

AgBud



A series of horticulture insights

Did you know?

Myth buster... Poinsettias are not poisonous. However, their milky sap may cause irritation in humans and pets.

Overview

- The colorful part of the plant isn't a flower but are modified leaves (bracts). The flower (cyathia) are the small yellow parts clustered in the center of the leaves.
- They are the #1 selling potted plant in America.
- They are not always red in color. There are more than 100 varieties.
- Poinsettias need daytime temperatures between 60 and 70 degrees and nighttime temperatures near 55 degrees.

Production

Grown commercially in all 50 states. Virginia is in the top 5.

Many growers purchase rooted cuttings instead of propagating their own.

In 2021 over 42 million Poinsettias were sold at over \$215 million in sales.

Poinsettia

Kingdom: *Plantae*

Family: *Euphorbiaceae*

Genus: *Euphorbia*

Species: *E. pulcherrima*

History

- Joel Roberts Poinsett, a botanist who is considered to be the father of the Poinsettia industry, first introduced them to the United States in the 1820s. He sent cuttings from Southern Mexico to his home in Charleston, South Carolina.
- Poinsettias are native to Mexico and were used to make red dye by ancient Aztecs. They would also use the sap to help control fevers.
- Poinsettia production started as a field-grown plant in California in the early 1900s by the Ecke family, but they later moved to grow them in greenhouses.
- They are native to Mexico and can grow up to 15 feet in the wild.

Sources: ffa.org, poinsettiday.com, extension.illinois.edu, hort.ifas.ufl.edu, usda.gov

Parts of the Flower

