

A little dibble will do you

Large growers and nurseries are onto a fertilising method that saves them money and increases their profit. Smaller growers should get onto it as well - why let the big boys have all the fun?

Have you dabbled lately? You should if only to give your business a boost to the bottom line.

Dibbling is a fertilising method large growers use as a way of getting optimum performance from Osmocote controlled and patterned release fertilisers.

If you haven't heard of it, dibbling is the procedure by which Osmocote, Osmocote Plus or Osmocote Exact is added to the soil mix in a pot in readiness for the plant. But not on top.

A dibble hole is drilled into the soil and a specific quantity of Osmocote is placed in the base of the hole. The plant is set directly on top of the fertiliser prills.

The dibbling method offers growers and nurseries a major cost advantage. They use about 20% less fertilizer per pot than top dressing or incorporation, while still ensuring their crops have superior health and uniform growth.

Dibbling has a number of other advantages:

- Fertiliser will not be lost if a container is knocked over or flooded by watering
- Weed growth is reduced as the fertiliser is near the root ball, not on the surface. Only Osmocote, Osmocote Plus and Osmocote Exact have the safety characteristics to be used without danger of burning the plant in the dibble hole.

Osmocote Exact is the ideal fertiliser for dibbling. Exact offers a range of precisely patterned release formulae that are tailored to the varied growth patterns of crops. The larger nurseries and growers acknowledge the benefits of Osmocote dibbling. Smaller growers can also reap the benefits.



Don't just dabble in dibble, do it

Commercial growers of potted plant crops do not need to accept a loss of between 5% and 15% of their crop each season, especially when this loss (which includes plants not being suitable for sale) is due to the use of unreliable fertilisers.

The correct use of a superior controlled release fertiliser such as Osmocote Plus or a patterned release fertiliser such as Osmocote Exact can assist in producing a crop of even growth with healthier characteristics - with fewer losses.

The secret is in Osmocote's granular technology. Every Osmocote granule has a homogeneous quality that ensures it releases the complete nutrients in correct formulation at a time when the plant needs it. This is just what a professional dibbler needs. Use the dibble method and let Osmocote do the rest... while you dabble in other things.

Cole Engineering has equipment specifically designed for potting machines or bench dibbling. For details, call Scotts direct: Australia freecall 1800 789 338, New Zealand (09) 299 6558

Spoon feeding your plants

The best method for accurately adding fertiliser to potting media is to use a calibrated dibbling machine. The least reliable method is by handful guessing. In between is a simple yet reliable way and that is to use Scotts spoons correctly. The spoons are graded for accuracy, but it is worth asking your Scotts representative for advice on how to use them to your best advantage. Remember, underfeeding will necessitate topdressing later, which has high labour costs, so get your fertiliser rates spot on by spooning in. Ask your Scotts rep for a set.