

Cultural Details: **Wallflower Charity**

Wallflowers have traditionally been field raised, then lifted and bunched for bare root green plant sales in the Autumn. The market is changing however, and customers increasingly require plants ready to plant in the flowering position in the border or container, in full flower. **Charity** has two features to make it ideal for this purpose – a compact habit, and the ability to flower in the Autumn.

Production Schedule to produce flowering plants for sale

Sow mid June-mid July	for sales end September – mid October
Sow mid July-early August	for sales late October
Sow mid-late August	for sales in November
Sow October	for sales in January (given slight heat)
Sow October	for sales in February (grown frost-free)
Sow November	for sales in late February (slight heat)
Sow November	for sales in March (grown frost-free)
Sow mid December	for sales in March (slight heat)
Sow January	for sales in April (slight heat)

Production

Sow the seeds (around 500 per gram) plug trays ideally to prevent root disturbance, or seedling trays. Germination should be sufficiently good to sow one seed per cell. Sow onto the surface of an 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), and cover with vermiculite. Keep the trays moist, e.g. cover trays with clear/milky polythene after sowing, and in a shaded location. Germination takes 7-10 days at 15-18 °C.

Once the seed-leaves (cotyledons) have emerged, remove the polythene cover to prevent stretching of the young seedlings. After around 3-4 weeks, transfer to 6-pack or strip trays, or 8cm pots, when the young plants have filled the plug tray. Use a liquid feed programme to keep the plants green and healthy, until they are sold either in flower, or in bud, with a colour label. Keep good air movement around the plants to avoid problems with Mildew. Plants can stand temperatures down to 0 °C in the Winter, but production is hastened by temperatures up to 10 °C at that time.

To get the best results from Charity, use quite a strong feed programme during periods of active growth, with good nitrogen levels to encourage vegetative growth.

As brassicas, Wallflowers are subject to the same range of pest and disease as cabbages etc. For example flea beetles, aphids and caterpillars could all be a problem – spray accordingly. Monitor the crop for signs of Mildew and treat accordingly.

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