

ALOHA LILY[®] 'Leia' CULTURAL INSTRUCTIONS

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"Aloha" is a single word blessing that communicates a range of feelings from a heartfelt greeting or farewell, to deeper feelings of love, affection, sympathy, or veneration.

Likewise, this lovely but hardy plant can have a range of applications. It makes a beautiful 4" or 6" potted gift for a variety of occasions, it shows well as a mid-to-front of the border landscape plant and it provides beautiful cut flowers with a long vase life.

ALOHA LILY[®] 'Leia' is GSBG's 1st *Eucomis* spp. hybrid. It is the smallest, most compact, reliable, fragrant and brightest colored of any *Eucomis* on the market (standard varieties are known as "Pineapple Lilies"). Like its relatives, *E. comosa* or *E. autumnalis* which are natives of South Africa, this **ALOHA LILY[®]** prefers a Mediterranean type climate, although it can be produced under cover with modified culture.

ALOHA LILY[®] 'Leia' (pronounced 'Lay-ah') means "Child of Heaven". It is well suited to pot culture, can be a perennial landscape plant in USDA zones 7-10, and can also be used as a very long lasting cut flower with stems to 18 inches when grown under shade cover or in denser plantings. It blooms during traditionally "slow" summer sales and can lend itself as a novelty to fall sales. With a pineapple-like topknot, attractive bright flower buds and open blooms, as well as a distinct **tropical fragrance** (coconut oil is one association), these are unique plants having truly exotic flowers.

Availability: **ALOHA LILY[®]** bulbs are available for forcing from late February through early August, with efforts underway to expand the forcing window to incorporate spring holidays. Sizes available are:

1¾ -2" (14/16cm) for 4" (10cm) pots 2-2¼" (16/18cm) for gallon pots 2¼" up (18cm+) for 6" (15cm) pots.

Potting: Use well draining media. Generally use 1 bulb per pot. Cover bulbs with 2" of media. Smaller bulbs can be planted in multiples in larger pots, such as three 1¾-2" in a 7-8" pot (3 @ 14/16 in a 18-20cm pot).

Fertilizer: **ALOHA LILY[®]** is a light feeder. A modest constant feed at 50 ppm of 20-10-20+minors with leaches at 1:1 Fert: clear water works well. Once top-knot begins showing (leaf whirl open ¼ inch), change fertility to Hi-bloom 10-30-20 @ 1:1 Feed: Leach. A low level pre-plant slow release fertilizer can be used in generally cooler conditions or some salt burn may occur due to rapid release in warm temperatures. High fertility tends to produce soft, loose and generally weaker plants, especially when grown under cover.

Light: Full sun or partial shade is best. Outdoor production in summer or fall is recommended. Superior plant form and color will be achieved with high light and cooler evenings.

Water: Water regularly and do not allow pots to dry out. Clear water leaches are critical to reduce salt build up.

Pests and Diseases: Although pests and diseases are few, growers are advised to be observant to watch for the following:

Water molds (Pythium) – occasional incidence of darkened roots may indicate water molds. Check roots weekly for color change or flattening. Subdue Maxx[®] [mefenoxam at 1.0-2.0 oz/100 gal (7.8-15.6 ml/100L)] and/or Heritage [azoxystrobin at 3-5 oz/100 gal (22.47-37.45 gm/100L)] have been shown effective for control as a drench. A preventative drench is recommended one (1) week post-planting.

Leafminer - if incidence of leafminer occurs, spray as needed using locally recommended material such as Avid[®] (abamectin), Citation (cyromazine) or Conserve[™] (spinod) at label rates.

Mealybugs - these insects are occasionally harbored deep in the bulb scales. Therefore, we advise that growers take preventative steps to suppress and control mealybug outbreaks in their crop. Very successful control can be achieved with the systemic material Marathon[®] 1G [at level teaspoon/pot (4.1 gms/pot)]. This treatment can also control aphids for which this plant can be a host. Always spray or drench in the morning or early enough to allow for full plant drying.

Botrytis - can occasionally effect soft plants under certain conditions. Water for incidence and water in morning. Fungicides such as Daconil (chlorothanoniil at label rates can arrest outbreaks).

Temperatures: Under covered production greater uniformity can be gained by starting forcing at 68-78°F (20-26°C) until emergence. Subsequently, temperatures between 60-85°F (16-29°C) for day and 50-65°F (10-18°C) for night temperatures are best.

Flowering: ALOHA LILY[®] takes roughly 95 to 110 days from planting to flower. The number of blooms likely per bulb size is:

1 ¾-2" (14/16cm)	1 -2
2-2 ¼" (16/18cm)	2 -3
2 ¼" up (18cm+)	2 -4

Growth Regulation: Recent studies as well as market feedback, have indicated that although proper cultural techniques can yield a compact and well-proportioned pot for Eucomis, some growth regulation may be desirable for optimal interior post-harvest performance. Crops intended for use as premium potted plants for interior displays would greatly benefit from a Bonzi[®] drench. (Note: Eucomis grown outdoors and cool as mentioned above, and aimed at the garden market will likely not require PGRs with the exception of those traveling on long shipments. Employing a late and relatively high dose of Bonzi[®] will dramatically reduce the post-harvest stretch that occurs when this crop is displayed indoors (generally dark and warm). If Bonzi[®] is not used, the flowers of this crop tend to stretch dramatically and topple over within 3-5 days of interior display.

This type of reaction to low natural light can practically be eliminated by a single application of Bonzi[®]: using drench rates from 7.5-30 ppm with 15-30ppm being more effective. The method and timing are as follows: drench 6.0oz/6" pot (177mls/15cm pot). Successful results were achieved by drenching when 1/3 of this crop is just beginning to show a pineapple-like vegetative top-knot (when looking into the rosette from above), yet neither florets nor flower stalk, stem and flower's neck are visible.

Mid-maturity applications of Bonzi[®] (around 50-65 days after planting) at low levels (8-16ppm) when leaves are fully developed, but before top-knot formation have also shown to improve plant habit for good balance and bloom separation. Applications any earlier (<50 days) have given mixed results in habit performance (positive response for Autumnalis) and delays in finishing the product (shipping from 7-12 days later). From our studies, bloom counts were not adversely affected. Growing with minimal inputs of no fertility was equally leggy with thin leaves, but slightly slower to reach a shipping stage (5-7 days).

Note: prior to commercial scale application, growers should conduct rate and timing trials in their environment to determine the best methods for their particular needs. This applies especially to in season use of PGRs during the growth cycle due to overall plant sensitivity to Bonzi[®].

Stay in touch with your distributor, as other exciting ALOHA LILY[®] cultivars will be coming to market soon.