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Crop Maintenance Activities: Pinching

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THE *Fred C. Gloeckner* FOUNDATION, INC.

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Topics

- Manual pinching
 - Techniques
 - Timing
- Chemical pinching

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Manual Pinching



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Pinching


- Removal of growing point
- Encourages lateral branching, full plant



Photo by Chris Catanzaro

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- Influences plant shape and fullness
- Many smaller inflorescences are produced instead of one larger one



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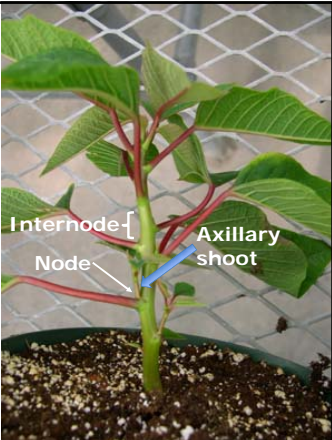
After pinch



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Nodes & Internodes

- Nodes
 - Leaf
 - Axillary bud
- Internodes
 - Extension makes plants taller



The diagram shows a plant stem with several nodes. A blue arrow points to a node, which is labeled 'Node'. A bracket indicates the distance between two nodes, labeled 'Internode'. A small shoot emerging from a node is labeled 'Axillary shoot'.

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Pinch just above a node

- Take care to avoid damaging the small, axillary bud




The top photo shows a hand pinching a plant stem just above a node, with a white circle highlighting the area. The bottom photo shows a hand pinching a plant stem just above a node, with a white circle highlighting the area.

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Counting nodes

- Pinch to leave ~ 5 to 8 nodes, fewer than shown here
- Consistency important



The photo shows a plant stem with several nodes. White arrows point to the nodes, indicating the counting process.

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Soft pinch



The left photo shows a hand performing a soft pinch on a plant stem. The right photo shows a hand performing a soft pinch on a plant stem.

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Hard pinch



The photo shows a hand performing a hard pinch on a plant stem.

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The photo shows two potted plants, one with a hard pinch and one with a soft pinch.

- Leave enough foliage to support the growth of the axillary breaks

Parallel to “survival shoot” concept



Impact on crop loss



66% shrinkage vs.



3% shrinkage

How to pinch

- Consider
 - Species
 - Length of production cycle
 - Desired affect on plant architecture



When to pinch



- Pinch when roots reach the edge of the pot

When to pinch

- Pinch in plug or liner tray after root system is well-established



When to pinch



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Flats in Flats out

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Two key chemicals:

- Ethephon
 - Florel™
 - Pistill™
- Dikegulac-sodium
 - Augeo™
 - Atrimmec™

Keep in mind...

- Timing
- Application rate
- Crop sensitivity

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'Infinity Marble' 7 DAT 'Infinity Marble' UTC

Augeo™ applied as 400 ppm foliar spray 1-day before transplanting well-rooted cuttings

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