

## ANTHURIUM

(*Anthurium species*)

Genus *Anthurium* comprises of about 600-800 species belonging to family Araceae is an evergreen, tropical herbaceous plant cultivated for its colourful spathe and attractive foliage. It is also known as Flamingo flower. Anthurium is now commercially grown in north eastern states like Mizoram and Meghalaya.



### Varieties / Species

The most popular species are *A. andreanum* and *A. scherzerianum*, which possess attractive long lasting inflorescences. Important varieties are Tropical, Midori, Acropolis, Pistache, Choco, Fantasia, Champagne, Casino and Terra. In global market red color anthurium varieties are most popular.

### Growing media

Generally used media are sugar bagasse, wood shaving, leaf mould, coarse sand, small bricks, coir pith, compost, charcoal, coconut husk etc. The media should be well aerated, highly organic with good water retention capacity.

### Growing environment

In NEH region, shade net house is most suitable and economical. For luxuriant growth it requires 18.3 QC at night and 21.2 to 23.9 QC day temperatures. Optimum light intensity is 20,000 to 25,000 lux.

### Propagation

**Seed:** The seed germinates within 10 days and can be transplanted within 4-6 months. It may take about 1-2 years to bloom.

**Stem cutting:** It is most common method. Top portion is removed and planted.

**Suckers:** Anthurium plant produces suckers from the base. These suckers when Grow to 4-5 leaves stage having healthy roots can be planted.

**Leaf axillary buds:** The single leaf with a dormant axillary bud and root is separated from the plant and on planting; it develops into a new plant.

### Transplanting

In small scale planting, anthurium is planted in earthen pots. A pot size of 25 to 30 cm with minimum of two holes is usually preferred. Crook pieces are placed at the bottom of the pot; above which a 2 cm layer of coarse sand is spread. Over this, pieces of bricks or

charcoal is arranged in such a way that plant along with the root ball can be easily placed, sides of root balls are covered with pieces of coconut husk and a filler mixture of sand and cow dung spread above it.

### **Nutritional requirements**

Anthurium prefers fertilizers in small doses at frequent intervals. Young plant may be sprayed with fertilizer mixture containing higher ratio of NPK (3: 1: 1) @ 2g/l twice in a week. For flowering plant, less quantity of nitrogen is required to increase post harvest longevity of flower. Application of NPK (1:2:2) 2-3 g/l in a week is beneficial.

### **Irrigation**

The plants are to be watered at least twice during summer. Sprinkler or drip method of irrigation is generally used commercially.

### **Plant protection**

**Mites:** Feeding by mites cause specking, mottling and drying of affected leaves. Spray of Dicofol (18.5 EC) 2.5 ml/l or Triazophos (40EC) 1.5 ml/l at 15 days interval followed by pongamia or neem oil at 10 ml/l provides sufficient control.

**Thrips:** Thrips produce white or brown colored streaks and distortion by sucking cell sap. Damage starts in March and reaches peak in August-September. Spray of oxydemeton methyl (25EC) 20ml/l or Dimethoate (30EC) 2 ml/l at 15 days interval followed by pongamia or jetrophia oil 10 ml/l is recommended.

### **Harvesting and yield**

The flowers are harvested after the completion of unfolding spathe. The price of flower is depending on the size of spathe and stem length.