

Cultural Details: **Bellis**

Bellis, 'double daisies', are an essential component of Spring Bedding sales in March and April, and can be sold as green plants with a colour label, in the Autumn. The newest introduction, Galaxy, is the first variety to flower profusely in the first Autumn after sowing – excellent in Winter baskets and containers.

Bellis make excellent subjects for parks Winter bedding programmes, being reliable performers from late February until May. They are straightforward plants to raise.

Variety Selection

Apart from Galaxy, referred to above with its Autumn flowering capability, we offer a range of varieties as mixtures and separate colours, differing in flower size from the small-flowered Pomponette to the extra large blooms of Radar.

Programming the Crop

Sow in June-July for green plant sales in Autumn (or flowering plants for Galaxy) and flowering plants in Spring.

Propagation and Growing-on

Seed is very small at 6,000 per gram. Germination takes around 7 days at 15-20°C, when sown onto the surface of an open seed-sowing compost. A very light covering of vermiculite can be applied. Cover with clear or milky polythene to maintain humidity, until the first seedlings are visible. Keep the germinating seedlings moist at all times. Keep away from direct sunlight to avoid damage to the seedlings.

After around 5-6 weeks the young plants are ready for transfer into 6- or 9-packs, or 8cm pots, and Galaxy can be pricked out into large cell trays and used later for Winter baskets and containers. It can still be hot at this time of year so avoid direct sunlight on the young plants – shading is desirable. Grow them on at ambient temperatures, keeping well ventilated whilst plants are in the greenhouse. Plants are totally hardy and require no heat during the Winter.

Pest and Disease

Fairly trouble-free, except for rust – crop should be monitored for the presence of red-brown pustules and sprayed with a suitable fungicide – ask your chemical supplier for more details. Look out for aphids and spray accordingly.

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