



Toucan Canna Series



Want a reliable and uniform canna crop that will flower fast and early? Look no further than the new Toucan series!

BY RICK SCHOELLHORN

Growing canna lilies has always been problematic for many growers. The rhizomes were always a source of risk for virus, and the uniformity was always lacking as some rhizomes grew quickly while others lagged behind, leading a grower to have to repeatedly screen and sort the crop to get them to market. Well those days are over now with the release of the Toucan series. Growers can now get a reliably uniform crop and virus free plants with fast growth and early flowering. This means that the canna lily can now be grown and added to any bedding plant lineup, giving the grower a new heat and humidity tolerant spring and summer crop that provides a tropical look and immense consumer appeal.

The Toucan series from Proven Winners contains four colors: Scarlet with purple foliage, and Red, Rose and Yellow with green foliage. So you can choose not only high impact flower color but also two different foliage types for retail appeal whether in bloom or not. The Toucan series is compact, and since it is produced from liners varieties can be grown either in a gallon or larger container (try three liners in a 10- to 12-inch standard pot for a unique container size) or produced as a quick crop in 4½-inch or quart-sized containers. Mature size is around 48 inches.

PRODUCTION GUIDELINES

Temperature. Toucan is best grown under production temperatures of 75 to 80° F day and 65 to 75° F night. This will give the fastest crops. Cooler production temperatures below 65° F are fine; however, as with any tropical crop, the cooler temperatures will slow the crop down, so plan accordingly.

Light levels. Always keep light levels high — 5,000 to 8,000 foot-candles. The higher light intensity promotes earlier flowering and builds a stronger stem structure for more as well as earlier flowers.

Fertilizer and watering. At transplant use 150- to 250-ppm fertilizer, but as soon as plants are established move up to a balanced fertilizer at a rate of 250 to 300 ppm as a constant feed. Like their cousins the bananas, Toucan cannas thrive on constant water and fertilizer. Maintain an EC between 1.0 and 2.56 and a pH between 6.0 and 7.5. Many growers find that especially in larger pots it can be easier (and more efficient) to use a slow-release fertilizer on established plants to keep fertility levels high. Keep the Toucan cannas moist at all times; reducing water is not a good way to control plant size as it leads

to lower leaf yellowing. Cannas are nearly aquatic by nature, so once established they need plenty of water to keep those large flowers coming all season.

Pinching and growth regulators.

No pinching is needed at all with this crop and given the correct light levels branching is exceptionally good. If needed, a toning drench of 1- to 4-ppm paclobutrazol can be applied two weeks after transplant, or anytime thereafter. Use care when drenching with plant growth regulators until you have some familiarity with how the crop will respond under your conditions and follow label instructions carefully.

Flowering. Flowering occurs about 60 to 85 days after planting and is mostly controlled by light,

fertilization and temperature. Keep light levels high and temperatures warm for faster crops. Keep fertilizer levels at 250 to 300 ppm as well to keep existing stalks growing rapidly and new shoots, with more flowers coming all the time.

