

MOLES SEEDS

Mesembryanthemum

Cultural Leaflet: ZZ244

Also known as the ice plant, Mesembryanthemum is a traditional bedding subject, producing masses of bright coloured daisy-like flowers over fleshy foliage, early in the Summer bedding season, and with a relatively short flowering life. It can tolerate cool temperatures, so can be sold before Impatiens, Begonias etc, and is straightforward to produce.

Variety Selection

In addition to a standard mixture, we offer a wide range of separate colours - dark pink, red, white, yellow, apricot and lemon.

Programming the Crop

Sow in January and February for sale from April to June, as green plants with a label, and in flower.

Propagation and Growing-on

Sow the small seeds (4,000 per gram) onto the surface of a free-draining, open-structured, 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. Sow either into trays, or multi-sow into plug trays, to avoid root disturbance when pricking out.

Cover trays with clear or milky polythene to maintain humidity, until the first seedlings are visible. Germination takes around 7-10 days at 15-20°C (not warmer – higher temperatures depress germination). Keep the germinating seedlings moist at all times, and continue to grow at 15-20°C.

After around 5 weeks, the seedlings should be ready for transfer into the final container, 6- or 9-packs containing a standard bedding compost. Grow on at 10-15°C until ready for sale; temperature can be reduced prior to sale to harden off the plants – they are tolerant of quite low temperatures.

Pest and Disease

Pay good attention to glasshouse hygiene, using only fresh trays, pots, compost, water and clean bench tops to avoid damping-off diseases. Monitor for insect pests such as aphids and treat accordingly. Mesembryanthemum does not generally suffer much from pest and disease.

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

(06/19)

