

Cultural Details: **Chrysanthemum parthenium**

This type of Chrysanthemum has a naturally-compact, bushy habit and a height of around 20cm, making it suitable for Summer bedding and pot plant sales. These plants are often used as tidy edging plants in parks bedding schemes.

Variety Selection

Santana has small creamy-white blooms like mini pot 'mum flowers, Yellow Santana is the same with lemon yellow flowers, whilst Butterball has large, bright yellow flowers.

Programming the Crop

Seed can be sown from February to July for continuous production, (it is unaffected by daylength). Most typically seed is sown in February and March for Summer bedding and pot plant sales. Sowing to flowering takes around 14 weeks.

Propagation and Growing-on

Sow the small seeds (6-7,500 per gram) onto the surface of a free-draining, open, seed sowing compost, which should be thoroughly wetted with a suitable fungicide prior to sowing (to prevent damping-off diseases), and the trays allowed to drain. Cover seeds very lightly with vermiculite, and cover the trays with clear or milky polythene to maintain humidity, until the first seedlings are visible. Germination takes around 7-10 days at 18-20°C. Keep the germinating seedlings moist at all times.

Grow at 15-18°C. As soon as the plants are large enough to handle, move into large cell trays and grow on at around 15°C. For bedding, the compact types can be moved straight into the sales unit, a 4- or 6-pack. Then when the cell grown plants are fully established, move into the final pot (9 or 10cm) and grow on to flowering, or put three plants in a larger 14 or 15cm half-pot (make sure habits are matching).

A balanced liquid feed should be applied to all varieties as plants establish in the pot

Pest and Disease

Maintain good air movement through the crop, and water in the morning rather than the evening to keep the foliage dry and lessen attack by Botrytis. Pay good attention to glasshouse hygiene, using only fresh trays, pots, compost, water and clean bench tops to avoid damping-off diseases, and check for the presence of pests such as aphids, spraying accordingly. Chrysanthemum parthenium is naturally resistant to many of the normal Chrysanthemum diseases, and suffers few pest and disease problems.

Information provided for guidance only, as cultural practices and climatic circumstances vary.