

Celosia

Sol Series

The new celosia Sol collection creates contrast and helps reinvigorate your foliage programs with unique plant texture.

BY SONALI PADHYE

We all know about the continuing interest in houseplants, tropicals and foliage. PanAmerican Seed is excited to reintroduce its Fantastic Foliage Collection, which focuses on a natural look for customers' living spaces. This trend toward a more neutral color with added texture blends our desire for nature with planting a restful retreat. It's a perfect time to think green.

New for 2021 is the Sol Collection of foliage celosia — varieties grown for their interesting foliage color and ability to add dimension to the landscape or containers.

There are two varieties debuting: Gekko Green and Lizzard Leaf. Both are heat tolerant, and Gekko Green is a Fleuroselect Gold Medal winner. With relatively fast production time and no downy mildew issues, the Sol Collection

expands the options for consumers looking for sun-loving accent plants.

Follow our recommended guidelines below to produce an outstanding crop for your customers.

PLUG CULTURE

Plug crop time is three to four weeks. The Sol Collection is offered in pelleted seed form. It germinates at 77° F and emerges between two and four days. Cover the seed lightly with a medium layer of vermiculite after sowing to maintain uniform moisture around the seed during germination. Provide light and an initial media pH at 5.8 to 6.2 and EC of 0.7-1.2 during plug production. Recommended plug size is 288, one seed per cell.

During Stage 2, provide a moisture level of 4 (medium-wet) with temperature at 72 to 77° F. Set light at 1,000 to 2,500 foot-candles. Apply a fertilizer less than 100-ppm nitrogen, less than 0.7 EC. In Stage 3, light is maintained at Stage 2 levels but lower the temperature range to 68 to 72° F. Do not allow media to dry out.

In Stage 4, before growing on to finish and to prevent premature flowering, keep moist and grow plugs under daylength of 14 hours or longer due to the short-day flowering response of foliage celosia. Increase light levels to 2,500 to 5,000 foot-candles and apply fertilizer at 100- to 175-ppm nitrogen and 0.7 to 1.2 EC.

Other key notes:

- Celosia makes a taproot and is sensitive to root damage. Transplant on time and do not allow seedlings to get rootbound.
- Gekko Green and Lizzard Leaf do not need PGRs.

Gekko Green

Lizzard Leaf

CONTAINER SIZE	PLUGS PER POT	CROP TIME	SEASON
5"/6"/1 Gallon	1 ppp	7-10 weeks	Spring
5"/6"/1 Gallon	1 ppp	5-7 weeks	Summer

GEKKO GREEN • DLI (mol·m⁻²·d⁻¹)

7 12 15



LIZZARD LEAF • DLI (mol·m⁻²·d⁻¹)

7 12 15



Effect of light levels on foliage color: Celosia are facultative short-day plants and therefore flower faster under short days than long days. Under long days, these foliage celosias flower very late.

- Celosia are susceptible to high salt levels. Monitor as needed.

GET THAT PURPLE COLOR

One of the key features of the Sol Collection foliage celosia is their striking purple coloration. It is due to pigments called anthocyanins. Anthocyanins impart purple color to a variety of plants — from purple lettuce to purple fountain grass. Anthocyanins are synthesized at higher concentrations, making plants more purple under high light intensity, UV and blue light. Oftentimes, greenhouse covering materials reduce UV light transmission and hence, reduce purple coloration.

To maximize purple in foliage of Sol Collection, grow plants under high light intensity, and preferably under natural light spectrum, i.e., full sun, which contains both UV and blue light. When grown under low light conditions, foliage can be more green than purple but once put outside, they become bright and purple in less than two weeks.

GROWING ON TO FINISH

Maintain growing temperatures (day) 65 to 70° F and (night)

59 to 61° F. Provide plant nutrition during finishing: 100- to 175-ppm nitrogen and 0.7 to 1.2 EC.

In summary, Gekko Green and Lizzard Leaf foliage celosia are great heat-tolerant additions to your foliage programs. Grow plants under long days to delay

their flowering, and maximize their purple foliage color by growing under high light at least for the last two weeks of production. We look forward to seeing how the modern gardener enjoys these new introductions! [gpn](#)

Sonali Padhye is a senior global technical manager for PanAmerican Seed. She presented the Sol Collection and more new varieties during this year's SimulCAST20. To view this event on-demand and for full culture details, visit www.panamseed.com.

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