

Astilbe arendsii **Showstar®**

Garden Spirea

Culture guide

Uses:

Plants for the border, pot and container plants, cut flowers

Exposure:

Sun - Shade

Garden height:

14" / 35 cm

Crop time:

12-14 months

Sow time:

February-June for green pots; June-July for flowering in pots the following year

Sowing method:

3-5 seeds per plug

Germination:

14-21 days at 72-77 °F (22-25 °C), cover seed lightly and keep very moist.

Growing On:

Transplant plugs 10-14 weeks after sowing

Media:

Use a well-drained, growing perennial substrate with 10-20 % clay, 0-15 % organic parts (e.g. bark, wood fibres), 1-1.5 kg/m³ complete balanced fertilizer, 3-4 kg/m³ slow release fertilizer (3-9 months), iron-chelate, micronutrients, pH: 5.5-6.0. Field: humus soils with good drainage and good nutrition levels. Standard fertilization: 80 g/m² slow release fertilizer. Sand soils are not suitable.

Temperature:

Grow at 15-18 °C or outdoors. After development of the roots decrease the temperature to 12-15 °C. In winter indoors frost free at 3-5 °C or outdoors. Outdoor fleece cover needed and plants need to be protected against direct sunlight. For the vernalisation 12 weeks at temperature of 5 °C are required. At mid December the plants start to grow for 8-10 weeks at 15-18 °C.

Fertilization:

High fertilization levels are required. Fertilize the crop weekly with 150-200 ppm nitrogen (at 3 kg/m³ slow release fertilizer in substrate), using a complete balanced fertilizer. Avoid high ammonium and high nitrogen levels. Don't fertilize after mid September. In spring fertilize 150-200 ppm nitrogen of a potassium balance fertilizer. Prevent magnesium deficiency by applying magnesium sulphate (0,025 %) 1-2 times and in case of iron deficiency (above pH 6.0) apply iron-chelate for 1-2 times. Field: If necessary according to analysis, improve the soil with 60-80 g/m² fertilizer per year, applied in several portions. N min soil value: approximately 90 g N/m².