

Culture Information

Salvia Big Blue

Big vigorous plants with intense blue flowers fill out quickly, adding height to garden borders and containers.

Great for early summer sales and flowers continuously up until the first frost.

Bees and butterflies lock-in to Big Blue in the garden.

Low maintenance, does not need dead-heading.

Great performer in heat and low water conditions.

Height 61-91cm, spread 45-51cm

Media

- A pH of 5.8 to 6.2 is optimum.
- Salvia Big Blue prefers a well-drained soil with as much air space as is practical.

Temperature

Day: 21 – 26°C

Night: 17 – 19°C

Light

- Salvia Big Blue is a Facultative Long Day plant, flowering faster over 14 hr days, but will flower eventually under shorter daylengths.
- The crop times suggested on this culture sheet assume 14hr days are provided.
- For an early crop daylength extension would need to be given in the plug stage.
- Plants will stretch at low light intensities and branching will be reduced.

Watering

- Keep growing media moderately moist. Allow the media to dry between watering's.
- If the media stays too wet, plants will stretch.

Fertiliser

- Salvia Big Blue has a moderate fertiliser requirement.
- Apply a balanced NPK feet at every watering from 10 - 14 days after potting

Controlling growth

- Maintain recommended temperatures and light levels to avoid stretch.
- Wet media will cause stretching and produce weak growth.
- Salvia Big Blue is responsive to Daminozide, Depending on climate and pot size, 2 or 3 applications.
- A 'soft pinch' leaving 4 nodes 6 weeks after sowing (2 weeks after transplanting) is recommended. Too late and too deep will delay flowering by about 4 weeks and create an unbalanced plant.

Common problems

Insects: Thrips, Aphids, Whitefly Sciarid fly.

Diseases: *Botrytis*, *Pythium*, *Rhizoctonia*

All Salvia Big Blue cuttings are derived from culture and virus-indexed stock.

Crop time

10 - 12 weeks in 12 – 13cm pots from a Ball 84 plug.

About 1 week more on larger containers.

Buds will develop about 9-10 weeks after sowing (approx. 4 weeks after potting).

First colour will appear 14-15 weeks after sowing (approx. 9 weeks after potting)

Problems	Causes
Plant collapse	Stem canker (<i>Phoma</i>) Plants grown in saturated media for extended periods of time (<i>Pythium</i>)
Excessive vegetative growth and lack of flowers	Excessive ammonia nitrogen in fertiliser Low light and over watering; saturated media
Poor branching and thin plants	Low fertilisation during early stages of growth; low light
Yellowing of foliage	Excessive moisture in soil Low micro nutrients

Ball Colegrave cultural information is issued as a guide to growers, based on our own trials experience. It is not intended as a blueprint for growing. Any chemicals referred to should be used only in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.