

## Evergreen Chrysanthemum Association

[www.ecamumclub.org](http://www.ecamumclub.org)

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### Presidents Message

Hi All,

Reflecting back on the 2025 growing season, the last 6 months have been educational and busy!

The first quarter of the year our membership started over 1800 mums; had a successful cutting university; and 2 plant sales.

In the second quarter our focus was on root development and progressive potting techniques. We've had many discussions about watering, fertilizing, pinching, disease and pest control.

July and August are the primary growing months for our mums so watering, fertilizing, disease and pest management regimens should be in full swing by now. For the next few months the focus will be on plant development and lateral management. Our mums should be in their final 8 to 10 inch pots and in a growing location that gets lots of sunshine.

We will start to see laterals and side shoots developing for those plants that were pinched in May and June. Now it's time to introduce a few more discussion topics - lateral selection and management; staking; flushing; top dressing; and "taking the bud".

Probably the most critical item in the July to do list is "**taking the bud**". Read carefully and ask questions of our more experienced growers.

Our July cultural notes introduce some of these new topics.

### THANK YOU!

**A BIG THANK YOU** to Michael Boudreaux for sharing his knowledge and experience about chrysanthemum hybridization at the June ECA meeting. These presentations are always very interesting and

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*The glory of gardening: our hands in the dirt, our heads in the sun, our hearts with nature. We nurture our soul*

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### Upcoming Events

#### July 13

ECA Meeting  
Sharon Priebe Wing –  
Volunteer Park  
Conservatory 10 am – Noon

#### Aug 9 – ECA Annual Picnic

Picnic details are being finalized at this time. Stay tuned for more information.

#### September 13

ECA Meeting  
Sharon Priebe Wing –  
Volunteer Park  
Conservatory 10 am - Noon

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#### 2025 ECA membership dues

**ECA Dues:**  
**\$15 single**  
**\$20 household**

**Mail checks to ECA PO BOX**  
**66155 Burien, WA 98166**

#### Supplies Available:

**M&R Mix**  
**Mid-Season Fertilizer**  
**Twist Ties**

educational. We look forward to future presentations and learning more about the "birds and the bees" of chrysanthemum hybridization

## July Cultural Notes

### Lateral Control:

In May and June the growing tip was pinched off the mum. This forces side laterals to develop. We recommend removing the topmost lateral below the stem break, as it is structurally the weakest lateral and can easily, accidentally, be broken off.

Generally, for the optimal bloom, you will want to carry between 1 to 3 laterals on a plant

As side laterals develop, select the number of laterals to carry through the summer and remove all other side shoots

### Support the plant - Staking:

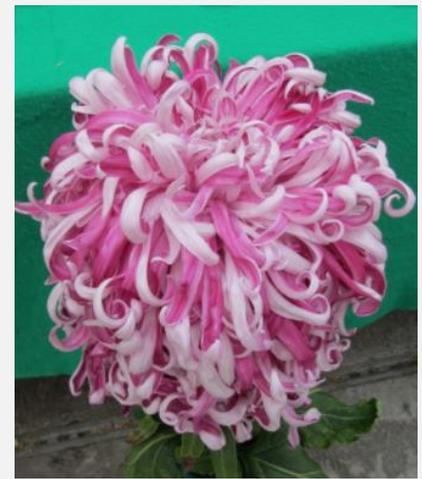
Individually stake each lateral to prevent losing them to wind, rain, accidents etc. You will need stakes ranging from 3' to 5'. Plant stakes can be wood, heavy bamboo, fiberglass stakes or a combination. I make wooden stakes nominally 5/8"x 1/2" ripped from 1/2" or 5/8" fence boards. Don't use Pressure treated lumber! Stakes should be pointed so that when you push them into the pots they don't tear away large sections of the roots.

Start fastening the laterals to the stakes with 4-6 inch twist ties when laterals are 1-2 foot long. Take care to place the plant stakes straight in the pot. Angled stake put stress on the stems and can cause the stem to break off.

