



Production of Flowering Remontant Hydrangeas for Fall Sales

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Nature of Work: Fall sales of flowering plants in the garden center depends heavily upon chrysanthemums and pansies. The retail consumer would readily purchase compact blooming hydrangeas that could be enjoyed in the pot and then planted directly into the garden. The remontant hydrangeas will bloom in fall and produce exciting new color.

In previous years, flowering three gallon hydrangea plants were cut back after flowering in late May and early June. All stems were cut back to eight inches and all flowers were removed. Plants grew vigorously all summer under shade. All plants of David Ramsey, Endless Summer and Penny Mac produced heavy blooms in October and November.

Rodger Flotta produced a crop on Penny Mac hydrangeas this year. His liners were planted early in the spring and produced early growth. They were pruned back once. This fall he had a reasonable percentage that flowered. The demand from his landscape customers was high and generated lots of interest.

Cuttings of *Hydrangea macrophylla* cultivars 'Endless Summer', 'Penny Mac', 'David Ramsey' and 'Nikko Blue' were stuck in three inch pots and rooted under mist on April 29, 2004. These liners were potted into three gallon pots on June 10. Plants were produced under shade and normal nursery conditions.

Results and Discussion: A few flowers were produced on David Ramsey and Endless Summer. Penny Mac and Nikko Blue did not produce blooms. The number of blooms were minimal on October 18 and November 19, 2004 (Photos 1-3) for all cultivars. Perhaps the spring propagation and summer planting resulted in too short a growing season to produce uniform flowering, although the plants reached good size. Another factor could be the long day photoperiod of summer delayed the onset of flower bud initiation.

Significance to the Industry: Fall flowering hydrangeas could be a profitable crop for wholesale and retail nurseries. The propagation and production of the crops in this study failed to yield the flowering hydrangeas. More work is needed to determine how to initiate flower buds on hydrangeas in summer.



Photo 1. Penny Mac and Nikko Blue Hydrangeas on July 30, 2004.



Photo 2. David Ramsey, Endless Summer, Penny Mac and Nikko Blue Hydrangeas on October 18, 2004.



Photo 3. David Ramsey and Endless Summer hydrangea on November 19, 2004.