Skimmia japonica

Crop Cultivation Sheet

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ICL Specialty Fertilizers

Skimmia japonica

General information for cultivation:

Skimmia japonica is a difficult crop to cultivate in high quality. The crop is produced mainly for trading in the weeks before Christmas. The main aims is heavy plants with many flowers. Skimmia grows once per year. Branching in spring is crucial for flowering in autumn. The most important cultivar is Skimmia japonica 'Rubella'. Total cultivation time from cuttings to sellable plants is 2 years.

STAGE 1: Cuttings and young plants	STAGE 2: Vegetation	STAGE 3: Finishing 4 l pots* (autumn pottings)
		
Cuttings to be made in June, preferably from outdoor mother plants (shaded). Good nutrition of mother plants is important. Start propagation when the axillary-buds are visible.	Uniformity between the plants and parties are key for quality. This must be created during stage 1. Branching is achieved through a good nutrition plan in stage 1.	Start with high quality young plants. Important are good roots and well-developed number of branches. *Other pot sizes possible (depending on customer requirements).

Cultivation cards:

Growing medium and water

- Required soil pH level: 5.0.
- EC in general: a maximum of 0.6 mS in pot during culture in greenhouses. For outdoor cultures we recommend an EC of ~1.0 mS. Do not use a starter fertilizer, because the plants are potted before winter.
- Important parameters: constant moisture and well-buffering growing medium. Mainly composed of types of peat, optionally supplemented with wood fiber or bark (maximum 20%).
- Mix Micromax into the growing medium for sufficient trace element supply.

Growing phase

- Skimmia has some typical nutritional requirements. The roots are sensitive to salts.
- Potting before winter is crucial so the plants can use wintertime (in the greenhouse) for root development.
- Stretching flowers (N-Eu) in July – Aug: delivering nitrogen nutrition at the right moments is crucial.
- It is better to use crop protection actions preventively rather than curatively.

Starting phase

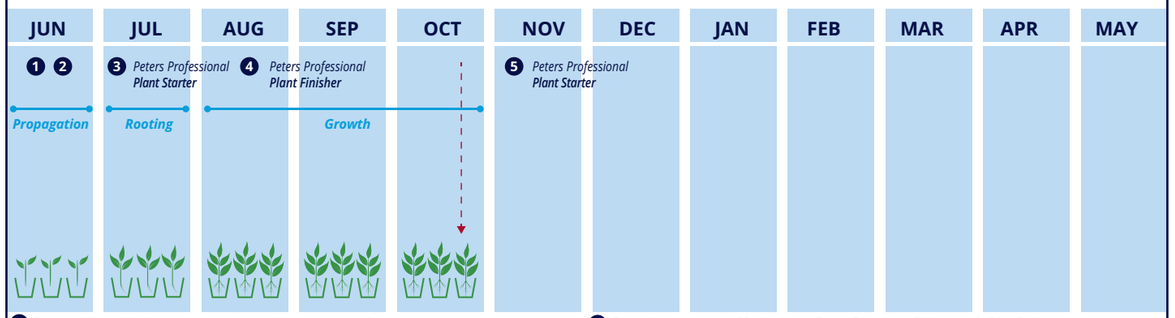
- Moment of propagation: the branches used for cuttings must be inflexible.
- Pruning during the young plant stage is key for good plant design.
- It is recommended to prune each Skimmia individually for the best development.

Finishing phase

- Prune the plants during the finishing stage by 20 June. Prune too late and the plants will not develop flowers in time.
- The August – September period is important for maximum flower bud development in Skimmia. (Those buds will flower in spring the following year.). Plants need a lot of energy during this phase so: intensify nutrition by irrigating during the late summer to build the necessary buffer. Use a mainly a high K schedule (N:K 1:3); to avoid re-growth during the flowering phase.

