Crop Maintenance Activities: Pinching

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Topics

• Manual pinching
  – Techniques
  – Timing

• Chemical pinching

Manual Pinching

Pinching

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

Pinched Not pinched

After pinch

• Influences plant shape and fullness
• Many smaller inflorescences are produced instead of one larger one
Nodes & Internodes
- Nodes
  - Leaf
  - Axillary bud
- Internodes
  - Extension makes plants taller

Internode | Node | Axillary shoot

Pinch just above a node
- Take care to avoid damaging the small, axillary bud

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

Soft pinch

Hard 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
Automated Trimming

Chemical pinching

Two key chemicals:

- Ethephon
  - Florell™
  - Pistil™

- Dikegulac-sodium
  - Augeo™
  - Attrimmec™

Keep in mind:

- Timing
- Application rate
- Crop sensitivity

Chemical pinching

‘Infinity Marble’
7 DAT
Augeo™ applied as 400 ppm foliar spray 1-day before transplanting well-rooted cuttings

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