

## Time to get technical

The last week of July I spent in Stuttgart, Germany, at our variety meetings for the 2010/11 program. I saw a lot of exciting new varieties, but it is too early to talk about it. Back in Encinitas it is time to focus again on what matters, and this is providing technical assistance with new crops and Poinsettias.

This issue will talk briefly about three new exciting products. Contact us anytime if you desire more detailed information. We will look into the latest technical

information about our best-selling Christmas Eve™ Poinsettia.

And last but not least my promised report about my second backpacking trip in the Mineral King area in Sequoia National Park.

There is lots to read in the August News Flash, so sit back, relax, and enjoy this issue.

Sincerely yours,  
Stefan Reiner



## Variety of the Month

**Magadi™** Lobelia have won numerous awards for summer performance, and growers love them because they are easy to grow. Top sellers include Magadi™ Ocean Blue, Magadi™ White, and Magadi™ Basket Dark Purple (shown above); A great Trixi™ recipe as well.

## Success with new products

When ordering your cuttings, it is also a good time to look at the new products in more detail, as success starts with the planting week. We will look closer at three products.

Begonia boliviensis has been a huge seller over the past years' and especially **Bonfire®** (below), which has developed into a top-selling variety. With the addition of Bonfire® Scarlet (right), one can choose between two colors. Bonfire® Scarlet is slightly less vigorous compared to the original Bonfire®.

Begonia boliviensis is a tuberous Begonia originating from a cliff-dwelling species. They are extremely water and cold sensitive. What to watch for when starting with liners:

- Don't start too early!
- Don't allow temperature to fall below 58° F (14° C).
- Extend day length to 14 hours.
- Use good-draining, airy substrate.
- Don't let your liners become root bound, don't let them dry out, and especially don't let them get cold or over-watered.
- Don't plant too deep. Avoid direct contact between foliage and substrate.
- Perform the required pinch after node #3 but before node #5.
- Start to feed after roots show, using a well-balanced fertilizer including micro nutrients. They are heavy feeders; keep them actively growing by applying sufficient Nitrogen (N).
- Avoid high salt levels (they like to be grown on the dry side; high salt levels will damage the root system).



Don't start them too early when days are short and temperatures are low, easily resulting in waterlogged, dormant plants.

**Trixi™** has become a huge hit, and starting mixed baskets and pots by using **TrixiLiner™** is the latest innovation in achieving better results. TrixiLiner™ is a multiple-cutting rooted liner, pinched, PGR treated, and ready to grow. It is with no doubt the future of mixed baskets. As with all new products, there are a couple of points to keep in mind. We recommend 4 TrixiLiner™ for a 12-inch basket, 3 TrixiLiner™ for a 10-inch basket, and 1 TrixiLiner™ for pots (quarts, gallons, 4-6 inch pots). Plant them in a well-draining airy substrate. The use of slow-release fertilizer is beneficial for consumers. Keep them warm in the first couple of weeks until roots have developed and plants start to grow again after pinching. You can hang them afterwards. Grow them as you would grow any other mixed basket. Keep fertilizer in mind as you grow a large number of plants in one container and most of them are good feeders. For pure MiniFamous™ mixes, follow our Calibrachoa recommendations using a Bonzi drench towards the end of the crop. For mixed Trixi™ recipes we recommend using light spray applications first, as this will help to slow down more aggressive varieties and give slower ones a chance to catch up. Use low concentrations of B-Nine applied with low volume. Toward the end, a drench with Bonzi is a good way to keep the baskets in shape.

Our all new drought-tolerant Petunia **Soleil™ Purple** (right) fits perfectly in today's environment. It is a Petunia, but it looks and performs quite differently from anything Petunia-like that we grow today. Most importantly you need to keep in mind that it requires less water compared to other Petunias. No PGR's are needed, as vigor can be controlled by giving less water. They prefer high light levels and cool temperatures and will benefit from a later start compared to other Petunias. If plants look green and are growing too much, cut water by about 50%. You can reduce watering as much as to watering only once plants start to flag slightly. However, best quality is achieved if you water just before they flag. Keep fertilizer up but EC low.



## Christmas Eve™ tech update

Christmas Eve™ is one of Selecta's best-selling Poinsettias. With its 7.5 weeks' response time (natural flowering date Nov. 15-22) and medium vigor, it fits perfect today's expectations from growers. Christmas Eve™ belongs to our line-up of energy- and space-efficient varieties as well. It finishes nicely under a cool-finish schedule, and its V-shaped upright habit allows growers to fit more plants per square foot. It has strong stems, long-lasting centers, and a great color all over the top, giving it outstanding consumer appeal.

It is an early variety and when cooling it down right at first pollen, you will be able to extend its sales window. We found a way that you can improve the post-harvest characteristics of Christmas Eve™ even further and reducing leaf drop due to aging of the plants.

Towards the end of the crop, growers usually lower fertilizer rates and give clear water the last two weeks prior to

shipping. **For Christmas Eve™ only we recommend keeping the fertilizer rates up toward the end** and only use clear water for about one week prior to shipping. You can even keep fertilizer in the water all the way to the end, using low rates. Christmas Eve™ uses more fertilizer (especially N) than your average dark foliage variety. Providing sufficient N will increase post-harvest characteristics and reduce leaf drop to a minimum.

