

"LA BELLE" RANUNCULUS CUT FLOWER FORCING INSTRUCTIONS

LOCATION:

Select your beds so that they can receive full sun during the Winter months, but can be shaded as temperatures rise in the Spring. Be sure that the growing beds are well drained, and the area receives good air circulation. Ranunculus may be grown in the same greenhouse as other plants, but their best growth will come from night temperatures of 45 to 48 degrees Fahrenheit, and day temperatures of 58 to 65 degrees Fahrenheit. Daytime temperatures above 70 degrees Fahrenheit should be avoided.

Ranunculus may also be grown in containers and forced following these same cultural recommendations.

For outdoor production temperatures should not drop much below 40 degrees Fahrenheit on your coldest days. They should also be protected from rain when flowers start to open.

PLANTING:

For best results plant after your soil temperature has cooled in the fall. A well drained, organic media is important. Media Ph should be 6.5 to 7.5. Plant corms with the pointed "fingers" down and cover with one inch of media. It is highly recommended to use a fungicide drench at planting time using 1 1/2 pounds each of Chipco 26019 and Chipco Aliette to 190 gallons of water to cover 1000 square feet of bed space.

If you can not plant the corms immediately upon arrival they should be stored in a dry location at a temperature of 50-55 degrees Fahrenheit until ready to plant.

Pre-Germination: It is suggested that you provide a "pre plant" treatment to the corms upon arrival prior to planting to enhance stem quality.

Prior to planting soak the corms in room temperature water for 3 to 4 hours. During this time leave the water running so that a small amount of water runs over the rim of the container. By keeping the water running slightly you will keep oxygen in the water supply. For the final thirty to forty minutes add a fungicide (such as Captan at 10 oz. per 26 gallon of water, or 1 tablespoon each of Chipco 26019 and Chipco Aliette to 1 gallon of water). During this thirty to forty minutes you can turn off the water.

After soaking, remove corms and let them drip dry. Next, pack them into clear plastic perforated or ventilated bags (corms must have air). Pack 250 corms with approximately five quarts of Perlite, or moist (NOT WET) Peat Moss. Place the bags into cool storage at 50-55 degree F for ten to thirteen days (keep the media moist at all times, but not wet), or until the roots or shoots reach 1/8 to 1/4 inch in length. Corms are then ready to plant.

The time required for the Pre-Germination treatment (10 to 13 days) will be more than offset by the increased quality of the final product.

Planting Density: For Greenhouse or outdoor bed planting space your corms as follows:

Size:	3/5 cm	4" apart in rows 8" apart (about 3 per square foot)
	5/6 cm	6" apart in rows 8" apart (about 2 per square foot)

For Outdoor field planting space corms as follows for double row planting. Two rows 14" apart and double row sets on 36" centers.

Size:	3/5 cm	8" apart in rows
	5/6 cm	10" apart in rows

WATERING:

After your soil drench is applied, keep the soil surface moist. The first watering is very important. Water so that the soil is moist to a depth of 14 to 16 inches. Subsequent watering need not be so heavy, however, Ranunculus are heavy feeders and care must be taken to be sure that they never dry out during the growing season. It is important to keep the soil cool especially during initial growth.

FERTILIZING:

When the plants are established they should be fertilized using a 9-45-15 (NPK) solution at one pound to 100 gallons of water. Use one gallon per square yard. Three weeks later start fertilizing every three weeks using a solution of 30-5-25, or 12-12-20.

DISEASE AND INSECT CONTROL:

The drench mentioned above should control the water molds during the growing season. Ornalin Spray at 1 pound per 1000 gallons of water can be used for control of Botrytis if required.

Usually the only insects that will bother these plants are Aphids and Thrips. It is recommended trying different insecticides to find the one that performs best for you. You will need to read the labels carefully before using any product for disease and insect control.

FLOWERING:

Corms planted in early October should start producing flowers in January and continue on through April. Before the soil warms in the Spring add a good mulch to the soil to help keep the soil cool as possible. This will increase the length of the bloom cycle.

Cut flowers are soon as they start to show good color.