

Margarita Series Portulaca

The Ideal Portulacas for Shipping & Selling!

- Well-branched plants have an upright, mounding habit that provides much fuller flats at point-of-sale.
- Easier to pack and ship than prostrate types, **Margarita** portulaca has less breakage in transit.
- Plants show lots of color, look good in the pack and keep their tidy appearance at retail.
- An excellent performer in the landscape.
- Very floriferous and early flowering with uniform blooming across all colors
- **Margarita** portulaca is supplied as multi-seed pellets and as raw seed.

P. grandiflora (Moss Rose)

Approximate seed count: 142,000 pellets/oz.
(500 pellets/g)

Plug Production

Media

Use a well-drained, disease-free, soilless medium with a pH of 5.8 to 6.2 and an EC less than 0.75 (mmhos/cm with a 1:2 extraction). Portulaca is very sensitive to high salts, particularly high ammonium, during germination.

Sowing

Margarita portulaca is offered as multi-seeded pellets and as raw seed. Each multi-seeded pellet will generally yield 2 to 4 plants. Do not cover the seed. Germination takes 2 to 3 days.

Temperature

Germination: 74 to 80°F (24 to 27°C)

Cotyledon stage: 72 to 75°F (22 to 24°C)

True leaves: 68 to 72°F (20 to 22°C)

Hold plugs: 65 to 68°F (18 to 20°C)

Light

Stage 1: Light (more than 10 f.c.) is not required, but beneficial for germination.

After germination: 1,000 to 2,500 f.c. (10,000 to 30,000 Lux)

Seedling maturity: Up to 5,000 f.c. (54,000 Lux). Higher light level results in stronger seedlings.

Photoperiod

Portulaca is sensitive to short days, even during the plug stage. When daylength is shorter than 11 hours, **Margarita** plants can rosette (stop growing or grow very slowly without flowering). Flowering is significantly delayed once a plant has rosetted.

To prevent plants from rosetting, sow seed when the natural daylength is at least 11 hours (the second week of February in the South, or the fourth week of February in the North). If sowing earlier than suggested here, provide long day conditions during seedling production (daylength extension to 12 to 13 hours).

Portulaca prefers warm temperatures and high light levels. Sowing when the natural daylength is at least 11 hours also makes it easier to provide these conditions. Portulaca also likes to be grown on the dry side. The warmer temperatures and higher light levels associated with longer days help the soil to dry out more quickly after feeding and watering.

Soil Moisture

Adequate moisture should be used to dissolve the pellet. Keep soil evenly moist but not saturated until radicle emergence, then reduce moisture levels after the radicle penetrates the medium. After germination, allow the soil to dry out slightly before watering for best rooting.

Portulaca prefers warm, high light and dry conditions. Best root growth will be obtained under these conditions.

Irrigate early in the day so foliage is dry by nightfall to prevent diseases. Damping off (*Rhizoctonia*) is the most common problem when the plants are grown too wet.

Fertilizer

As cotyledons expand, feed 50 ppm N in a low phosphorous nitrate form fertilizer. When true leaves begin to develop, increase to 100 to 150 ppm N. Keep ammonium levels less than 10 ppm.

Growth Regulators

Growth regulators are not needed.

Growing On to Finish

Media

Use a well-drained, disease-free, soilless medium with a pH of 5.5 to 6.2 and a medium initial nutrient charge.

Temperature

Nights: 65 to 68°F (18 to 20°C)

Days: 68 to 75°F (20 to 24°C)

Flower buds may not develop or open if temperatures are too low.

Light

Maintain light levels as high as possible while maintaining recommended temperatures. Flower buds may not open if light levels are too low.

Photoperiod

Portulaca is sensitive to short days. Flowering can be significantly delayed by a condition known as rosetting (plants stop growing or grow very slowly without flowering). **Margarita** portulaca can be affected by rosetting when the daylength is shorter than 11 hours during any part of production.

If purchasing plugs, transplanting late March will generally ensure the plugs have been grown under the correct daylength without any special treatment. If transplanting earlier than this, make sure that the plugs have been produced with the proper daylength as noted under **Plug Production – Photoperiod**.

If transplanting plugs when the daylength is shorter than 11 hours (before the second week of February in the South, or the fourth week of February in the North), provide long day conditions after transplanting. Daylength extension to 12 to 13 hours can be used. Make sure that the plugs have also been produced with the proper daylength as noted under **Plug Production – Photoperiod**.

Irrigation

Do not overwater. Allow the media to dry thoroughly between watering. Plants can be allowed to wilt slightly after the roots reach the side of the container.

Fertilizer

Fertilize every other irrigation with 15-0-15 alternating with 20-10-20 at 150 to 200 ppm N.

Growth Regulators

PGRs are not needed. Height can be controlled by allowing the soil to dry thoroughly between waterings. Plants can be allowed to wilt slightly after the roots reach the side of the container.

Height can also be controlled by withholding fertilizer, especially phosphorous and ammonium-form nitrogen.

Crop Scheduling

Sow to transplant (400-cell plug tray): 4 to 5 weeks

Portulaca is very sensitive to cool temperatures and low light levels. Plants grown under these conditions are likely to have longer crop times than noted below.

Container Size	Plugs* Per Flat/Pot	Weeks From Transplant
606 flat	36	5
4-in. (10-cm) pot	1	5 to 6

*Plugs are grown from multi-seeded pellets. Each multi-seeded pellet will generally yield 2 to 3 plants.

Common Problems

Insects: Spider mites, thrips

Diseases: *Rhizoctonia*, *Pythium*

Tips for Landscapers and Gardeners

- Plant in full sun after all danger of frost is past.
- Space plants 10 to 12 in. (25 to 30 cm) apart in well-drained soil.
- Flowers close at night.

PanAmerican Seed

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