



Baselga RZ yellow blocky pepper – week 49, 2010

Here we go, another start with Baselga!

Here's a quick overview of some of the important Baselga points, then have a look below for more detail:

- Baselga is a strong growing, big leaf plant*
- It sets fruits early and they develop fast*
- Sometimes (high pipe temp, low outside temp, setting fruit...) Baselga needs extra attention to watering, that it's enough volume with enough fertilizer content*
- Steer this variety with temperature, a little higher than most other varieties*
- Baselga does not like low night temperatures or low/ long pre night temperatures*
- Good quality flowers bring good shaped fruits in the first sets*

Plant condition from the plant raiser:

You might find that the plant looks a little on the vegetative side. Large leaves and a light colour. Don't try and change this too much. If you want a darker colour in the plant, use a higher EC. Use temperature to keep speed in the plant – it's natural that a young Baselga plant is looking lush in growth. Relative to other varieties, this is not a problem.

Young plant on the slab:

For the first days you might use night irrigations to help with the roots. Make sure that the block has made good contact with the slab. Some slabs (coco and sawdust?) can wick water from the block (also depending on the type of block you use), so be aware of this. Remove the night irrigations as soon as the roots have penetrated the top of the slab. This will help avoid making a weak plant.

Keep the EC high enough as you water heavily for root development. Even though you want this to be a vegetative time of growth (to make roots), the higher EC will help to bring balance in the plant. Most of the fertilizer for the plant is coming from the drip water.

The pipe temperature should be limited to a maximum of 50 to 55C. Even if the air temperature goes lower than you want, the plants are close to the pipes and they will be warm enough. At these pipe

temperatures, the plants are always warmer than the air. Keep in mind if you're on a growing gutter at a higher level, your plant temperature might be a bit lower.

Use your screens carefully. Consider an afternoon period when you can open up the screens and use the pipes for a while. This will activate the plant and allow you to use the light to help make assimilates for the root development.

There is no need to give a lot of CO₂ at this time.

First fruit setting:

Our main goal in the early period of Balsega RZ is keeping speed in the plant while making good quality flowers. This variety will set fruits; our job is to make strong generative flowers. Slow developing large size flowers are what we want to avoid. Look to the quality of the buds and flowers in making your steering decisions. This will be easier with a late planting date, because the days are getting longer, so there is more light.

As you reduce the irrigation to normal levels (after rooting in), keep the EC level the same. Make sure you have achieved a darker colour in the head of the plant before the temperature starts to drop with the setting sun. With sun, a lot of benefit can come from using a temperature boost period in the afternoon and carrying this boost as long as possible. Keep it going with the pipes if necessary a while longer (as the sun loses its energy very early this time of year). Do this only when you want a nice generative effect on a healthy growing plant. This sort of action given to a weak plant will only make it weaker. Strong generative is always a goal! As the temperature falls with the sun, this creates a differential in temperature that will achieve a generative effect and make better quality flowers. If you use a pre night temperature period, keep it short and not too low with temperature. Start it late enough in the day. If you start the pre night too early, there is a chance you will make large/ weak/ vegetative flowers. Baselga naturally wants to make big flowers, so we have to be extra sure to use a pre night effectively. Don't open the vents to reach your pre night temperature, because then you lose the humidity and the result of the pre night turns vegetative. The pre night/ early night period is the time when the plant evaporates out its extra water and the root pressure should dissipate.

Look at the plant head again in the morning. Make sure you're not pushing too hard with the afternoon boost. In the morning the head should be light in colour and looking like the cells are full with water.

As you review your flower quality, keep in mind that you normally do not need a pre night with Baselga. This variety sets easy. Use the pre night as a tool only when necessary; to help steer generatively (and later in the season, for other reasons).

The more energy efficient your greenhouse is (energy screens...) the more aggressive you will need to be with your generative actions (high EC, boost periods). A greenhouse with no energy screen will naturally use a higher pipe temperature and the plants at the end of the day will lose temperature fast through radiation outside. You need to grow according to your circumstances.

When you have a healthy well developing plant you can start to use a high CO₂ level to aid in generative steering. This is very useful for Baselga.

Remember that during fruit setting (or re setting) the plant has a large demand for water and nutrients. This is even more true for Baselga. It sets early, it sets in low light conditions and it continues to grow fast. The average recommended growing temperature is also a bit higher. All of this demands food for the plant. This is not a good time to restrict water or nutrients to the plant. The best early kilo's and fruit quality will come from plants that received enough water.

Overall, steer Baselga RZ generatively with EC, afternoon boosts and CO2 levels. Maintain the night and average temperatures to keep the speed in the plant.

See you soon!

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