

Cultural Manual - Pepper Zamboni RZ F1 (35-106 RZ)

Plant raising

Zamboni does not look remarkable at the plant raiser's. A standard temperature regime should be used. The plants may, perhaps, draw a little more easily than other varieties, but they do produce enough leaf surface area.

Start of the crop

We prefer to see Zamboni being steered for growth. It is an easy- and early-flowering variety, which means that the screen may be used frequently, but always, of course, combined with a min. pipe, at least during the day, that is!! As soon as the plant can take it, a brief period with a reduced pre-midnight temperature may be used to ensure fruit set.

First fruit set

Because Zamboni gives very large fruits, it is important to thin the first fruit set to one fruit per branch. This depends, normally, on the stem system used. If there are more than two stems per plant, it is best not to allow a first fruit set before the fourth axil. If this is done anyway, the fruits should preferably be picked green.

With a 2-stem system it is also important, of course, to pick green if the plant cannot quite cope with the first fruit set, regardless of which axil it occupies. But this, understandably, applies to all varieties.

Steering for growth

Once the first fruit set is a fact, we feel that the crop should be steered towards growth. This means: fairly level temperatures, with 19 - 21C being no exception. The screen also comes into this again. Once growth stops, the 24-hour temperature is reduced slightly and, conversely, when there is too much growth, the 24-hour temperature is increased slightly.

As you see, Zamboni RZ is an easy variety to grow. Zamboni reacts immediately to even a brief drop in the pre-midnight temperature, so only use it to steer the crop.

Strong against sun scorch

Zamboni is very strong against sun scorch. That is why we prefer to see Zamboni topped at just one leaf. Another reason for this is that the fruits set in the second axil are often of inferior quality (fruit shape). Like other Rijk Zwaan varieties, this one, too, grows large leaves. The more generative the steering, the smaller, of course, are the leaves.

Growing a variety for speed often means that it is at the expense of fruit size and Zamboni is no exception. Remember, though, that we are already talking about an average fruit weight of more than 200 g.

With growth into summer

As with Mandy RZ, it is important for Zamboni to have growth to take it into summer. This will ensure the best quality and fruit shape. And as with other varieties, once we have had the longest day, Zamboni's growth has to be watched to prevent that the crop has too much growth by autumn as that would only require more crop work and lose you production.

Watering

Because Zamboni gives very large fruits it needs adequate amounts of water. Until about 1st April, a volume of 3x insolution is sufficient. However, once the fruit load reaches more than 25 fruits/m² it will soon be necessary to increase it to 3.5 - 4x insolution. This may seem a lot and

often leads to discussions, but remember that 35 fruits of 225 g will need considerably more water than 40 fruits of 180 g each. Whatever volume of water you use extra will be more than recouped in production.

Feed

Zamboni requires a standard feed regime. In normal circumstances, an EC of more than 3.0 in the slab is correct. During very sunny conditions this may drop slightly, to 2.8 minimum. It is then more important to give sufficient water with generous amounts of feed; the EC should preferably not be lower than 2.2 but the amount of water given should be increased.

How much water constitutes "generous watering"?

As with other varieties, we prefer watering not to start too early in the morning. The plant has to start working before you start watering. Start with large rounds (120 cc/plant) and reduce them strongly in line with the light. The large rounds will ensure that run-off is achieved in good time. Giving smaller rounds during the day means that the plant is able to absorb the water more easily and that the run-off percentage does not become too high. **BUT:** giving smaller rounds during the day also means that the slab gets wetter. That is why watering should stop early in the afternoon. If the slab then dries out too much too quickly or too early, it is advisable to put on an extra round during the night. This has a positive effect on fruit size, the slab has a chance to recover (oxygen) and we do not have to start watering too early the next morning. The plant will not go short of anything either in the way of nutrient elements, as calcium in particular is pumped up into the plant and the fruits purely by root pressure and in this way also prevents blossom end rot. Especially in summer, the calcium figure should always be higher than the potash figure. Zamboni is definitely not susceptible to blossom end rot but could succumb to it in extreme conditions. If bitter pit is detected, do not reduce the calcium figure but increase the potash figure instead.

Cultural advisors Rijk Zwaan, October 2003

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