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Calibrachoa

Colorburst PRO™

Many vegetative forms of Calibrachoa can be a challenge in production and shipping because of their trailing habit. Even though spaced properly, branches often become entangled with neighboring plants resulting in broken stems and damage during production, shipping and retail. Calibrachoa also drop debris, increasing the incidence of botrytis on crops below or creating unsightly displays at retail. The Colorburst Pro series addresses each of these issues. Through their unique compact-mounding habit, this series can be spaced tighter for production, shipping and retail display without damage. They also do not drop debris, creating a cleaner production facility and more polished retail area. They are best suited for 4" and 6", 1 quart, and 8" specialty hanging baskets. Typical crop timing is 12-18 weeks including time in production.

The picture below is a good example of the difference in growth habit between Colorburst Pro and a trailing form of Calibrachoa. No growth regulators were used on either specimen to maintain habit.



Figure 1 Colorburst Pro Blue (left) and Deep Improved Blue

Calibrachoa are available from the Paul Ecke Ranch as an unrooted or rooted cutting.

[Click here for live online inventory](#)

In the Greenhouse.....

Propagation

Calibrachoa Colorburst Pro can be propagated in various tray sizes including 72, 84, and 105's. Stick one cutting per cell.

Media

- Choose a well-drained aerated propagation media
- Avoid media containing peat moss which will hold too much water
- Choose a blended media with other components or inorganic media such as Oasis® or Rockwool®

Bottom Heat

- Bottom heat will promote healthy root development.
- Maintain bottom heat at 70-75°F/21-24°C.
- Mist will cool the media temperature. Monitor media temperature closely and frequently.

Rooting Hormones

- Calibrachoa roots easily without the use of rooting hormone. However, time to root and uniformity in rooting may be improved with use of a hormone.
- Colorburst Pro White will benefit from the use of a hormone.
- Either liquid or powder formulations work equally well. Choose a product with up to 2500 ppm IBA or up to 500 ppm NAA.

Misting

- Average days with mist vary from 6-8 days depending on environmental conditions in the greenhouse.
- Mist cuttings so they remain turgid but avoid over misting that results in saturated media.
- Over misting will result in slow rooting and possible problems with root rot and botrytis.

Pinching

- Calibrachoa Colorburst Pro can be pinched in propagation if stretch becomes an issue. Pinch cuttings in the fifth week. Colorburst Pro Red will benefit from pinching

Fertility

- Fertilize once weekly with 250 ppm 21-7-7 beginning 2 weeks after sticking.

- Calibrachoa are pH sensitive. Closely monitor media pH and maintain between 5.5-6.0. E.C. should be between 1.5-2.0.

Growth Regulators

- Colorburst Pro is a very compact variety and growth regulators **should not** be used.

Propagation Cycle: 6 weeks

Growing ON.....

Media

Choose a media with the following traits:

- Good aeration
 - Porosity between 5-15%
 - Sterile
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Irrigation/Fertilization

- Avoid excess irrigation and fertilization while plants are establishing which can lead to slow root development.
- **Fertilizer regime:**
 - Begin fertilizing 2 weeks after transplant
 - The less aggressive habit of this series should be irrigated less, appropriate to the plant mass of these Calibrachoa which are more compact than other commercial Calibrachoa.
 - Choose a complete balanced fertilizer complete with minor elements
 - Apply 220-250 constant liquid feed
 - Additional iron may be needed – apply as iron chelate or iron sulfate (always rinse foliage when using iron sulfate)
 - A slow release product may also be used to supplement a constant liquid

feed program and may provide improved performance for the consumer

- Maintain pH between 5.5-6.0
- Optimum EC is 2.5 to 2.8 mmhos. Provide periodic clear water application if excess salts accumulate.

For a link to pictures of different nutrient deficiencies and corrective measures on Calibrachoa click here:

<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/floriculture/def/>

Temperature/Humidity

Calibrachoa can be grown successfully at a wide range of temperatures but for best results the crop should be established warm. As root growth and top growth begins temperatures can be reduced.

Temperature regime:

Establishing temperature: 60°F/15°C average daily temperature

Temperatures for growing on: 65-70°F/18-21°C day and 60-65°F/15-18°C night

At lower temperatures:

- Crop timing will be extended and flowering less prolific

Relative Humidity:

Maintain relative humidity below 70% and provide good air circulation to avoid problems with botrytis.

Light

Calibrachoa prefers bright light.

Provide:

- 5000 foot candles/53,800 lux minimum
 - 6000foot candles/64,600 lux maximum
 - Colorburst Pro are day neutral and will not require supplemental lighting for early spring flowering.
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Spacing

Establish plants pot tight than space to::

- 4" pots – 5-6" centers (approximately 2 per sq. ft.)
 - 6" pots/1 gallon – 14" centers
 - 8" pots – 18" centers
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Pinching

1st pinch – week 5 of propagation

2nd pinch – pinch out growing tips 1-2 weeks after transplant

Additional pinches - to correct for stretch or time to flower additional pinches or a shear may be performed.

On mature plants this will delay flowering 5-6 weeks

* In 4" containers or for a "quick turn" crop pinching is not necessary

Plant Growth Regulators

Colorburst Pro are naturally compact and **will not** require growth regulating.

Insect and Disease Concerns

Insects

- Aphids
- Caterpillars
- Fungus gnats
- Leafminer
- Thrips
- Whiteflies

Diseases

- Botrytis
- Powdery Mildew
- Root and stem rots
- Viruses

For recommended chemical controls for disease and insects please consult [The Flower Fields Federal Disease Control Chart \(463K\)](#) and [The Flower Fields Federal Insect & Mite Control Chart \(541K\)](#) at www.ecke.com. Always consult the chemical's label for rates, mixing instructions and restrictions.

TROUBLESHOOTING

SYMPTOM: Yellowing of young leaves

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS:

- Check that fertilizer injectors are functioning properly.
- Ensure pH of media is between 5.5-6.0. Adjust if outside this range.
- Check iron levels in soil and tissue. Supplement with iron sulfate drenches if media pH is high or with iron chelate as a spray or drench if media pH is normal.



Figure 2 Example of iron deficiency on Colorburst Pro Blue as a result of high media pH

SYMPTOM: Yellowing of lower foliage

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS:

- Check that fertilizer injectors are functioning properly.
- Check for low nitrogen levels in soil and tissue.
- Check E.C. levels of soil for high salts.
- Check magnesium levels in soil and tissue. If low, supplement with magnesium sulfate as a drench.
- Check for root or stem rot.

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CROP SCHEDULING (REGULAR)

Season	Container Size	Cuttings per pot	Weeks to establish before pinch	Weeks after pinch to flower	Total Crop Time (Weeks)
Early Spring*	4", 1 Quart, & 6"	1	1-2	7-9	8-10
Early Spring*	Specialty Baskets (6" & 8")	3	1-2	9-11	10-12
Spring	4", 1 Quart, & 6"	1	1-2	5-7	6-8
Spring	Specialty Baskets (6" & 8")	3	1-2	7-9	8-10

CROP SCHEDULING (Fast Crop – No Pinch)

Season	Container Size	Cuttings per pot	Total crop time (weeks)
Spring	4", 1 Quart, & 6"	2	6
Spring	Specialty Baskets (6" & 8")	3-4	6

If you have questions about Calibrachoa in production please post your question on our live bulletin board at www.EckeRanchTechHelp.com or call 760-753-1134 and choose option#3 for Technical Support.

[For high resolution images click here](#)

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