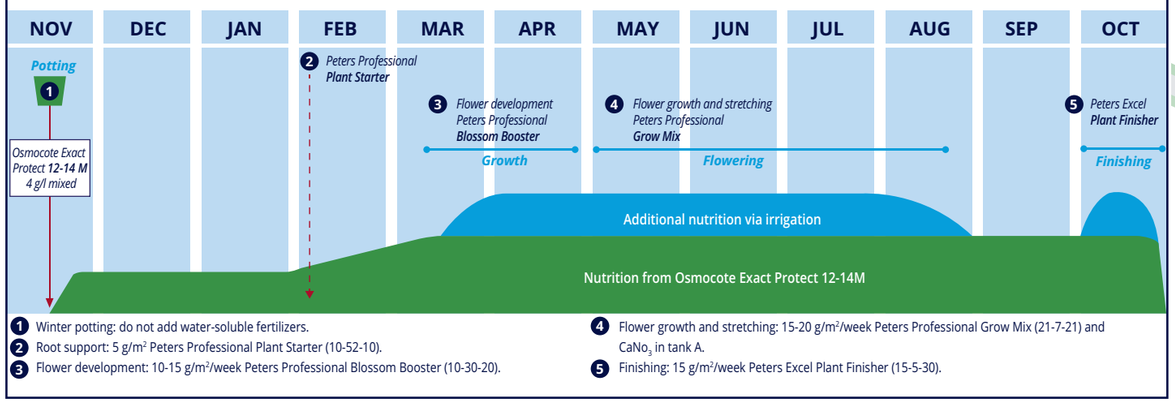
Recommendations for Cultivation

Cuttings in large cups | 64-74 plugs per tray — **Skimmia japonica**



1. Ensure high nutrition in the weeks before cutting mother stock!
2. Cuttings in large cups: 1 g/l Osmocote Exact Protect 5-6M, do not add water-soluble starter!
3. Start rooting: 3 g/m² Peters Professional Plant Starter (10-52-10).
4. Branching and growth: 10 g/m²/week: Peters Excel Plant Finisher or CalMag Finisher.
5. One week before potting: 5 g/m² Peters Professional Plant Starter (10-52-10).

Final stage | small pots: repeat for larger plants — **Skimmia japonica**



1. Winter potting: do not add water-soluble fertilizers.
2. Root support: 5 g/m² Peters Professional Plant Starter (10-52-10).
3. Flower development: 10-15 g/m²/week Peters Professional Blossom Booster (10-30-20).
4. Flower growth and stretching: 15-20 g/m²/week Peters Professional Grow Mix (21-7-21) and $CaNO_3$ in tank A.
5. Finishing: 15 g/m²/week Peters Excel Plant Finisher (15-5-30).

For a tailored advice for your situation, please contact your ICL Specialty Fertilizers advisor. As circumstances can differ and as application of products is beyond our control, ICL Specialty Fertilizers cannot be held responsible for any negative results. Before a new rate, product or application method is used, a small-scale trail is recommended.

Cultivation notes from our specialists

Tips & Tricks

Skimmia japonica

- To ensure that Skimmia can use 100% of its energy to develop branches and flowers during spring, it is necessary to finalize potting by the end of November. Potting in October results in well-developed roots before wintertime.
- Propagation in January – February is possible, but not optimal, because plants will grow faster above the soil surface than below. There is a big risk of leaf burn.
- General recommendations after starting with high quality young plants:
  - Control EC levels in the pots. Especially in high temperatures and during the period of flowering.
  - Maximum EC level in the pot, indoor: 0.6 mS/cm.
  - Maximum EC level in the pot, outdoor: 1.0 mS/cm.
- Keep the plants out of direct sunlight on the leaves. Skimmia prefers the shade.
- In low temperatures during spring: it is beneficial to apply Peters Professional Winter Grow Special. Apply this twice in 14 days during April. The high amounts of trace elements support the plant when trace elements are hardly absorbable (low temperatures, wet circumstances).

Crop Protection

Skimmia japonica

Sciara
Skimmia is very sensitive. Quick rooting is important. Keep irrigation limited and control temperatures during the cutting period. Especially because the crops root during summertime.

Wine Weevil (Othiorhynchus sulcatus)
Mainly affects older or overaged plants. Take preventive actions against larvae by mixing the protection products into the growing medium. Curatively it is necessary to apply protection products against adults (beetles) during summer months (evening applications).

Phytophthora spp.
Very sensitive to stem rot and root rot (Phytophthora spp.). Protect the plants by avoiding peaks in greenhouse climate, irrigation, and nutrition.

Caterpillars and aphids
Apply a first round of protection products on the leaves during spring.

Spider mites (Acari):
Protection products are needed during the entire year (also in winter greenhouses!).

ISO 9001 ISO 14001 OHSAS 18001

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