

Tech Shares

Fertilizer Tips

Tip Sheet for Combination Spring Baskets

Fred Hulme, PH.D., Technical Service, ICL Specialty Fertilizer

Overall comments on crop:

- Hanging Baskets are heavy feeders especially during the vegetative stage.
- Typical problems are poor size and light green foliage due to inadequate nutrition.
- Adequate magnesium will ensure dark green foliage.
- Many plant species used in baskets have a high demand for Iron especially if root-zone pH's climb above 5.8.

100% Water soluble fertilizer (WSF) program:

- Ideally fertilizer selection should be based on a current water analysis (contact your ICL representative for more details).
- A good general program would be Peters Professional® 20-3-19 Petunia Special with black Iron @ 250 to 300 ppm N on a constant basis.
- Commence feeding at planting or as soon as cuttings are rooted.

100% Controlled release fertilizer (CRF) program:

- Osmocote® Plus (5-6 mo. @ 70°F in N. zones/ 8-9 mo. @ 70°F in S. zones) incorporated at 8 to 10 lbs. per cu. yard.
- Media should be used within 2 to 3 weeks after mixing in CRF.
- Select a longer term product to extend feeding once plants get shipped.



Combination fertilizer program:

- Osmocote® Plus 15-8-11 tablets , 3 to 4 tablets per 10" hanging basket stuck into growing media.
- Fertigate with Peters Professional 20-3-19 Petunia Special @ 100 to 150 ppm N on a constant basis.

Supplements:

- Add Magnesium in form of Peters Excel® Magnitrate 10-0-0 @ 4 oz. per 100 gallons on a constant basis if Mg is lacking in program.
- Monthly applications of Peters Professional® Liquid STEM™ starting Oct. 1st at 2 fl. oz. per 100 gallons will promote deep green foliage.
- Apply a medium rate of H2Pro® liquid before shipping to help prevent wilting in the post-harvest phase.

Problem solving:

- If plants are chlorotic and pH is above 6.0; apply a high rate of Liquid Stem (8 fl. oz. per 100 gallons).