### Fertilizing:

Continue your summer feeding program using a mid-season 20 - 10-20 fertilizer or something comparable. The standard dosage for 20-10-20 is 1 tsp per gallon of water, fed once a week. If you feed with every watering you should cut the dosage to half that or less.

Keep in mind that it is easy to overfeed. Watch and feel the leaves to gauge fertilizer needs. If leaves tend to be hard and curl up or the upper leaves turn over you are feeding too much.



### Feature Cultivar – Elizabeth Shoemith

**Description – Purple Irregular**

**English Classification – Large Exhibition (1)**

**Plant Height – 4 feet**

**Disbud size – 8 inches diameter**

Elizabeth Shoemith was raised by Len Shoemith and released by Cyril Jefferies in the UK in 1973.

Elizabeth Shoemith is a two toned purple. The top side of the petal is purple and the underside is a lighter shade.

Mace pinches Elizabeth Shoemith twice - 3/21 and 5/15

Ivor states when bud Sets around 8/10 it will time appropriately for show.

The leaves on some plants – Jessie Habgoods, Dukes, Lundy's and Connies – tend to be more yellow. If your plant leaves are yellow first try drying out the plant with less water. If that doesn't work feed ½ to 1 tsp Epsom salts (Magnesium Sulphate) per plant. Leaf feeding with liquid Iron products such as Sequesterine or chelated Liquid Iron will also help green up the plants.

Continue this feeding program right up to the bud formation, then drop to approximately ½ tsp per gallon through most of the bloom formation. Heavy feeding during the early bud growth can seriously deform the buds

### Flushing:

When using M&R mix flush your pots every 4-6 weeks to get the excess salts out of you medium. If you are mixing compost or loam with your soilless the excess salts will be absorbed by the soil and flushing isn't generally necessary. Never the less it's a good idea to give your pots a good flushing once or twice. For flushing, fill the pot with clear water, let it drain, refill and drain twice more. After you have completed the flushing, there will be little feed left so it's a good idea to add a new weeks' supply of fertilizer

### Top Dressing:

Top dress the pots in late July or early August and again when the buds show color (around Sept 1 to 15). Spread 1 to 2 hands full of your final potting mix on each pot. This gives the upper roots a better growing environment.

### Pest Management:

Continue to review your pest control program every 1-2 weeks. Keep the plants free of black aphids, other bugs and fungal diseases, especially before the blooms open.

Azadirachtin, extracted from neem seeds is an effective organic insecticide. To ensure that you are purchasing the most effective neem solution review the notes distributed after our May meeting – the subject was “What you need to know about Neem oil.”

Marathon systemic is the most effective black aphid control. Apply once per growing season to each pot at the rate of ½ tsp per pot to control aphids. Some other insects such as leaf hoppers, leaf rollers, earwigs and Capsid bugs need to be picked off the plants or they will invariably ruin the bud. Earwigs are particularly dangerous, and a product called Seven when spread around the roots and or sprayed on the plant can be very effective in controlling them.

### Disease Control:

During the summer and fall seasons spray plants with a fungicide every 2 to 3 weeks. Always use appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when using insecticides and fungicides.



## **Taking the Bud:**

From mid-July to late August the terminal buds will start to appear on your laterals, followed by a ring of smaller buds just below the main bud. It is necessary that the ring of smaller buds be removed, leaving only the single bud on each lateral. This process is termed "Taking the Bud".

You need to let the ring of smaller buds develop to near ¼ inch before attempting to remove them so as to prevent damaging the main stem and primary bud.

To remove the buds simply push them sideways with your thumb and they will easily break off.

At this time it's a good idea to add the bloom support stick (a small 16" long stick, tied to the main stem and to the support stake). This support will keep the growing stem straight and the bloom sitting square on top.

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Once again, here are the links that explain Neem Oil:

### **1) What You Need to Know Before Buying Neem Oil for Your Plants**

<https://www.urbangardeningmom.com/blogs/news/neem-oil>

### **2) Explaining Azadirachtin and Neem**

<https://gpnmag.com/article/explaining-azadirachtin-and-neem/>