

## Happy New Year!

It feels like 2008 just started and now we are already in 2009. January is a crazy month for URC suppliers, like 0 to 60 in 5 seconds. We are shipping, and the next couple weeks will be crunch time. All hands are working together to make this supply season a smooth one.

January is also the month to think about the next season even though this one just started. Pack Trials are coming up, and with it the start of the 2009/10 season.

The same time January is also peak ordering time for Poinsettias, and the best deals and availability can be found now.

There is lots to do this month and most importantly, let's work together on a successful 2009.

There is lots to read in the January News Flash, so sit back, relax, and enjoy this issue.

Sincerely yours,  
Stefan Reiner



## Variety of the Month

**SK 62 Dark Red** joined the 2009 Selecta Poinsettia program just weeks ago. It performed so well at growers trials all over the continent that we had no other choice but to make it available for 2009. Compact, sturdy, strong, reliable - a great mid-season choice.

## What's new?



Pack Trials 2009 is around the corner, and with it the start of the 2009/10 season. It is Selecta's 10th season in North America and reason enough to take another leap ahead with innovations in different areas. With well over 50 new varieties and improvements, 2009/10 will be an exciting year.

We are proud to introduce the next generation MiniFamous™ Double varieties including a stunning orange, and amethyst. MiniFamous™ continues to play an important role in our program and with the all-new MiniFamous™ Deep Yellow and MiniFamous™ Electric Purple, we are adding pizzazz to America's #1 Calibrachoa series. The new MiniFamous™ MiniDouble series puts Calibrachoa in a new and different light. MiniFamous™ - Expect Success!

Selecta adds spice to its world-class Osteospermum program with specialty colors and a new line split. Choose FlowerPower™, we call it the comfort line, featuring varieties that have proven themselves worldwide. Select FlowerPower™ Compact for smaller pot formats and later planting. Zion™ offers specialty colors you have been craving.

Selecta's specialty pot plant and perennial program takes a leap ahead. New colors, including stunning bi-colors, are joining our SuperTrouper™ Pot Carnation program. Brand new in our program is the Trumpet™ Gaillardia series and LaVela™ Pink Lavendula.

The list of innovative varieties is long, and some of the highlights you shouldn't miss include LaRita™ Double Rose Argyranthemum, Bonfire® Red Begonia, Serengeti® Orange Nemesia, Zion™ Copper Amethyst Osteospermum, Moonlight™ Light Salmon Zonal Geranium, Royal™ Scarlet Red Ivy Geranium, Famous™ Violet Picotee Petunia, SweetSunshine™ Burgundy Double Petunia, and Lascar™ White evol. Verbena.

Innovation is not limited to varieties. We are proud to introduce you to innovations of a different kind:

- TrixiLiner™ has become a huge hit in its first season and keeps growing strongly. See all recipes, including the new ones, and check out our MiniRooter™ and the new Quick&Easy™ liner program as well.
- WWA stands for World-Wide-Availability and for virtually unlimited access to Selecta's worldwide production. WWA is part of the new Selecta, a Selecta with great genetics and great availability.
- At Selecta 7 out of the 10 best selling spring annuals varieties are MiniFamous™ Calibrachoa, and this fact tells you where to go for the best Calibrachoa. And the best offers you the MiniFamous™ Club website <http://minifamousclub.com> featuring a forum for Calibrachoa lovers and probably the best tech information available.

We could go on and on about all the great innovations joining our tenth season in North America. We suggest you plan to visit us during Pack Trials 2009 and look at all the exciting additions and innovations for 2010. By the way, I didn't tell you about all of them and some of the best cost-saving ideas won't be released before the event. Hope to see you in Encinitas.

The Profit Center will open its doors March 28 - April 4, 2009, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. in Encinitas, CA. Please contact Angela for further information and reservations by sending an Email to [a.storm@firstclassplants.com](mailto:a.storm@firstclassplants.com), or calling toll free 800-955 5644 ext. 112. To better serve our visitors, reservations will be required!

**The Profit Center™ is the 2009 Pack Trial location you don't want to miss!**



Famous™ Violet Picotee



Zion™ Copper Purple



MiniFamous™ Deep Yellow



MiniFamous™ Double Amethyst



LaRita™ Double Rose



Serengeti® Orange



PortoGrande™ Apricot



LaVela™ Pink



## Calibrachoa - eight common mistakes



MiniFamous™ Tangerine in a 12-inch basket.



Overmisted during the first week of rooting.



Nicely developed pinched liner.

Calibrachoa have grown to one of the largest vegetative spring annual crops in our industry. Its huge color range and reliable performance for growers and consumers alike have boosted its popularity. Breeding has evolved rather quickly, and today's leading assortments offer not only different colors but also different habits.