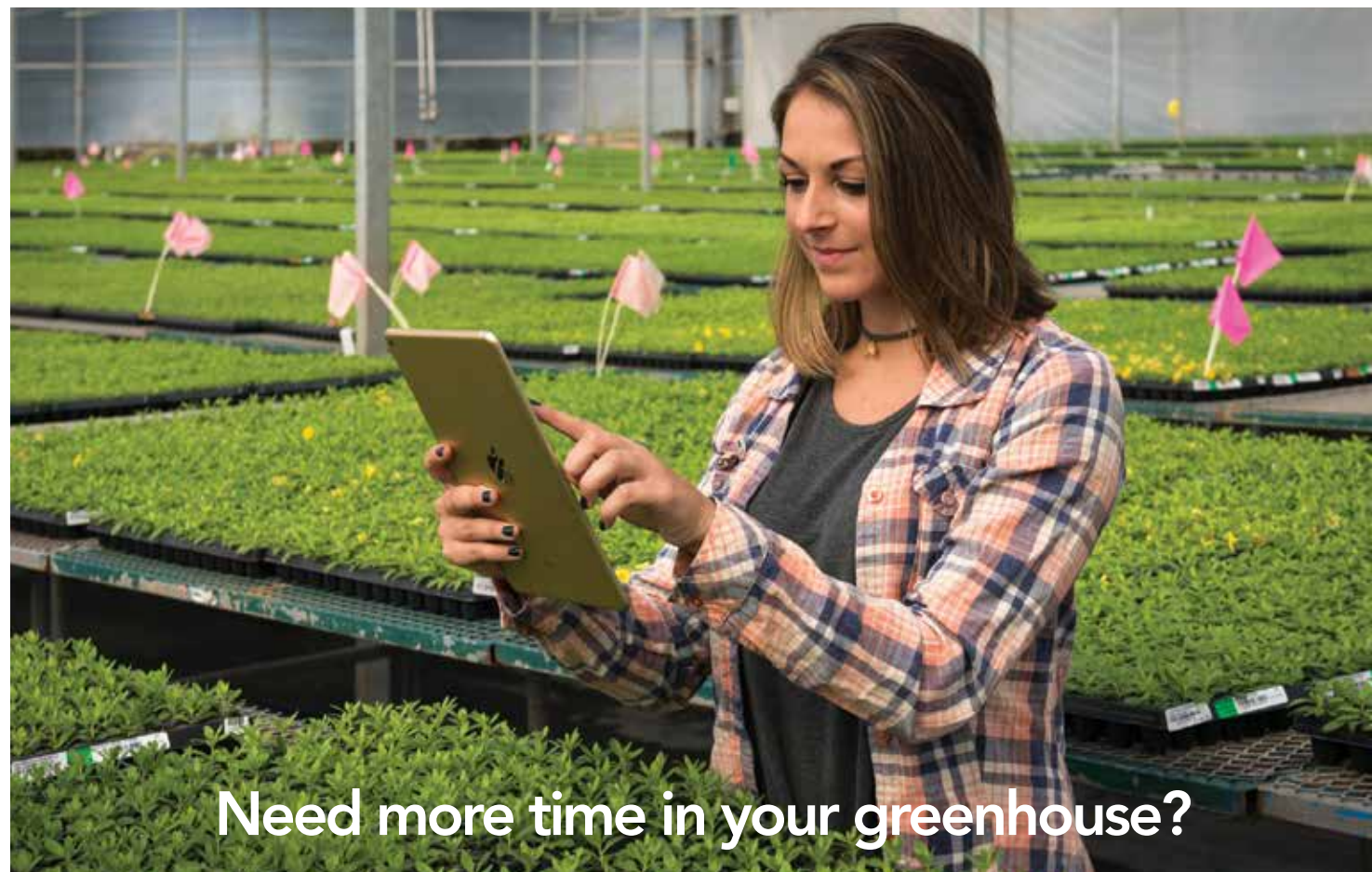
The Toucan series is as straight forward as they come in terms of production, so it makes for an easy crop to fill gaps in spring production and to add to sales all summer long. Retail shelf life is exceptional and the broad

tropical foliage makes them ideal candidates for mixed containers and the landscape. [gpn](http://gpn.com)

For more information about Toucan canna, contact Rick Schoellhort at rick@provenwinners.com.



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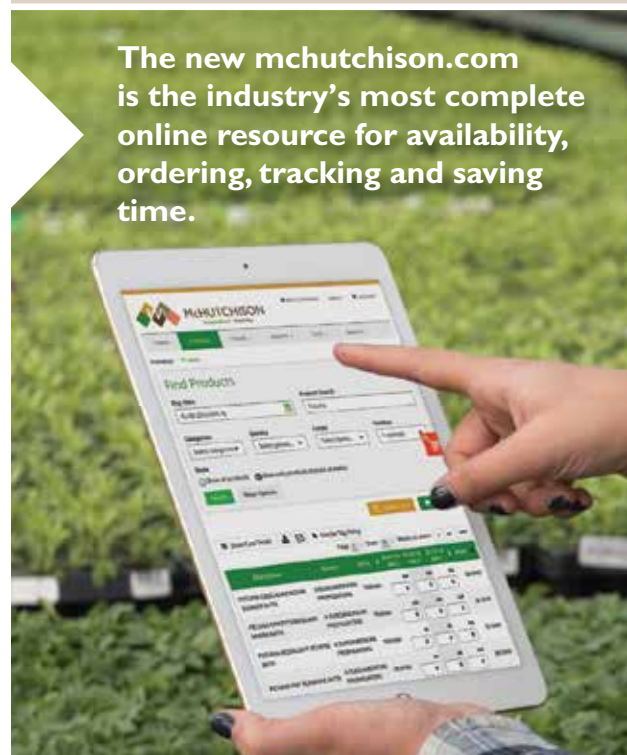
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