a medium that is high in organic matter.
- A pH of 6.0 to 6.4 is optimum.

Temperature

- **Nights:** 55 to 60°F (13 to 16°C)
- **Days:** 60 to 65°F (16 to 18°C)
- Temperatures below those recommended will slow plant growth significantly.
- An average daily temperature of 60 to 65°F (16 to 18°C) is optimal, but plants will tolerate a wide range of temperatures.
- Vernalization is not required for natural-season flowering of mid-late June. Forced plants will bloom more quickly when they have received 6 weeks of temperatures below 50°F (10°C) at night. Late April/early May flowering can be achieved without lighting when containers are planted prior to Week 45 and grown below 50°F (10°C) NT during the Winter months.

Light

- Will perform best under moderate to high light levels of 5,000 to 8,000 f.c. (50,000 to 80,000 Lux).
- Extended day lighting of 14 hours can be used to flower plants earlier, however 6 weeks below 50°F (10°C) NT prior to lighting is required for proper

flowering of forced plants.

- Best plant quality will be achieved when grown outdoors in full sun.

Watering

- The media should be allowed to dry moderately between watering and never saturated. However, plants should not be allowed to wilt at any time, particularly when flower stems are elongating.
- Leach regularly to avoid the buildup of high soluble salt levels.

Fertilizer

Use a balanced fertilizer at a rate of 125 to 150 ppm. Periodic use of a calcium-based fertilizer should help optimize the nutrient levels. Low calcium uptake or availability can delay or inhibit flowering.

Pinching

Plants can be pinched once for larger containers (10-in./25-cm diameter and larger). Pinch as soon as the plants are well-rooted in the final container. Leave a minimum of 8 to 10 leaf nodes.

Controlling Growth

- Under most conditions, will not require growth regulator treatments.
- Responsive to B-Nine/Cycocel at 1,500/800 ppm if needed. Also responsive to 30 ppm Bonzi spray before buds are visible.
- 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: Low sensitivity. Watch for Aphids, Whitefly, Spider Mites.

Diseases: Digitalis have a low sensitivity to disease.

Key Tips

Early flowering can be easily achieved with cooled plants. Provide 45-50°F (7-10°C) NT for at least 6 weeks to reduce long day requirements.

Problem: Bent flower stems

Causes: Allowing plants to wilt when in bud stage

Problem: Excessive vegetative growth and lack of flowers

Causes: Excessive ammonium-based fertilizer; Over-fertilization under low light conditions; Low light and over-watering; Saturated media; Low calcium levels caused by low pH

Problem: Yellowing of older foliage

Causes: Saturated media, excessive drought

Problem: Foliage necrosis

Causes: High soluble salts in media; Excessive water stress

Problem: Excessive plant height

Causes: Low light conditions

Crop Schedule & Uses

(Crop Schedule in Weeks. Plants can be Fall-planted in frost-free greenhouses. Finished containers should be established prior to Week 45 for best results when Fall-planted.)

It is possible to use one plant per pot for larger containers. Pinch two to three weeks after transplant and add four weeks to production schedule. For forcing during Winter months, expect to light plants for 16 weeks after establishment in final containers. Also, use 6-week vernalization prior to lighting for forced plants.

1 PPP* 1-qt. (10-cm) pot

Rooted cutting Not recommended

1 PPP* 1-gal. (15-cm) pot

Rooted cutting Spring Plant for Summer flowering or Spring Plant from vernalized liners 12 to 14 weeks; Fall Plant 24 to 26 weeks

3 PPP* 2 to 3-gallon (25 to 30-cm) pot

Rooted cutting Spring Plant for Summer or Spring Plant from vernalized liners flowering 12 to 14 weeks; Fall Plant 24 to 26 weeks

*PPP: Plants per pot or basket

