

Cultural Details: **Primula obconica**

A traditional indoor pot plant for Winter sales, Primula obconica suffered from the disadvantage of containing Primin, a chemical causing an allergic reaction in some people. The variety Libre F1 is however free of Primin. Primula obconica is relatively straightforward to raise.

Programming

Sow late May to early August, for selling December to April. The crop takes 22-28 weeks from sowing to flowering.

Propagation and Growing on

Sow the small seeds (6,000 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 trays with clear or milky polythene to maintain humidity, until the first seedlings are visible. Germination takes around 4-5 weeks at 16- 18°C – not over 20 °C. Keep the germinating seedlings moist at all times, without overwatering, and grow on at 15-18°C, shading as necessary.

When large enough to handle, move the plants into large-celled plug trays, and then around 6 weeks later, into the final pot (10-13cm) using a standard potting compost. Commence liquid feed programme as soon as plants are established in the pot. Grow at a steady cool temperature of around 15 °C, shading where necessary, until flowering commences. Do not let the plants dry out at any stage during production.

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 and whitefly, spraying accordingly.

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