

# The Karma Cut Flower Dahlia

## **Order Information – Bosgraaf Greenhouse, Inc. 2011-2012**

**Karma dahlias are available as a 72 cell liner or as an unrooted cutting.**

Minimum order:	4 trays of 72 or 288 total plants. (8 trays of 576 total plants = 1 full box.)
Box size:	21" X 21" X 21" – holds 8 individually boxed trays.
Box weight:	30-35 lb (6-8 trays)
Availability:	November 7, 2011 – June 11, 2012
Lead time:	8 weeks – Late orders Dec.-May subject to availability of cuttings.
Shipped:	FOB Hudsonville, Michigan
Royalty:	Included in the price on each stem cut for 1 season.

## **Soil**

The soil must not be too rich or organic based. A heavy or clay based soil is not recommended.

## **Planting & Pinching**

1. Plant January 1 through March 31 in a heated greenhouse, or outside after danger of frost has passed.
2. After planting, pinch and leave 3-4 sets of leaves which will give 4-6 breaks.
3. Plant 9 plants per 1 square meter, staggering 3 X 3 X 3.
4. Dahlia beds should be approximately 3 feet wide with an 18" walkway between beds.
5. Many growers use netting for plant support and a fence for a wind-break.
6. Drip irrigation can be used very effectively.

## **Growing and Harvesting Suggestions**

1. Many growers stagger initial pinching to give a continual harvest.
2. Stems can be harvested 7-9 weeks after pinch. Always cut just above the node.
3. Stem length can vary from 12" – 20".
4. The stem can be cut when the flower shows color and is halfway (or less) open.
5. Stems must be put in water with a post harvest additive. This treatment delays leaf yellowing in the vase and allows for better keeping quality.
6. Cut flowers should be stored at a post harvest temperature of 40-42 degrees F.

## **Stem Production**

1. Greenhouse: a minimum of 160 stems can be harvested per square meter.
2. Cool house: about 110-140 stems per square meter can be harvested.
3. Outside: approximately 80-100 stems per square meter.
4. Stock plants gradually lose production numbers and should be replaced with new tissue cultured cuttings.

## **Fertilization and Watering**

1. As the plant grows and adds foliage, water more frequently.
2. A balanced fertilizer seems to be a good approach: 15-15-15 or 20-20-20 (150-200 ppm).
3. The pH of the soil is best maintained at about 6.5. Please no bark.

### **Pest & Disease Prevention**

1. Thrip, whitefly and aphid can be controlled with Avid, Talstar, Safari, Orthene and Tame.
2. Pythium root rot – watch overwatering and drainage.
3. Botrytis and powdery mildew – Zyban, Strike, Heritage and Compass.

### **Light Levels and Photoperiod**

1. Grow Karma with higher light levels at cooler times of the year. Some shading is required for inside during higher light periods.
2. **Dahlias require 14 hours of daylight for vegetative growth. Extend with mum lighting.**

### **Tips for Growing Dahlias – 2011**

1. All dahlias need 14 hours of day length to grow and stay vegetative.
  - Growers must extend the day with mum lighting to 14 hours.
  - Failure to do so causes dahlias to form tubers, flower profusely and shut down growth and become dormant.
  - Bury 1 set of leaves which helps firm up the plant as it grows.
2. Low temperatures can cause dahlias to grow very little if at all.
  - Day and night temperatures of 65 F. keeps dahlias growing. We use 68 F. as the bench mark to keep roots moving and vegetation forming.
  - Initial temperatures are key to plant growth and development.
  - Low temperatures can also cause roots to remain wet and contribute to root rot and other fungal diseases.
3. Using a fungicide drench as a preventive.
  - November - February plantings (and later) of dahlia must consider a fungicide at planting or within 5 to 7 days.
4. Combating powdery mildew and botrytis.
  - Powdery mildew and botrytis need to be considered even when recommended temperatures and conditions are followed.
  - Changes in the amount of light or swings in daytime temperatures can contribute to conditions causing fungal and mildew problems ( humidity, temperature and light levels ).
  - Use a fungicide spray with an insecticide spray to help with prevention.
5. Feed moderately = 100 ppm of 20-10-20, 75 ppm of 15-0-15, 25 ppm mag. (200 ppm)
6. Height control: most growers are using Bonzi as a spray or drench. Every series is different – see culture for each series.
7. Summary: good growing means evaluating plants & conditions daily.

### **Variety: Name – color**

1. Amanda – rose with cream petal base
2. BonBini – red tips with yellow center
3. Choc - burgundy-black
4. Corona – golden apricot
5. Corona pink – bright pink
6. Corona red – bright red
7. Fiesta – brite orange with yellow base
8. Irene – brilliant orange-red
9. Lagoon – amethyst blue
10. Maarten de Zwaan - white

11. Naomi – dark red
12. Prospero – bi-color pink
13. Royal - dark red
14. Sangria – pink with yellow petal base
15. Serena - white
16. Thalia - fuchsia
17. Ventura – yellow
18. Ying Yang – bi-color red/white
19. Goldie - golden yellow