

Whisper™ Diascia

Propagation

- Choose a well-drained medium with an EC of 0.75 to 0.80 mmhos and a pH of 5.6 to 5.9.
- Stick cuttings within 12 to 24 hours of arrival. Cuttings can be stored overnight, if necessary, at 45 to 50°F (7 to 10°C).
- Soil temperature should be maintained at 68 to 74°F (20 to 23°C) until roots are visible.
- Once roots are visible, the media should be kept moderately wet and never saturated. This will prevent iron deficiency and the associated chlorotic foliage which can develop.
- 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 (PGR).
- **Whisper** Diascia do not require pinching during propagation. However, to improve branching and habit, plants can be pinched 7 to 10 days before transplanting.
- Diascia rooted cuttings should be ready for transplanting 21 to 24 days after sticking.

Growing On to Finish

Media

- Use a well-drained, disease-free, soilless medium.
- Maintain a media pH of 5.6 to 6.0.

Temperature

- Nights: 52 to 60°F (11 to 16°C)
- Days: 62 to 75°F (17 to 24°C)
- Excessively warm temperatures will cause stretch.
- Recommended night temperatures will create maximum branching and the best possible habit.

Light

- Keep light intensities at 5,000 to 8,000 f.c. (50,000 to 80,000 Lux).
- Low light levels promote stem stretch.
- **Whisper** Diascia are daylength-neutral and will flower equally well all year.
- Reduce light intensity when temperatures are high to prevent flower and leaf burning.

Watering

- **Whisper** Diascia are susceptible to *Botrytis* – avoid high humidity and wet foliage.
- When plants are young, allow the media to dry slightly between watering.

Fertilizer

- Use constant feed with a balanced fertilizer at 200 to 250 ppm N with additional iron as needed.
- 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.
- Use clear water with every third watering if high soluble salt problems occur.

Pinching

- Pinch plants back 7 to 10 days after transplanting to improve basal branching.
- For a larger basket or container, a second pinch can be applied but will delay flowering by approximately 2 weeks.
- Plants will generally bloom 4 to 6 weeks after a pinch.

Controlling Growth

- **The best way to control the growth of Diascia is to grow the crop cool, provide bright light and apply moderate, regular water stress to promote flowering and reduce unwanted vegetative growth.**
- To control growth and improve flowering and habit, growers can use 1 or more applications of B-Nine (1,500 to 3,000 ppm) starting 2 weeks after transplant.
- Use of PGRs can delay flowering 1 to 2 weeks. Avoid spraying once flower buds appear.
- In general, more frequent applications of any growth regulator at a lower concentration will produce the best results.
- These recommendations for plant growth regulators should be used only as general guidelines. Growers must trial all chemicals under their particular conditions.
- Florel 200 to 300 ppm can be used to improve branching.

Common Problems

Insects: Aphids, thrips, whitefly, leafminers, fungus gnats.

Diseases: *Botrytis*, *Rhizoctonia*, *Pythium*.

All **Whisper** Diascia cuttings are derived from culture and virus-indexed stock from the **Ball Certified Plants®** program.

Problems	Causes
Plant collapse	Wet media for an extended period (<i>Pythium</i>) Planting too deep (<i>Rhizoctonia</i>)
Delayed flowering	Late application of growth regulators
Excessive vegetative growth	Higher than recommended air temperatures Over-fertilization under low light conditions Low light levels and over-watering; wet media
Poor branching	Low fertilization; lack of nitrogen
Stretched plants	Low light levels, excess water, higher than recommended air temperatures
Chlorosis	Iron deficiency High pH Nitrogen deficiency Over-watering

Whisper Diascia Crop Schedule & Uses

(Crop Schedule In Weeks)

	4-In. (10-Cm) Pots 1 PP*	6-In. (15-Cm) Pots 1-2 PP*	10-12-In. (25-30-Cm) Pots 4-5 PP*
Unrooted cuttings	9-11	10-12	12-14
Rooted cuttings	5-7	7-9	9-11

*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.

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