

OPENING CHRYSANTHEMUM BUDS

Chrysanthemum growers often find it necessary to "clear" a bed in order to prepare the ground for the next scheduled crop. Some of the late flowers are cut as buds showing color or in more advanced stages of maturity, but not opened sufficiently to be marketed. The following treatments were tried in three different tests in Santa Clara County with the cultivars 'Albatross' and 'Fred Shoemith.'

1. Plain water, low light (5 F.C.)
2. Plain water, high light (50 F.C.)
3. Petalife
4. Everbloom, low light
5. Everbloom, high light
6. F.M. Super
7. 2% Sucrose plus 200 ppm 8-Quinolol Sulfate

Approximate temperature of 70 degree F. was maintained for all treatments.

Neither of the plain water treatments opened satisfactorily, while all preservative treatments opened reasonably well, with the high light being an improvement over the low light treatment. The F.M. used at the rate suggested by the manufacturer caused severe foliage damage. Although no satisfactory measurement could be carried out, visual evaluation favored the "Everbloom" over the sugar and 8-QS, followed by "Petalife." Time to open varied from 2 to 4 days depending on the stage of maturity of the buds. There was a slight tendency towards reflexing of petals in all treatments which opened.

This information agrees closely with the preliminary work being done by the Agricultural Research Service in Florida and Beltsville as well as results obtained by Farm Advisor Seward Besemer some years ago at Cornell. In addition to routine grower use, it opens up possibilities for shipment of immature chrysanthemum flowers.