

## ***Pentas lanceolata*** ***Kaleidoscope Pink***

Egyptian Star

### ***Culture guide***

**Uses:**

Attractive pot plants for indoors and outdoors, plants for bedding

**Exposure:**

Sun

**Garden height:**

18" / 45 cm

**Crop time:**

14-18 weeks

**Sow time:**

January-April

**Sowing method:**

1 seed per plug

**Germination:**

Sow pellets in a media with a pH range of 6.5-7.2. Maintain uniform soil moisture levels and humidity levels above 95 %. Stage I temperatures of 75-80 °F (23-26 °C) optimize germination. Irrigate with warm water with a pH range of 6.5-7.2 to avoid shocking seedlings during Stage I. Do not cover seed as light increases germination rate and improves seedling uniformity. Begin light feeding with 25-50 ppm nitrogen. Continue Stage I conditions for 7-10 days.

**Growing On:**

Transplant plugs into 6" (15 cm) pots or hanging baskets. Grow on at 65-70°F (18-21 °C). Fertilize at 100-150 ppm nitrogen in a well-balanced mix. Monitor soil pH levels and maintain a pH above 6.5.

**Media:**

Use a well-drained, growing substrate with 10-20 % clay, 0-15 % parts (e.g. coconut fibres, perlite, sand), 1-2 kg/m<sup>3</sup> complete balanced fertilizer, 1-2 kg/m<sup>3</sup> slow release fertilizer (3-9 months), iron-chelate, micronutrients, pH: 5.8-7.5.

**Temperature:**

Grow at 17-19 °C. At temperatures below 16 °C the vegetative growth is inhibited. Just before selling harden the plants. Decrease the temperature slowly. Temperatures below 10 °C will delay the flowering. Pentas does not tolerate frost.

**Fertilization:**

Moderate-high fertilization levels are required. Fertilize the crop weekly with 150-200 ppm nitrogen (at 1 kg/m<sup>3</sup> slow release fertilizer in substrate), using alternating a potassium balanced fertilizer (N: K<sub>2</sub>O-ratio: 1:1,5) and a calcium nitrate fertilizer. Avoid high ammonium and high nitrogen levels.

Prevent magnesium deficiency by applying magnesium sulphate (0,025 %) 1-2 times. Check regularly pH value in substrate, because at pH above 6.0 iron deficiency (yellow edges on the leaves) can appear and at pH below 5.0 iron toxicity (necrotic spots on the leaves) can arise. In case of iron deficiency apply iron-chelate for 1-2 times and in case of iron toxicity adjust the pH in substrate with lime.