The next generation of Calibrachoa brings you larger flowers, clearer more fluorescent colors, a mounded habit with excellent center branching, early flowering, lots of flowers, and great performance throughout the summer. MiniFamous™ leads the way with varieties like MiniFamous™ Tangerine and the only double-flowering Calibrachoa series.

There are some important points to watch when growing Calibrachoa, especially during rooting and the first weeks after planting rooted liners. This crop is not the easiest one, and mistakes during the first weeks will take a long time to heal. Avoid these eight common mistakes:

### 1. Variety Selection

Know what the final product should look like and base your variety selection on it. Growing a small pot crop using 4-inch pots to quart size and easy-to-ship mono-baskets, use a compact variety such as MiniFamous™ Compact. For larger and impressive mono-baskets and mixed baskets, the traditional MiniFamous™ line is the better fit.

### 2. Scheduling

It's a common sight to see overgrown pots and baskets at retail. Calibrachoa is a quick-to-finish crop and should not be started too early. Check out the recommended finishing times for your area and know your desired sales date; use this information to schedule your crop and plant accordingly.

### 3. Don't over-mist in propagation

The cuttings are small and thin, and more mist will enter the plug compared to the large Petunias, for example. It's easy to over-saturate a Calibrachoa liner without noticing it until the cutting shows it (when it's too late). It's important to avoid over-saturating the plug the first 10 to 14 days until initial roots have been formed. Signs of too much water include uneven rooting, yellowing of the growing tips, uneven growth, and hardened cuttings.

### 4. Start warm

Calibrachoa like it warm during propagation, and especially during the first two weeks the media temperature should be at 70° F (21° C). Don't harden off your liner too quickly or harshly. Drop the temperature by a couple degrees; use cool mornings and higher light levels to tone your liners. Hardening off too fast will delay rooting of the liner after transplanting, reduce branching, and delay finishing. After transplanting the liners, keep the temperature up. Maintain night temperatures of 61-64° F (16-18° C) and day temperatures of 68-72° F (20-22° C), until plants have nicely branched and cover almost all the substrate surface of your pot.

### 5. Substrate / fertilizer / pH / EC

Choose well-draining, peat-moss-based substrate for your Calibrachoa crop. Most newer genetics can handle

a pH between 5.6 and 6.2. Know your water and use the correct fertilizer for it. Check your root system and keep it healthy; this becomes much easier if you use a well-draining, peat moss-based substrate. Keep the salt level below EC 2.0. Low salt levels will lead to light green or slightly yellow plants, but high salt levels will burn roots and may lead to root disease and problems that aren't so easy to correct. A too-high pH is as bad as a too-low one. Water regularly and avoid jumping from one extreme to the other, as this will damage the root system. The right genetics in combination with good substrate, the right fertilizer, and the correct watering will get you through your crop without the need for special treatments.

## 6. Pinching

It sounds so easy, but pinching a liner at the perfect time will make a huge difference. Don't let your liner overgrow. Keep cuttings soft and growing before you pinch, as hard cuttings won't branch as well. Apply PGRs at an early stage in propagation, so the cuttings stay nice and compact (avoid the initial stretch). Pinch early and soft so good basal branching is the result. Especially for pot and mono-basket production, you should keep a close eye on the pinching process.

## 7. PGRs

Using the right PGR at the right moment will avoid a lot of headaches later on. Avoid planting vigorous varieties in small pots, as this will complicate the crop. If it's necessary, make sure to stay on top of PGR's and consult with your supplier for more specific instructions.

I like to use a spray and drench combination for Calibrachoa. I start in propagation with about 2 applications of 2,500 PPM B-Nine (or 10-20 PPM Sumagic) and apply the drench according to the plant format.

For pots, I suggest the use of 0.25 PPM Sumagic as a drench the moment side shoots are about 1-inch long. Apply the drench before you lower the temperature for your crop.

Baskets will get one more spray at the same stage (when side shoots are about 1-inch long) and the drench later on. I like to drench my baskets with 1 PPM Bonzi when plants reach about 75% of the desired size. Additional spray applications or a second drench application can be applied if necessary.

For very vigorous varieties (like MiniFamous Double) I recommend doubling the rates (which equals our Petunia recommendations).

## 8. Avoid late flowering

Quite often I hear complaints about late flowering. This may have to do with the variety selection, but it can also be related to treatments during production. It has proven that using HID lights during propagation will result in early flowering. Avoid the use of B-Nine and Florel (especially in northern areas) as much as possible, as it will delay flowering. Keep the temperatures up (especially at the beginning of the crop) and avoid late pinching. Keep light levels up and grow plants on the dry side.

For more tech advice, tips, ideas, and an interactive forum check out our new website: <http://minifamousclub.com>

**Most importantly, and point 9, pick the best genetics. Pick MiniFamous™!**



Fe (iron) deficiency shortly before sales date.



Good stage for a PGR drench (5-inch pots).



