



Gerbera Garvinea Series

Three seasons of color are made possible with Garvinea!

By Niels Kuiper

Garvinea is a lush series of plants with flower shapes and colours, totally different from any gerbera on the market. Gerbera, the well-known and appreciated cut flower and indoor potted plant, brings vibrant colors indoors and will put a sunny smile on everyone's face. However, the generally used *Gerbera jamesonii* has its limits: the species has soft characteristics and it is therefore not suited for long term and carefree use outdoors. How wonderful would it be to extensively enjoy gerberas in gardens, borders and on terraces?

Back to Basics

With this challenge in mind, the gerbera breeding company Florist De Kwakel from the Netherlands started a new breeding program more than a decade ago. With a very innovative program the company aimed to bring gerbera back to its outdoor roots by developing a hardy and garden-worthy gerbera solution.

Since the species *Gerbera jamesonii* did not qualify for this purpose, Florist used numerous botanical gerbera species. The team of breeders combined all strong characteristics of these outdoor species, resulting in a completely new robust genetic basis. After years of breeding, Garvinea was successfully introduced in 2009. It was awarded with the Hortifair Innovation Award in 2009, for being the first gerbera to revive after an average winter and decorate the garden for months on end with a high aesthetic value.

Features and Colors

Garvinea's most exciting feature is the exceptionally generous flowering period of three long seasons. From early spring until the first frost many new buds will be formed, producing more than 100 flowers per plant per year, which makes it a valuable addition to the existing garden segment.

The consumer care of Garvinea is simple. The plants have a high resistance to diseases and pests. They require a moderate sunny to half shady place, with well-draining soil, some regular fertilizer and extra water by prolonged drought. Removing finished flowers and old foliage will stimulate the plant to produce even more new flower buds.

At the moment the series contains more than 20 different varieties, including the brightly colored Lisa, Jilly, Rachel, and soft-toned varieties like Piroska, Santana and Valerie. Several significant varieties such as Crista and Summer have flower heads that change colors during the flowering period of each individual flower.

Benefits and Basic Growing Tips

Since its introduction, Garvinea is extensively cultivated and tested around the world. Due to its vigorous, all-weather and disease-resistant basis, the series offers advantages for growers. Garvinea can be produced at relatively low temperatures, with little to no intervention of pesticides and no grow regulators, matching today's criteria in which environment and energy saving are key factors. The uniform plant material is multiplied through tissue culture and offered through rooting stations as hardened young plant material in trays.

Substrate. It is recommended to obtain a coarse substrate and pots with proper draining edges and at least eight holes at the bottom, to provide adequate drainage. The pH should be between 5.5 and 6.0 and an EC of 1.0 to 1.5. These are ideal values to facilitate the absorption of micro-elements. If the pH is too high, the crop will start growing chlorotic (mainly yellow) leaves. It is advised to take a soil sample before using the substrate.


Climate Facilities. For Garvinea cultivation, use a greenhouse (or shade house in case of a milder climate), where climate can be




monitored through ventilation, screening and, when necessary, heating. Water the plants with a drip irrigation system or irrigation from above.

After potting, the light intensity should read approximately 300 to 500 watts. For the first three weeks after potting, screening must be applied to prevent higher light intensity/sun radiation. After three weeks, a higher light intensity is desirable.

The ideal temperature for the first three weeks of growing Garvinea is between 59° and 68° F. After three weeks and along the whole growing process, lower temperatures between 41° and 61° F to stimulate bud development. During the flowering phase Garvinea can handle a maximum of 95° F.

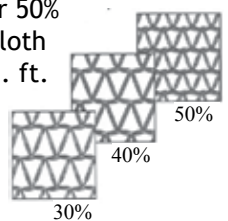
Cultivation plan. Directly at arrival the young plants will be ready to be potted in 5- to 7-inch pots. Make sure the plugs are planted in the middle of the pot at the same level as the soil surface. Subsequent to spacing 10 plants per square meter after five to seven weeks, the plants can be moved to a colder greenhouse for hardening. After another two to three weeks, the first plants will start to develop flower buds and flowers. After 10 to 12 weeks at the greenhouse, the plants are ready to be distributed. Consumers will be able to welcome a rich flowering Garvinea into their gardens. 

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