Another important point is the time of spacing. If you prefer a really upright and tight habit, you can wait with spacing until the canopy of your crop closes. However, don't wait too long, as it may result in stretch.

For a slightly wider plant habit **we recommend spacing Christmas Eve™ just before the canopy closes** (you still should see the ground between the plants). However, don't space too early, as this will result in a harsher micro-climate, slightly delaying your crop.

Spacing at the perfect moment and the right fertilizer treatment toward the end are two key points for a successful Poinsettia crop, not only for Christmas Eve™.

Keeping these two tips in mind will help you to grow an even better Christmas Eve™ crop.



## MiniFamous™ summer update



Trial field days and root&sell open houses are always a great way to see the summer performance of varieties. The image to the left shows MiniFamous™ Double in the ground at Fessler Nursery in Portland, OR. It was hot in the area lately, but they are not getting spoiled. Debbie from Fessler loves them, and I love to see the dark green foliage and habit they have even in the ground!

The image below is a print screen from the UGA website showing the



trial result of MiniFamous™ Double Lemon. A straight 5 so far, and Dr. Allan Armitage loves the variety. You can view the results for yourself by visiting their website <http://ugatrial.hort.uga.edu/>.

To the right you can see MiniFamous™ Double Lemon planted in the ground. Healthy and looking good.

The two images just below show MiniFamous™ Peach and MiniFamous™ Pink at DS Cole in Loudon, NH. Doug Cole sent me a selection of images, and MiniFamous™ looks great in containers and in the ground.

The CSU trial suffered severe hail damage in June, and plants got more or less trimmed by nature. Compared to previous years, plants are much smaller, but all MiniFamous™



varieties recovered and are looking good. They are just starting to get back into full flower. The image to the right shows MiniFamous™ Compact Watermelon at the CSU trial in Fort Collins, CO.

Brian Weesies from Mast Young Plants mailed me the image below (left). It shows a mixed basket with MiniFamous™ Double Lemon, Double Amethyst, and Double Blush Pink. According to Brian, this basket has been getting a lot of votes as the nicest basket during the Michigan Garden Tour so far.

The ground beds below to the right are MiniFamous™ Calibrachoa at C. Raker in Michigan. Varieties are MiniFamous™ Electric Purple, Compact Watermelon, Coral Pink, Lemon, and Double Amethyst.



## Soleil™ Purple update

We have sent our all new drought tolerant and heat-loving Petunia Soleil™ Purple to growers and trial stations all over the country. I have asked for updates and images and wanted to share some of them with you. The images show you the development of the variety in the ground and window boxes during the heat of the summer. Plants that looked small beginning of July are now looking stunning.

Brian Weesies of Mast Young Plants told me that the window box (images below) is not getting much water at all. He took the dripper out and is watering by hand only.

Meg Green from the University of Georgia in Athens has plants too, and she wrote in her last report: "As you can see, 'Soleil' is holding up very well in our heat!"

In the mixed basket Soleil™ Purple is able to keep up with Ipomea quite well and looking good.

Wrapping up with the words from Mike Gooder of Plantpeddler: "The potential of the variety is solid."



July 9, 2009



August 7, 2009



July 9, 2009



August 7, 2009



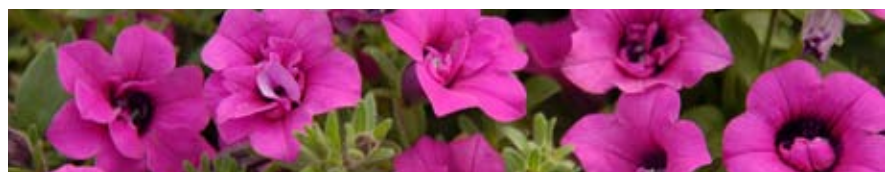
July 9, 2009



August 7, 2009



University of Georgia, Athens



## Trixi™ update



We proudly introduce the new logo (above) for Trixi™. This will help to communicate our message and make it easier to identify the original.

To the right you can see our new ad for Trixi™. TrixiLiner™ are available from Fessler Nursery, Hardy Starts by Welby Gardens, and Gro'n Sell. You can book your orders with the broker of your choice. TrixiLiner™ is, as all rooted Selecta products, available from the broker of your choice.

I just checked availability for the single Trixi™ recipes, and sales have been really good so far. To ensure you are getting the Trixi™ recipes you are looking for, I recommend booking your orders rather soon before single recipes might not be available anymore.

**Trixi™** the **future**  
of mixed baskets

**Perfect baskets:** Three different varieties are rooted together in one TrixiLiner. Use four liners to create high-impact combinations as never seen before.