Good stage for a PGR drench (12-inch basket).

## “Better Homes and Gardens” x 5



We are proud to announce that five Selecta varieties have been chosen by “Better Homes and Gardens” for their website and are featured in two categories for 2009:

- <http://www.bhg.com/gardening/flowers/top-red-orange-yellow-annuals/>
- <http://www.bhg.com/gardening/flowers/new-annuals/>

The image to the left shows MiniFamous™ Tangerine (courtesy of BHG) featured in the ‘20 Top New Red, Orange, & Yellow Annuals for 2009’ category together with MiniFamous™ Double Lemon.

The second category is ‘28 Top New Blue, Pink, & Purple Annuals for 2009’ and features MiniFamous™ Double Series, FlowerPower™ Silver Pink, and Famous™ Lilac Picotee.

Follow the above-listed links (or paste and copy into your browser) for the complete article.

Consumers will ask for MiniFamous™ and MiniFamous™ Double this spring. Have you ordered America’s #1 Calibrachoa series to meet the demand? Remember to take advantage of the trademark by using our POP kit and visit our website for more information: <http://minifamousclub.com>

## Dollars and Sense of TrixiLiner™



The TrixiLiner™ is a 1 dollar plus liner and this price tag scares some growers. But looking at the value of this liner you will quickly understand how much you can save by using TrixiLiner™.

I went on-line and took pricing from a broker website for RC MiniFamous™ and RC Callie™, both shipping in a very similar format (2.5 cm pot). I added the RC cost plus royalty plus FedEx® shipping and came for the volume level of 10,000-25,000 for both breeder/supplier to the same cost of \$ 0.58 per RC delivered (same broker). This broker offered TrixiLiner™ as well, and the price per RC was \$ 1.32 delivered for the same volume level. I used a lower volume level on purpose and did not add the EOD available.

For a 12-inch basket we recommend using 3 TrixiLiner™ RC, which are actually 9 cuttings (3 cutting per TrixiLiner™ RC), resulting in a plant input cost of \$ 3.96. At the same time using 9 standard RC will cost you \$ 5.22. So the TrixiLiner™ is actually cheaper.



Now one could say that only 5 standard RC are used in average per 12-inch basket, resulting in a plant input cost of \$ 2.90, making the TrixiLiner™ more expensive. But by using 5 standard RC, you are planting only 5 cuttings in this basket and not 9 like with the 3 TrixiLiner™ RC. Using 5 standard liners will add crop time compared to TrixiLiner™ costing you even more at the end.

On top of the input costs are handling costs. Planting 3 liners goes much quicker than planting 5, not to speak of 9. At the same time when mixing products, you slow down planting with standard liners even more and may end up with mixes you weren’t planning on.

From our experience, one could use 4 TrixiLiner™ RC for a 12-inch basket and still



Trixi™ Caribbean Cocktail



Trixi™ Raspberry Parfait



Trixi™ Twinkle Star



Trixi™ Sweet Candy



Trixi™ Spring Valley

have lower input costs at the end, increasing the bottom-line and not to forget the overall improved quality and look.

Another aspect to consider are labels. We offer for each mix a specific label, so one has to use only one label per Trixi™ recipe (basket). If you mix, you would need at least one label per product used, which directly compared with TrixiLiner™ would mean three labels. A label is \$ 0.025, resulting in another \$ 0.05 plus handling in costs on savings.

So far sales for TrixiLiner™ have been great, and we do see that some mixes are selling better than others. The top 5 mixes so far are:

1. Trixi™ Caribbean Cocktail = 17%
2. Trixi™ Raspberry Parfait = 15%
3. Trixi™ Twinkle Star = 12%
4. Trixi™ Sweet Candy = 9.5%
5. Trixi™ Spring Valley = 9%

The other 5 recipes are sold more or less in the same quantities, showing that growers are testing most of them to find out which they like most. We are already working on additional new recipes for 2009/10, and you can be assured that they are well-tested and trialed.

- There are many reasons to use TrixiLiner™ and on our website <http://firstclassplants.com> (click on SALES and select TrixiLiner™) you can find more information, all recipes, and a tech-sheet about this exciting and revolutionary product. But one of the best reasons to buy the original TrixiLiner™ is the fact that Selecta genetics are used. Superior genetics (like MiniFamous™, America's #1 Calibrachoa series) packaged in a great idea - this is how we are creating the future.

## Selecta News

### Early Order Discount for Poinsettias 2009!

To celebrate the great success of our Christmas Feelings™ series and Christmas Eve™ we decided to offer an Early Order Discount (EOD) for URC and RC Poinsettias until February 28, 2009.

Remember, all Selecta Poinsettia cuttings will ship from our farm in Uganda guaranteeing great quality and access to our worldwide availability.

Grow Christmas Feelings™ and Christmas Eve™, two of the most reliable Poinsettias available.



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