

Cultural Information for: Crossandra Orange Marmalade Annual

Common Name: Crossandra

Botanical Name: Crossandra sp.

Optimum Growing Temperature: 65-75°F / 18-24°C

Optimum pH: 5.8 – 6.2

EC – Plug: 0.26 – 0.75 mmhos/cm (1:2) / 0.76 – 2.0 (SME)

EC – Finishing: 0.76 – 1.25 mmhos/cm (1:2) / 2.1 – 3.5 (SME)

Propagation: 5 weeks

Rooting: For the best results apply a rooting hormone (up to 3,000 ppm IBA) and stick in a natural rooting sponge as Crossandra roots best in a medium with high aeration. Mist as needed to maintain the plants turgid. Bottom heat enhances root development. Maintain soil temperatures between 70-75°F/ 21-24°C. Crossandra is a true tropical plant and appreciates warmer air temperatures. Maintain 75°F/24°C days and 68°F/20°C nights until roots are present. Remove any visible flowers or buds while in propagation and apply 100 ppm N once a week beginning in week 2.

Forcing to flower:

Media: A light, sterile media with good drainage and aeration is best. The optimum pH range is between 5.8 and 6.2.

Irrigation/Fertilization: Plants should be allowed to dry thoroughly between watering and always water in the early part of the day allowing the foliage to dry before nightfall. Avoid allowing the plant to wilt. Fertilize at 150-200 ppm with a balanced fertilizer. Supplemental magnesium applied biweekly at 30-50 ppm is beneficial.

Temperature/Humidity: Crossandra thrives under high temperature, high light, and high humidity. Night temperatures should be maintained at 65-75°F/18-24°C and day temperatures at an average of 75°F/24°C. Crossandra does not handle cold temperatures well. At temperatures below 55°F/13°C the foliage will turn black and drop. Higher temperatures will also speed flowering. At 75°F/24°C flowering will start 9 days earlier than plants grown at 70°F/21°C. During the vegetative stage maintain high relative humidity. During the flowering stages reduce relative humidity to control botrytis.

Note: *In cooler northern climates, Crossandra is best grown in mid to late summer and early autumn to take advantage of the high light intensity, warmer temperatures, and high relative humidity.*

Light: Crossandra is not photoperiodic but high light levels are key to producing the best crop in the shortest amount of time. Flowers develop when the light intensity is greater than 2,000-foot candles/21,520 lux and plants remain vegetative when the light intensity is less than 1,800-foot candles/19,500 lux. Therefore, in low light regions supplemental lighting is required.

Pinching: A soft pinch prior to transplanting promotes branching and a fuller plant habit.

Plant Growth Regulators (PGRs): Under adequate light intensities and proper spacing the use of plant growth regulators is usually not necessary. If needed, Crossandra will respond to a tank mix of B-Nine® (daminozide) and Cycocel at 2,500 ppm B-Nine + 1,000 ppm CCC.

Spacing: Plants should be established pot tight but spaced before foliage touches.

Insects: Aphids, fungus gnats, spider mites and whitefly.

Disease: Phythium, powdery mildew and rhizoctonia

Crop scheduling: Total crop time from sticking*.

Container	# of cuttings	Northern Area*	Southern Area*
4 inch /10 cm.	1	14–15 weeks	11-12 weeks
6 inch/15 cm.	2	14-15 weeks	11-12 weeks
8 inch/20 cm.	3	14-15 weeks	11-12 weeks

Usage: Crossandra will thrive in warm temperatures and high light and is ideal for 4 -6 inch/10-15 cm. pots and 1 gallon/4-liter containers. These plants will be showcased at a time when other annuals have shut down from the heat. The orange flowers bring a nice splash of color to late summer and early fall. Crossandra will compliment mixed containers and patio planters or can be planted alone. An important characteristic of Crossandra is that it keeps flowers longer even indoors in bright light. In other words, they have a longer shelf life than other pot plants and can be used for both sunny & semi-shaded places.

“All information given is intended for general guidance only and may have to be adjusted to meet individual needs. Cultural details are based on North American conditions and Sakata cannot be held responsible for any crop damage related to the information given herein. Application of recommended growth regulators and chemicals are subject to local and state regulations. Always follow manufacturer’s label instructions. Testing a few plants prior to treating the entire crop is best.”