

## Mecardonia Little Sunshine

(*Mecardonia hybrida*)

A Ball FloraPlant Product

### Propagation

- Choose a well-drained medium with an EC of 0.75 to 0.80 mmhos and a pH of 5.5 to 6.0.
- Stick cuttings immediately upon arrival.
- Soil temperature should be maintained at 68 to 73° F (20 to 23°C) until roots are visible.
- Once roots are visible, the media should be kept moderately wet, but never saturated.
- Begin fertilization with 75 to 100 ppm N when roots become visible. Increase to 150 to 200 ppm N as roots develop.
- As the rooted cuttings develop, high light and moderate air temperatures should eliminate the need for chemical plant growth regulators (PGRs).
- Rooted cuttings should be ready for transplanting 28 to 35 days after sticking.

### Growing On to Finish

#### Media

- Use a well-drained, disease-free, soilless medium.
- Maintain a media pH of 5.5 to 6.0.

#### Temperature

- Nights: 65 to 70°F (18 to 21°C)
- Days: 68 to 77°F (20 to 25°C)
- Avoid excessively cool temperatures, as this can impede quality growth.

#### Light

- Keep light intensities at 3,500 to 6,000 f.c. (38,000 to 65,000 Lux).
- Provide shading above 6,000 f.c. (65,000 Lux)

#### Watering

- Mecardonia are tolerant of a range of moisture levels. Keeping soil evenly moist with some drying between irrigation will give the most consistent quality growth.
- When plants are young, allow the media to dry.

#### Fertilizer

- Use constant feed with a balanced fertilizer at 150 to 200 ppm N.
- A full complement of minor elements should be provided at each fertilizer application.
- Controlled-release fertilizer can be used to

supplement a liquid feed program.

#### Pinching

- Pinching will improve overall branching and habit of the finished product.
- Pinch plants back 7 to 10 days after transplanting to improve basal branching.
- A second soft pinch 2 to 3 weeks after transplant is beneficial when growing large containers such as hanging baskets.

#### Controlling Growth

- Mecardonia are naturally compact and plant growth regulators are generally not needed.

#### Common Problems

**Insects:** Aphids, Fungus Gnats, Slugs/Snails

**Diseases:** Botrytis, root and stem rot

All Mecardonia Little Sunshine cuttings are derived from culture and virus-indexed stock from the **Ball Certified Plants®** program.

**Problems:** Lack of flowers

**Causes:** Low light levels

**Problems:** Stretched soft growth

**Causes:** Low light with excessive fertility and moisture

#### Little Sunshine Crop Schedule & Uses (Crop Schedule in Weeks)

##### Unrooted cuttings

**4-in. (10-cm) Pots 1 PP\*:** 10-12

**6-in. (15-cm) Pots 2 to 3 PP\*:** 10-12

**10 to 12-in. (25 to 30-cm) Pots 5 to 6 PP\*:** 14-16

##### Rooted cuttings

**4-in. (10-cm) Pots 1 PP\*:** 6-8

**6-in. (15-cm) Pots 2 to 3 PP\*: 6-8**

**10 to 12-in. (25 to 30-cm) Pots 5 to 6 PP\*: 10-12**

\*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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