

## Oxypetalum (*Tweedia caerulea*) Culture Guide

Oxypetalum is originally from Central and South America. Blue and white colors are available. It can be harvested year round by keeping the condition of 12-16 hour day length and warm temperature (10-15C at night). Plants will produce flower stems continuously under the above conditions.

### 1. Raising seedlings

Optimum germination temperature is about 18-20C, but it can be germinated well up to 25C. (Germination is rather good in high temperature compare to cool.) Please use 288-406 cell trays and well-drained clean soil (We use 406 cell trays).

Please sow 1-2 seeds per each cell. And please cover the soil 5mm.



### 2. Planting

30 days after sowing (2-3 true leaves) is the time of planting (It is tap-rooting crop, so please do not make it old). Planting density is about 20 x 20 cm. 4 rows with empty one row in the middle in 100cm wide bed.

### 3. Management

#### a) Temperature

Optimum growing temperature is about 20-25C. If high temperature like over 30C continues, flower quality will be dropped: plants create unexpected axillary buds, flower initiation will be inhibited, stem length will be shortened and flower color will fade. (White will be easier to handle during hot period because color won't fade.)

#### b) Watering

Give sufficient water after planting and reduce gradually to harvest high quality stems. Excess water can easily soften stems, but if you make it too dry, it would slower growth of branches.

#### c) Pinch

Side branches will grow without pinching, but we recommend pinching 2-3 weeks after planting, when plants has 5-6 nodes. Please leave 3 nodes.

#### d) Flower net

Optimum stem length for harvest would be around 60 cm as Oxypetalum stems are rather soft, so please place one 15 x 15cm flower net around 30 cm high from the ground.

#### 4. Preparation of soil and fertilizer

Stems and leaves are strong for diseases (mainly aphid) but it is sensitive for soil diseases like fusarium, rhizoctonia, phytophthora, so, soil disinfection is necessary. Maximum use of the land would be around 3 years even if you disinfect soil completely.

Please prepare soil to be manure rich soil.

Basic fertilizer is N: P: K=1:1:1kg per 100m<sup>2</sup>. Please top dress 50% by observing the growing condition.

\*Less fertilizer will smaller the stem volume.

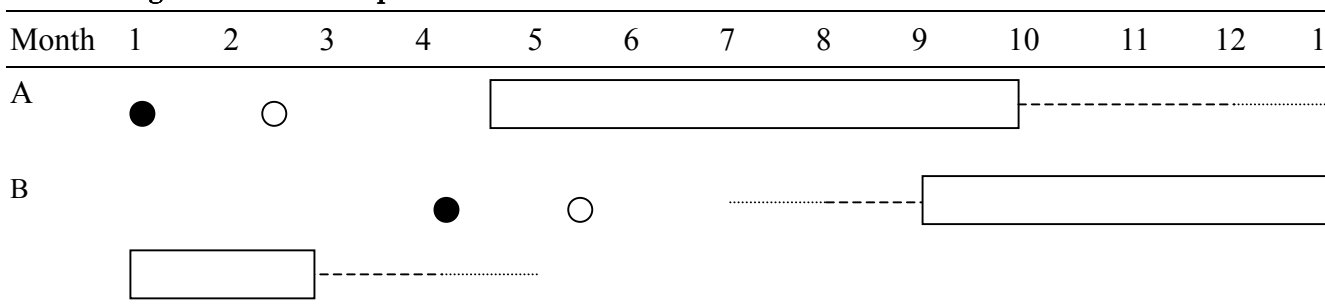
\*Excess potassium (K) will drop quality by shortening the length between internodes.

#### 5. Harvesting and Treatment after harvesting

Optimum harvesting time is when you recognize 3-4 flowers open on stem. If harvesting time is too busy, it is also possible to keep a while: Remove bottom finished flowers and keep 3-4 new flowers on top.

White latex will come out from stems when you cut. If you leave them dry, the liquid will become coagulated and the stems can't take water. Please dip stems 3-4cm deep to hot water (60-70C) right after harvesting and leave them for a few minutes. The part dipped into hot water will become brown, so you may cut it off. Please keep flower stems cool after harvesting.

#### 6. Planting schedule examples



A for cold area, B for warm area

● : Sowing      ○ : planting      □ : flowering

It is about one month till planting from sowing and 1.5-2months till first flower stems from planting. If stems are too thin, you may cut and wait for next thick stems. For good quality, keep around 3-4 stems per plant when plants are small, and 5-6 stems when plants became big and lignified.

<In Winter>

\*Please keep sufficient light and keep day length at least 12 hours.

Lower than that would cause quality problem like color fading and flower shattering.

\*Day length is rather related to stem length. (Stem length will be longer under longer day length.)

\*8-15 stems are expected from one plant per year, depending on how you keep plants.

\*3C would be enough if you just want to keep plants alive (no harvesting).

<In Summer>

\*Hot temperature will harm plants and you may lose them, so please try to keep it as cool as possible.

**Notes: All above information and data are based on average Japan conditions**