

Medusa & Chilly Chili Ornamental Peppers

Non-Pungent Fruit Make These the First Peppers that Can Go Public!

■ **Medusa** and **Chilly Chili** ornamental peppers bear **non-burning, “child-safe” fruit**, making them ideal for indoor and outdoor use in both public and residential areas once thought unsuitable for the traditional “too-hot-to-handle” ornamental peppers.

■ In retail displays, **Medusa** and **Chilly Chili** plants **hold their fruit well after first color**, allowing for **great shelf life and long sales period**.

■ An excellent choice for **landscape** use, 2002 All-America Selections Winner **Chilly Chili** ornamental pepper is best suited to 5 to 6-in. (13 to 15 cm) pot programs. **Larger in habit** than **Medusa** ornamental pepper, **Chilly Chili** reaches 9 to 10 in. (23 to 25 cm) tall, with a spread of 14 in. (35 cm).

■ **Medusa** ornamental pepper produces a **dwarf, naturally compact, well-branched** plant that is well-suited to 4-in. (10-cm) pot plant culture. Garden height is 6 to 8 in. (15 to 20 cm) with similar or slightly greater spread, making it great for **gardens and mixed plantings**.

■ **Medusa** and **Chilly Chili** varieties are also perfect for the **Fall indoor pot plant market**. With their unique appearance and spectacular range of colors, **Medusa** and **Chilly Chili** plants will bring life to **Halloween and Christmas sales**.

■ **Medusa** and **Chilly Chili** ornamental peppers are available as standard seed. Contact your local distributor or call PanAmerican Seed at 800 231-4868 for ordering information today.

Capsicum annuum

Approximate seed count: 8,000 S./oz. (285 S./g)

Plug Production

Plug Tray Size

Ornamental peppers are well-suited to 288 cell or larger plugs.

Stage 1 (Radicle emergence/5 to 7 days)

■ Maintain soil temperature at 72° to 76°F (22° to 24°C).

■ Keep medium evenly moist but not saturated.

■ Cover the seed lightly with coarse vermiculite.

■ Light is not necessary for germination until radicle emergence.

■ Maintain soil pH at 5.5 to 5.8 and soluble salts (EC) at less than 0.5 mmhos/cm (using 2:1 extraction).

■ Keep ammonium levels less than 10 ppm.

Stage 2 (Stem and cotyledon emergence/7 to 10 days)

■ Maintain soil temperature at 70° to 75°F (21° to 24°C).

■ Allow the medium to dry out slightly before watering for best germination and rooting.

■ Provide light levels of 1,000 to 2,500 f.c. (10,000 to 25,000 Lux) for the remainder of plug production.

■ Begin fertilizing with 50 to 75 ppm N from 14-0-14 or a calcium/potassium nitrate feed once cotyledons are fully expanded.

■ Alternate feed with clear water.

Stage 3 (Growth and development of true leaves/10 to 14 days)

■ Maintain soil temperature at 70° to 75°F (21° to 24°C).

■ Avoid wilt.

■ Increase feed to 100 to 150 ppm N from 14-0-14 or other calcium/potassium nitrate fertilizer. Fertilize every 2 to 3 irrigations.

■ Chemical growth regulators cannot be used on peppers.

Stage 4 (Plants ready for transplanting or shipping/7 days)

- Maintain soil temperature at 68° to 70°F (20° to 21°C).
- Provide medium soil moisture and avoid wilt.
- Maintain soil pH at 5.5 to 5.8 and soluble salts (EC) at less than 0.75 mmhos/cm.
- Continue to fertilize with 100 to 150 ppm N from 14-0-14 or calcium/potassium nitrate feed as needed.

Growing On to Finish

Media

Use a well-drained, disease-free, soilless medium with a medium initial nutrient charge and a pH of 5.5 to 6.3.

Temperature

- **Nights:** 65° to 70°F (18° to 21°C)
- **Days:** 68° to 80°F (20° to 26°C)
- Peppers will be damaged by temperatures below 45°F (7°C). They prefer the warmest growing temperatures possible.

Light

Provide light levels of 4,000 to 5,000 f.c. (40,000 to 50,000 Lux) while maintaining moderate temperatures.

Fertilization

- Fertilize at every other irrigation with 20-10-20 at 150 to 200 ppm N.
- Maintain medium electrical conductivity around 1.0 mmhos/cm (using 1:2 extraction).

Controlling Height

- **Medusa** and **Chilly Chili** ornamental peppers produce a naturally dwarf, compact plant.
- No growth regulators are needed.

Crop Schedule (Spring Production)

Plug stage: 4 to 5 weeks

Transplant to flower: 12 to 14 weeks

Flower to fruit: 4 to 6 weeks

Total crop time: 20 to 25 weeks

Note: **Medusa** and **Chilly Chili** ornamental peppers have a total crop time of 14 to 18 weeks during Summer production.

Post-Production Care

■ Once the peppers have formed, night temperatures of 60° to 65°F (15° to 18°C), and day temperatures of 65° to 75°F (18° to 24°C) are optimal.

■ Avoid shipping **Medusa** and **Chilly Chili** plants in closed boxes. Due to the high fruit count, ethylene can build up in the boxes, causing the foliage to drop. If boxing is necessary, do not close boxes until just before loading onto trucks. Recommend that your customer unbox the plants immediately upon arrival.

■ Ornamental peppers prefer full sun; however, partial shade may be beneficial during retail display.

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