

crop culture report:



'PowWow White'



'PowWow Wild Berry'

# PowWow Echinacea

This 2010 All-America Selections winner is sure to turn heads with its compact habit and intense color combinations.

By Lisa Lacy

**A**s native plants build in popularity, showy performers like echinacea (coneflower) appeal to growers and gardeners alike.

The new, All-America Selections award-winning PowWow echinacea from PanAmerican Seed is a first year-flowering native perennial (USDA Hardiness Zone 3) available in two colors with matched habit and timing. Its flexibility meets market needs as both a first-year spring sales item or a traditional overwintered perennial.

PowWow has a more compact habit with a garden height of 16-20 inches and a spread of 20-22 inches, and it has more flowers in both the first and second year than other seed varieties.

'PowWow Wild Berry' is an intense, rich rose shade and is complemented by the pure, clean 'PowWow White' with yellow center.

PowWow flowers attract birds and butterflies in the garden.

PowWow can be sown in January for spring production and will flower naturally in mid- to late-June. When sown from July to early September for overwinter production it will flower late May to early June the following year. Plants from overwinter production will flower slightly early, and have better branching and shorter flower stems.

## Plug Production

For plug production, use a well-drained, disease-free, soilless media with a pH of 5.8-6.2. Sow two seeds per cell in 288 or larger plug trays. Covering the seed with vermiculite is recommended since light is optional.

**Stage 1:** Germination takes four to five days at 71-76° F soil temperature. Keep the soil wet.

**Stage 2:** Keep the soil temperature at 71-73° F and light to 2,500 foot-candles. Reduce soil moisture slightly and begin fertilization at 50-100 ppm from nitrate form fertilizers low in phosphorus.

**Stage 3:** Reduce soil temperature to 68-70° F. Allow media to dry further and increase fertilizer to 100-175 ppm. If growth is slow, alternate between a 20-10-20 type formulation, which contains a portion of the nitrogen in the ammonia form and the nitrate formulation like 15-0-15.

**Stage 4:** Reduce soil temperature to 65-67° F, and maintain wet/dry moisture cycles. Continue with a fertilizer recommended above.

## Growing On To Finish

Transplant into a well-drained soilless media in a 4½- to 6-inch container. Use one plug per pot. Grow

at 50-60° F nights and 60-75° F days with maximum light intensity.

## Photoperiod

PowWow is an intermediate-day plant and flowers most rapidly and uniformly at 13- to 14-hour days.

When forcing the crop, use 14 hours instead of 16 hours daylength or night interruption to promote flowering. Once PowWow has begun to flower, it will keep blooming regardless of the day length.

## Irrigation

Maintain a uniform moisture level. When overwintering, keep the plants on the dry side.

## Fertilizer

Fertilize at 175-225 ppm with a nitrate, low phosphorus, high-potassium fertilizer. Maintain a pH of 6.0-6.5.

## Growth Regulators

For height control, echinacea is responsive to a tank mix of B-Nine (daminozide) at 2,500 ppm with Cycocel (chlormequat chloride) at 500-750 ppm. PGR application can begin about four weeks after transplant. If necessary, repeat the application two weeks later. B-Nine at 3,500-5,000 ppm or Sumagic (uniconazole) at 30-ppm spray is also effective.

To promote branching, Configure can be applied at 300 ppm two weeks after transplanting and repeated two weeks later.

## Crop Scheduling

**Spring production:** Sow in January for mid- to late-June flowering.

**Sow to transplant (288-plug):** five to six weeks

**Transplant to flower:** 13 to 17 weeks

**Overwinter production:** Sow in July to early September for natural season flowering the following late May to June.

## Insect and Disease Control

PowWow has a long shelf because it can tolerate dry growing conditions. An overwatered echinacea attracts aphids and fungus gnats, and is susceptible to powdery mildew. For mildew treatment, begin a fungicide application when the first white patches are noticed. Repeat as indicated on the product label during cool, humid conditions. **GPN**

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