

# Handling Unrooted Cuttings

Due to the heightened awareness of the importance of clean stock, a number of customers have requested that SUPPLIERS (McHutchison, McGregor Plant Sales and/or FlorExpo) provide their staff with information regarding the best practices for handling unrooted cuttings. Because SUPPLIERS liability is limited to the cost of the cuttings, you may wish to ensure that the following procedures are implemented and your staff properly trained:

## 1. Disinfection

In order to minimize the transmission of disease from one crop to another the following disinfection steps are suggested prior to the start of the season and between crops.

- a) *Disinfect floors under benches and keep walkways clean in greenhouses*
- b) *Disinfect benches*
- c) *Sanitize hands*
  - 1) *prior to work*
  - 2) *between handling different varieties*
  - 3) *when re-entering the propagation area*
- d) *Disinfect propagation flats prior to use*
- e) *Disinfect footwear before entering propagation area; clean or change footwear daily*

## 2. Propagation

- a) *Do not use shared irrigation when growing sensitive or high risk varieties, either in propagation or production.*
- b) *All growing media should be sanitized – steamed or chemically treated.*
- c) *All irrigation water should come from deep wells or be treated, and regularly tested.*
- d) *Soak clippers or cutting knives in sanitizing solution for enough time to ensure that the product you are using will eliminate the target pathogens.*
- e) *If hand pinching dip hands or change gloves between varieties and/or benches*
- f) *Scout crops often for signs of disease*
  - 1) *If there is any problem check it immediately*
  - 2) *Isolate any suspicious plant by placing it in a double plastic bag and having it tested.*
  - 3) *Have samples tested by a certified laboratory*
- g) *Isolate all crops.*
  - 1) *Keep crops from different suppliers away from each other, during both propagation and finishing.*
  - 2) *Maintain a minimum of 1 meter spacing between crops*
- h) *Work with extension specialists, trade associations, and regulators to ensure maximum knowledge and use of most current practices.*