

## General plant raiser guidelines for peppers

- Use 24C in the germ chamber for the most even germination.
- For germinating on the floor, cover the seeds with enough vermiculite and cover the tray's with plastic, remove the plastic when you see 40-50% of the plants. Do this only in the evening or early in the morning before that the lights are turned on. The higher the humidity (must be over 90%), the fewer problems you will have with leaves sticking together (to the seed shell). Germinate at 24C and keep the temperature at this level till about 12 to 15 days after sowing. **Do not grow the plants cold during this period.**
- Saturate the kiem plugs with an EC of 1.5 to 1.8. **Do not go higher with the EC.** One or two times watering with **clear water** after germination is usually enough in the trays. If the clear water has a higher than normal EC level, then saturate the plugs with a lower EC level to compensate.
- Use artificial lights starting one hour before sun up and stop 1 or 2 hours before sunset. Turn off the lights when you have 150-200 Watts of natural light. **The artificial light must not be the dominant source of light**, especially during the period till 12 days after sowing.
- It's best to do the sorting in the trays as late as possible. You want to see that you have 2 equally developed true leaves. The longer you wait to transplant, the more accurately you will see plants that should not be transplanted (unequal or deformed true leaves).
- Make sure the blocks are **fully saturated** with an EC of 2.3 - 2.5.
- The temperature for the main selection of plants should be 21C when in the blocks (when you have a smaller selection of plants, keep them at 23C in the trays for 2 more days to make them more equal to the others).
- After spacing the blocks, water again so that all blocks are equal with 2.3 - 2.5 EC. Normaly in the autumn (November) you might water 2 more times in total, in the winter (December) just one more time. In the spring (January), 2 or 3 waterings will be necessary. **Avoid large fluctuations in the water content after transplanting. Do not let the blocks dry out or become uneven in water content.**
- Normal final plant spacing in the Netherlands for nov/dec plants: 60 day's @14-16 pl/m<sup>2</sup>, 55 day's @16 -18 pl/m<sup>2</sup>, 50 day's @20-22 pl/m<sup>2</sup>
- Only use floor heat when the block temperature is going under 20C. **The floor temperature must be lower than the air temperature.**
- Make sure the energy screen is open with 150 watts of natural light. Use the screen as little as possible in general.

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