

Cultural Information for: Mecardonia Magic Carpet™ Annual
Common Name: Mecardonia
Botanical Name: Mecardonia hybrid
Optimum Rooting Temperature: 70-75°F / 21-24°C
Optimum Growing Temperature: 68-77°F / 20-25°C

Propagation: 4 weeks

Tray: 105 cell density. 1 cutting per cell.

Media: Select a well-aerated sterile media or inorganic material. Foam, coarse peat, rockwool and media blends with 30-40% aggregate are all good choices. Avoid mixes that hold excessive moisture. EC should be < 0.5 mmhos (2:1 dilution) (because fertilizer is not necessary for rooting and high EC tends to cause root burning) and the pH 5.8-6.2. When root starts to elongate, apply liquid fertilizer at 100 ppm Nitrogen and target a media EC of 0.7 mmhos.

Light: Target 2,000 foot candles/22,000 lux.

Bottom Heat: Bottom heat promotes healthy root development. Target 70-75°F/21-24°C and ideally use tempered water in the mist lines to avoid overcooling the root zone.

Rooting Hormone: Not necessary, but it does promote uniformity. Use IBA between 500-1,000 ppm.

Misting: Mist is less needed to root Mecardonia, and it often promotes disease/rotting. It is best to moisten the media and then stick the cuttings under non-woven fabric or plastic tunnel. In areas of high heat, where the media dries quickly, some minimal misting for 3-4 days might prove beneficial.

Pinching: Apply a soft pinch to cuttings in the propagation tray prior to transplanting.

Note: Unrooted cuttings may defoliate during shipment. Stem sections will easily regenerate with new leaves, but rooting speed is delayed approximately one week.

Production:

Potting: Mecardonia Magic Carpet is suited for production in many sized containers and hanging baskets. Being drought tolerant, it is ideal for consumers who spend weekends away from home.

Media: Select a sterile, well-aerated mix with 5-15% porosity. EC <0.75 mmhos (2:1 dilution). The optimum pH range is 5.5 to 6.0.

Irrigation/Fertilization: Avoid excessive irrigation throughout production. Commence fertilizing 2 weeks after transplant with a complete, balanced fertilizer at 150-200 ppm Nitrogen (constant liquid feed). Maintain the media pH at 5.5-6.0 and target the EC level at 1.0 mmhos (2:1 dilution). A slow release fertilizer is an option; especially for outdoor production where heavy summer rains are common. In addition, a slow release may provide improved performance for the consumer. Provide periodic clear water applications if excess soluble salts accumulate.

Temperature/Humidity: Establish the crop at an average daily temperature of 68°F/20°C. Once established, grow at 68-77°F/20-25°C days and 68°F/20°C at night. Provide good air circulation and a relative humidity below 70% to prevent Botrytis (gray mold).

Light: High light intensity of light notably improves flowering and the opening of the flowers. For best results provide a minimum of 3,500 foot candles/38,000 lux, and shade above 6,000 foot candles/65,000 lux. Lower light levels produce internode stretching and poor flowering.

Photoperiod: Mecardonia Magic Carpet Yellow responds to temperature for flower induction. Photoperiod is not as critical but a longer day length does accelerate plant development and greater flowering.

Spacing: Establish plants pot tight and then space to:

Container Size	Spacing
4 inch/10 cm.	5-6 inch / 12-15 cm. on center
6 inch/15 cm.	14 inch / 35 cm. on center
8 inch/20 cm.	18 inch / 45 cm. on center

Pinching: For 4-5 inch/10-12 cm. pots pinch only at transplanting. For 6 inch/15 cm. pots and larger, including hanging baskets, apply a second soft pinch 2-3 weeks later to trim the edges.

Plant Growth Regulators (PGRs): Plant growth regulators are usually not necessary with adequate light levels.

Insects: Aphids, fungus gnats, slugs/snails.

Disease: Botrytis (gray mold), root and stem rot.

Crop Scheduling:

Container Size	Cuttings/Pot	Time from Transplant*
4 inch/10 cm.	1	6-8 weeks
6 inch/15 cm.	2-3	6-8 weeks
8 inch/20 cm.	3-4	7-9 weeks
Hanging Baskets	5-6	10-12 weeks

*add 4 weeks of rooting time for total crop time

Consumer Culture: Mecardonia is both heat and drought tolerant and requires minimal care. In general it grows 14-18 inches wide in the garden, depending on the length of the growing season. Periodic hard pruning prolongs flowering and a nice plant form. In mid-summer under high temperatures the leaves may turn black. A hard pruning will rejuvenate the plant.

“All information given is intended for general guidance only and may have to be adjusted to meet individual needs. Cultural details are based on North American conditions and Sakata cannot be held responsible for any crop damage related to the information given herein. Application of recommended growth regulators and chemicals are subject to local and state regulations. Always follow manufacturer’s label instructions. Testing a few plants prior to treating the entire crop is best.”