**Great genetics:** Well-proven Selecta varieties deliver outstanding performance, bench to home.

**True & true mixes:** Three varieties grow in harmony and add instant color to any patio.

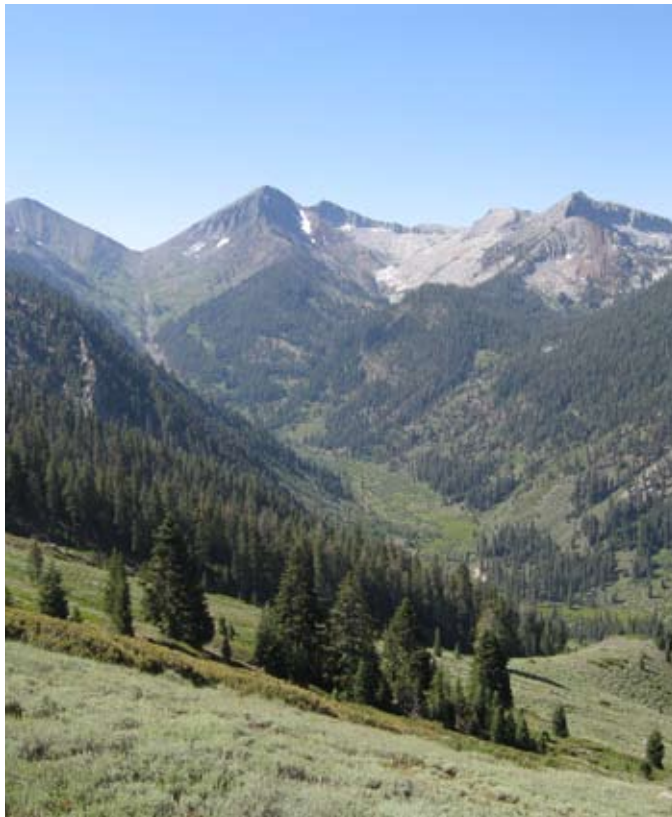
For TrixiLiner technical info, visit [firstclassplants.com](http://firstclassplants.com).

Contact your favorite broker for ordering details.

© 2008 Ball Horticultural Company. BK2008-4P  
Trixi is a trademark of Selecta Plant Systems GmbH & Co.

**selecta**  
Creating the future™

## Mineral King to Little Five Lakes



Our second backpacking trip this year was also the more challenging one. Hiking 40 miles, climbing and descending 12,000 feet in four days while most of the time above 10,000 feet, called for a long first day. We spent the night before the hike in a cabin at the Silver City Resort <http://www.silvercityresort.com/>. A great place, renting cabins and chalets in different sizes. If you would like to escape and relax, we highly recommend checking out this resort. A great place high up the mountains away from the tourist masses (it is a 90-minute mountain road drive via a very small two-lane road) at 7,800 feet high Mineral King (image left).

We hiked out at 5:00 a.m. (of course meeting a bear) from Mineral King to Little Claire Lake via 11,800 feet high Franklin Pass (13.5 miles, 5,300 feet up, and 2,700 feet down) with the full pack. The last two hours we hiked in a thunderstorm with lots of rain and hail. This also ended our discussions about leaving the rain gear back home in future (to reduce our weight further).

After the storms cleared, the scenery was amazing and the air smelled as fresh as it could be. However, it was too cold to swim in the lake as the temperature dropped significantly

during the storms. The next day was not much easier but rewarding. Great views and a wonderful (storm-free) afternoon at Little Five Lakes. The lake was warmer than your average Sierra pond, and even Sabina took a swim. We enjoyed a great stay and a wonderful scenery (image to the left is the view from our tent to one of the Little Five Lakes).

Day three took us over Black Rock Pass (11,600 feet) with stunning views in all directions (you could even see Mount Whitney). The second image to the left shows Sabina on top of Black Rock Pass with Sawtooth Peak / Pass in the background and from top to bottom Columbine Lake, Cyclamen Lake, and Spring Lake (the so-called Empire lakes). The distance called only for 9 miles and about 1,500 feet up to the pass. However, dropping after the pass 5,000 feet on a relatively short distance wasn't as easy as it sounded. The last camp was the only one low enough for a campfire, and after swimming in the freezing creek right at the campground the warming fire at sunset felt great.

Rising early morning we climbed Timber Gap and got rewarded with great views of Mineral King (image previous page) on our way down to the trail head.

Finishing the trip with homemade, great-tasting pie and coffee at the Silver City Resort, it became clear that this was one of the best trips we ever took.



## Selecta News

August is the perfect time to order your Selecta Osteospermum. With world-wide availability and close-to-perfect cutting quality from our farm in Uganda, there has been no better time to grow FlowerPower™ and Zion™ Osteospermum. Pick from our best-selling line-up and add some of the hottest new varieties available. Make sure to order early enough to get your share of Zion™ Yellow and White (image), Zion™ Copper Amethyst, Zion™ Shadow Red, and Zion™ Milky Way.

Selecta offers with FlowerPower™, FlowerPower™ Compact, FlowerPower™ Spider, Zion™, and the inter-specific Kenai™ series the most diverse line-up of Osteospermum in the industry.

Contact us for technical questions and the perfect variety selection for your crop.



Selecta First Class, Inc.  
P.O. Box 231306  
Encinitas, CA 92023-1306  
800-955 5644

<http://firstclassplants.com>