

# The Melody Dahlia

## **Order information – Bosgraaf Greenhouses, Inc. 2011-2012**

**Melody dahlias are available as a rooted 72 cell pac liner or as an unrooted cutting. The finish time is about 8-9 weeks from pinching.**

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. Winter and summer packed.
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
Care Tags:	Included in price – 1 tag per cutting
Royalty:	Included in price

## **Marketing**

The Melody Dahlia series is a great series for finishing in larger patio (decorative) pots, garden settings and for cut flower bouquets.

## **Soil**

Use a well drained, sterilized planting medium, pH 6.5 – 7. The medium should not contain bark.

## **Planting: Fungicide drench**

1. Pinch cuttings when potting, leaving 2 sets of leaves. Generally a single pinch produces 3-4 breaks and a good finished plant.
2. Plant rooted cuttings into pre-watered pots and bury the first set of leaves.
3. A fungicide drench is always a good preventative, especially for pythium.

4. <u>Container size</u>	<u># of cuttings</u>	<u>finish time</u>
6.5" – 7.5"	1 pinched	8-9 weeks
8"-8.5"	2 pinched	8-9 weeks
10"-12"	3 pinched	8-9 weeks

## **Fertilization & Watering**

1. Dahlias require that the planting medium stays moist, but not wet.
2. Week 1-5 the E.C. can be maintained for around 0.6. The next 4 weeks can be slightly higher, at 0.7 – 1.0 E.C.
3. Osmocote 14-14-14 can be incorporated into the soil at a rate of 4-6 lb per cubic yd.
4. Constant liquid feed can be used at 175-200 ppm alternating 20-10-20 and 15-0-15.
5. A combination feed can be used with a multi-headed injector with 20-10-20, 15-0-15 and 20-35 ppm magnesium totaling 200 ppm.

## **Temperature – Humidity**

1. Ideal growing temperatures range from 65-70 degrees during the day and 65-68 F. at night.
2. Temperatures above 80 degrees can delay flowering – shading may be necessary.
3. Humidity levels range from 60% to a high of 86%.

### **Light Conditions**

1. Grow dahlias with a maximum amount of available light with a minimum of 2000 footcandles.
2. If low light conditions persist, 400 footcandles of HID lighting can be added.

### **Flowering – Photo Period Requirements:**

1. **Long days are needed for quality dahlia vegetative growth and timely bud development.**
2. **A 14 hour day is required to keep dahlias vegetative. Use mum lighting.**

### **Spacing Requirements**

Spacing allows more air movement and helps prevent fungal and stretching problems.

### **Pest & Disease Prevention**

1. Thrip, mite, aphid and whitefly are potential pests.
2. Effective control can be used using Marathon, Avid, Maverik, Thiodan, Talstar, Orthene, Tame, Decathlon and Duraguard.
3. A fungicide spray in combination with an insecticide spray is recommended.
4. Zyban, Heritage and Compass can be used as preventative sprays.

### **Use of Growth Regulators for Height Control –**

1. The grower should evaluate growth at 2-3 weeks after pinching.
2. **15-45 ppm of Bonzi can be used as a spray. Bolero and Dixie can be controlled with lower amounts of Bonzi spray.**
3. **A Bonzi drench of 3-8 ppm can be used on varieties other than those in #2 at approximately 3 weeks after pinch.**

### **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 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 color sell sheets for detail.
7. Summary: good growing means evaluating plants & conditions daily.

**Variety: Name – color – flowersize – height \* denotes new variety for 2012**

1. Allegro – watermelon red – 4" – 14"-18"
- \* 2. Allegro pink - 4" - 14" - 18"
3. Bolero – scarlet – 3.5" – 14"-16"
4. Dixie – lilac with cream center – 3.5" – 14"-18"
5. Dora – orange / red w/ yellow center – 5" – 16"-20"
6. Fanfare – dark purple – 4" – 14"- 18"
7. Gypsy – pink & white blend – 5" – 16"-20"
8. Harmony – soft lavender with bronze foliage – 4" – 14"-18"
9. Latin – yellow – 4" – 14"-18"
10. Lisa – rose pink – 4" – 14"-16"
11. Mambo – dark red – 4" – 14"-18"
12. Swing – copper orange – 4" – 14"-18"