

***Antirrhinum majus* (Snapdragon) as a locally produced cut flower for Northern Ireland**

Summary technical note, 2009

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Introduction: *Antirrhinum* commonly known as Snapdragon (*Antirrhinum majus*) is a seasonally available cut flower that is gaining popularity as a locally produced product after successful technology transfer and adoption from Greenmount Campus, CAFRE. The quality and shelf life of the locally grown *Antirrhinum* is very good making it popular as a locally produced cut flower.

Technology project findings: CAFRE, Greenmount Campus trialled and demonstrated the successful production of cut flower *Antirrhinum* in a polytunnel with side ventilation. The demonstration showed that good quality marketable *Antirrhinum* stems can be throughout the summer and autumn in tunnels within Northern Ireland.

Technology grower adoption: New growers have adopted the production of *Antirrhinum* as a tunnel grown crop for marketing to local florists and shops and retail multiples with good success.

Obtaining planting material: Young plants are available as module raised plants from specialist Dutch suppliers of young plants through local

representative Shane Donnelly of Donnelly Horticulture, Greenisland Flowers. Contact Shane Donnelly for availability, price list and delivery dates. (www.donnellyhorticulture.com/greenisland.htm)

Planting density: Antirrhinum can be planted into the soil at a planting density of 64 plants per m².

Expected marketable yield: Antirrhinum should yield between 60 to 64 stems per m².

Crop Support : It is important to use at least one layer 12.5 x 12.5 cm square wire support with support bars placed every linear meter to ensure stems are kept growing straight.

Harvest period: Antirrhinum can be harvested between June and early November under tunnel conditions.

Vase life: anticipated vase life of 10 days.

Weeds, Pests and Diseases: Weeds should be controlled using chemical or stem sterilisation prior to planting. Downy mildew and botrytis should be controlled using good crop hygiene, ventilation and air circulation fans, and a preventative fungicide spray programme.

Facilities and equipment required: Antirrhinum can be grown in a side ventilated polytunnel or a well ventilated glasshouse, use overhead irrigation to establish the crop and ground level trickle-tape irrigation for watering the crop from after establishment until harvest. Use 1 or 2 layers of wire support to keep stems straight. Use a cold store for post harvest storage of harvested stems.

Marketing opportunities: local wholesalers, retail florists, local shops and farmers and town markets and multiple retailers.

Advantages of selling locally produced Antirrhinum over imported stems: Stronger and thicker stem, extra freshness, longer vase life, larger more vibrant coloured flowers, can mix colours to suit local client's specific requirements.

Interested to know more about cut flower Antirrhinum production?

If you would like to find out more about growing cut flower **Antirrhinum** please contact David Davidson, Ornamentals Development Adviser, CAFRE, Greenmount Campus on **email** david.davidson@dardni.gov.uk ; **tel: 028 37 515605**.