

Single-Stem Pot Mums

Product Description

Single-Stem pot mums have also been called “standard” or “commercial” pot mums. They consist of multiple cutting pots and plants are not pinched. Varieties are chosen which have large showy flowers after disbudding. “Standard” cut mum varieties are often used; however these varieties are more difficult to control height, and require more PGRs.

Single-Stem pot mums can be especially valuable during the winter in low-light areas. Overall quality, size and flower color are generally better than pinched pot mums in low-light flowerings. They also can provide a different, higher price-point item for pot mum sales. Consider growing Single-Stem pot mums for Thanksgiving, Valentine’s Day, Easter or Mother’s Day when regular pinched pots are plentiful, or for Chinese New Year where large-flowered, single stem pots are preferred.

Cutting Considerations

The general rule of thumb is to plant 1 more cutting than the top diameter (inches) of the pot, e.g. 6 plants in a 5" pot, 7 plants in a 6" pot, 8 plants in a 7" pot. The exception to this is for 4" pots, where one plant in the center of the pot is used.

Plant cuttings evenly around the edge of the pot with 1 to 2 plants in the center of 6" and larger pots. A large percentage of Single-Stem pot mums are grown with 7 cuttings per 6" pot (1 in the middle).

Careful grading of cuttings is necessary to help improve uniformity of growth and flowering. Because of this, rooted cuttings are generally used. Select cuttings of similar length, caliper and rooting for each pot.

Cultural Differences

Single-Stem pot mums are produced with similar spacing, root media, watering, fertilization and temperatures as used for pinched pot mums. Key cultural differences are detailed below.

Fewer long days: Schedule 1 week of long days year-round when planting rooted cuttings.

Use more growth regulator: B-Nine rates should be increased or should be applied more frequently than for regular pot mums. Begin spraying when new growth after planting is 1½" to 2" long and continue until disbudding if necessary. Weekly sprays of 2,500 ppm B-Nine may be needed for summer flowerings.

Disbud on schedule: Early disbudding promotes shorter stems, larger flowers and more uniform flowering. Remember, there are fewer stems to disbud than with pinched pots, so less disbudding time is required. Take extra care when disbudding to ensure that the terminal bud is not removed by accident since lower buds will not develop into the desired, large, showy flower.

Harvest and handling: Single-Stem pot mums are generally sold when flowers are 2/3 to 3/4 open for best display. Careful handling during packaging and in transport is critical since a broken stem or two can ruin the pot. Also, the larger flowered varieties will bruise easier in handling.

Cost factors

Compared to pinched pots, more cuttings are used, which is an added cost. However, consider the following factors which may increase profitability:

- Less crop time, since fewer long days are needed.
- Less disbudding per pot (7 stems per 6" pot vs. 15 to 20 on a pinched 6" pot).
- Premium product with a higher price point possible.
- No pinching labor.

Crop Planning

Suggested Schedule for Single-Stem Pot Mums

Activity	Winter/Spring/Summer/Fall
Plant rooted cuttings	Upon receipt
Lights on	At planting
Short days	1 week after planting
Flower	7 to 10 weeks after short days begin, depending on variety

Suggested Varieties for Single-Stem Pot Mums

White Incurve	7 Week: Yukon 10 Week: Nob Hill
White Decorative Quill	8 week: Vancouver White
Yellow Incurve	8 Week: Golden Gate
Red Decorative	8 Week: Shanghai Red
Purple Decorative	8 Week: Pittsburgh Purple
Bronze Decorative (Spoon Quill)	8 Week: San Francisco Bronze Bicolor



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