FUCHSIA GROWING HINTS AND TIPS
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I have been asked to give you some advice on growing the Fuchsia's which you will receive in March. I do not class myself as an expert fuchsia grower, just an enthusiastic amateur who enjoys growing fuchsia's for fun. The real experts who grow for showing may well do things differently but the following information is what works for me.

When you receive your plant you should put into a clean three and half inch pot, I use good quality compost, which is sieved to remove lumps and rubbish. This is then mixed with 25% perlite and grit which helps to keep an open airy compost and helps with drainage. In my pot I place a layer of polystyrene chips in the base, then cover with compost. Holding your plant in the centre of the pot, trickle your compost around the roots until the pot is full, then gently tap the pot on the bench to settle it. Never press the compost down with your thumbs as this will compact it and restrict the roots. Next gently water and place the pot in a light and ventilated place avoiding direct sunlight.

WATERING

Only water when necessary, keeping the compost moist but not wet, a heavy pot does not need water but a light one does.

Remember a fuchsia which wilts through being dry will recover when watered, a fuchsia which wilts because the roots are too wet will probably die.

FEEDING

I use Chempak No 2 in the early part of the growing season changing to No 3 in late May/early June. You can use Chempak every 7-10 days as recommended by the manufacturer, but most fuchsia growers prefer to use it at half strength at every other watering.

POTTING ON

When your plant has made good growth check the root system (tip out of the pot to check) to see if the roots are touching the sides of the pot, then pot on into the next size pot. Continue potting on when required.

STOPPING

When you receive your plant it may have already received its first stop, if not remove the growing tip above the second pair of leaves. When 2 or 3 pairs of leaves have formed on the growth pinch out the tips again. This procedure can be repeated 2 or 3 times depending on when you want your plant to flower. Remember single flowering varieties take 6-8 weeks to flower from the final stop and double varieties take 2 weeks longer.

PESTS & DISEASES

RUST

Spray at regular intervals with Roseclear No 3 for control, remove affected leaves and continue spraying.

WHITEFLY

Spray with Provado Bug Clear or similar, Bayer all in one Bug and Disease Killer claims to be effective as a combined control, but it is not one that I have tried.

RED SPIDER

Likes dry, hot conditions, so misting your plants with clean water to create damp humid conditions will help keep the spider mite at bay. Spray with Provado or similar.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Remove your plants from the Greenhouse when all chance of frosts are past, place your plants outside in a good light position but not in direct sunlight! Dappled shade is ideal for fuchsia's. Turn your pots often to obtain a good shape, if you do not turn your plants they will grow towards the light and produce a lop sided plant. Continue feeding ,spraying and checking for pests and disease.

I hope this information helps you with your Fuchsia growing, so Good Luck and have fun with your Fuchsia's!!