

Cultural Details: **Celosia**

Moles Seeds offers a number of Celosia varieties for a range of uses from bedding and Summer pot plants, to cut flowers.

Variety Selection

For bedding and inexpensive Summer pot plant use, Moles Seeds offers two distinctive compact types – the cristata ‘Amigo’ mixture with its large fused flowers, and the plumosa ‘Kimono’ Mixture with feathery flowers, our most popular seller. A taller version of Kimono, the Century Series, is used in feature parks plantings; it is available in several colours for colour themed displays. Punky is another tall type, with deep red flowers.

Two other tall varieties, Celosia spicata Flamingo Feather and Flamingo Purple, have a use not only as tall bedding, but also as a cut flower. Flamingo Purple has contrasting darker foliage also.

Programming the Crop

Sow March and April, for flowering plants from late May onwards.

Propagation and Growing-on

Sow the small seeds (1,000 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 lightly with vermiculite, and cover the trays with clear or milky polythene to maintain humidity, until the first seedlings are visible. Germination takes around 14 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. Do not allow the plants to get rootbound at any time or they will be stressed into flower. Do not over-water, nor dry out as this might stress the plants into premature flowering. Do not pass go. Do not collect £200.

For cut flower use the Flamingo varieties are planted up at 25-30cm apart outdoors or in a polytunnel or glasshouse. Plants will need support wiring, especially if grown outdoors.

A balanced liquid feed should be applied to all varieties as plants begin to bud up.

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.

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