

Purple Majesty, Jester & Purple Baron F₁ Ornamental Millet

Striking Plants Ideal for Borders, Mass Plantings and in the Landscape!

■ Ornamental Millet is a tall, grasslike plant that adds dramatic height to gardens and large containers.

Purple Majesty reaches 4 to 5 ft. (1.2 to 1.5 m) tall in the garden with 12 to 14-in. (30 to 35-cm) flower plumes. At the time of flowering, **Jester** is approximately three-quarters the height of **Purple Majesty**, while **Purple Baron** is about two-thirds the height of **Purple Majesty**.

■ When grown under favorable conditions each plant produces one to three main stems, with some secondary branches from the base. **Jester** has the most branching, followed by **Purple Baron**. **Purple Majesty** produces a taller, more stately plant.

■ **Jester** comes into flower 7 to 10 days later than **Purple Baron** and **Purple Majesty**, and therefore stays compact longer into the season than the other two.

■ These F₁ hybrids are suitable for growing in containers 4 in. (10 cm) and larger.

■ **Purple Majesty** is a 2003 All-America Selections Gold Medal Winner.

■ Contact your local distributor or call PanAmerican Seed at 800 231-4868 for ordering information.

Pennisetum glaucum

Approximate seed count: 3,400 to 4,500 S./oz. (120 to 160 S./g)

Plug Production

NOTE: Plugs allowed to become rootbound or stressed by drought or nutrient deficiency will not perform well after transplant.

Media

Use a well-drained, disease-free, soilless medium with a pH of 5.5 to 6.3 and a medium initial nutrient charge (EC 0.75 mmhos/cm with a 1:2 extraction).

Sowing

Recommended tray size is 128 or larger cell. Larger cells result in shorter overall crop times. Multiple sowing 2 to 3 seeds per plug results in fuller, more attractive plants at retail.

Direct Sowing

Total crop time can be reduced by 2 weeks by direct sowing into the final container. Sowing 3 or more seeds in the center of the container is recommended.

Using either method, cover the seed with approximately 0.5 in. (1 cm) of media to prevent seedlings from tipping over.

Temperature

Germination: 72 to 78°F (22 to 25°C)

Stage 2 to 3: 68 to 72°F (20 to 22°C)

Hold plugs: 62 to 65°F (16 to 18°C)

Seed germinates in 2 to 3 days at the recommended temperatures. Temperatures below 68°F (20°C) will significantly delay germination.

Light

Light is not required for germination.

Humidity

As long as the soil is kept evenly moist, high air humidity is not required for germination. Therefore, seed can be germinated directly on the bench.

Soil Moisture

Keep soil moisture high until radicle emergence, then reduce moisture levels after the radicle penetrates the medium. Do not allow the seedlings to wilt.

Fertilizer

At radicle emergence, apply 50 to 75 ppm N from 15-0-15. Increase to 100 to 150 ppm N as leaves develop.

Growth Regulators

See **Growing On to Finish – Growth Regulators.**

Growing On to Finish

Media

Use a well-drained, disease-free, soilless medium with a pH of 5.5 to 6.5 and a medium initial nutrient charge.

Temperature

Nights: 64 to 66°F (18 to 19°C)

Days: 68 to 85°F (20 to 30°C)

This is a warm-season crop. Higher temperatures result in faster growth and taller plants. Average temperature below 64°F (18°C) will significantly delay crop time; below 60°F (16°C) will stop plant growth.

Light

Keep light levels as high as possible. Higher light results in stronger and thicker stems and better basal branching. Young plants are green. The stem and mid-rib of the foliage first turn purple after about eight leaves have developed. The foliage coloration occurs when the plants are moved from the greenhouse outside to full sun. *Note: Because the plants will be mostly green when sold, a color picture label is recommended to help consumers understand what the plant looks like after it is planted in the garden.*

Irrigation

Maintain even moisture. Do not allow plants to wilt.

Fertilizer

Feed plants weekly with 150 to 200 ppm N in a complete fertilizer.

Growth Regulators

Plants Grown For Landscape Use

Applying Bonzi at an early stage results in bushier plants with more side shoots without significantly affecting the final plant height.

If seeds are sown directly into final containers, apply a 6 to 8 ppm Bonzi drench 4 weeks after sowing.

If using plugs, a 3 to 5 ppm Bonzi drench can be applied one week after transplanting.

Optional PGR Treatment

Apply 2 applications of Florel 500 ppm spray. First application can be done 1 week after transplant or 4 weeks after sowing. Second application can be done 10 to 14 days later. Florel treatment can also result in bushier plants with more side shoots. However, Florel is not as strong as Bonzi in height control.

Plants Grown For Mixed Container Use

If seeds are sown directly into final containers, 2 applications of a 6 to 9 ppm Bonzi drench can be used to control plant height. First application can be done 4 weeks after sowing. Repeat 10 days later.

If seeds are sown into plug trays, apply a 6 to 8 ppm Bonzi drench 1 week after transplanting into final container. Only one application is needed.

These treatments result in plants with the first flower spike approximately 2 to 2.5 ft. (60 to 75 cm) above the top of the container for **Purple Majesty** and 1.8 to 2 ft. (55 to 65 cm) for **Purple Baron** and **Jester**.

Note: Based on the PanAmerican Seed research trial at Elburn, Illinois, transplanted plugs require less PGRs and make bushier plants after PGR applications, but crop timing is 1 to 2 weeks longer than direct-sown plants.

Millet plant response to PGRs is variable with container size and different environmental conditions. We recommend that you run an in-house trial to determine the best rate or method for your conditions.

Pinching

Do not pinch.

Note

Do not allow the plants to be stunted from water stress, inadequate fertilizer or allow the plants to become rootbound. Plants which are stunted in a young stage may produce only a single, short stem and not reach their full potential.

Crop Scheduling

Sow to transplant (288-cell plug tray): 2 to 3 weeks

Container Size	Plants per Pot	Weeks from Transplant
1801s, 4 to 4.5-in. (10 to 11-cm) pot	1-2*	4-5 (green)
Gallon container (8-in./20-cm standard pot)	3*	5-6 (green)
Gallon container (8-in./20-cm standard pot)	3*	11-13** (flowering)

This crop time is based on a 68°F (20°C) daily average temperature. When plants are grown in warm temperatures, crop time can be 2 or more weeks shorter.

*For multiple-sown plugs, only one plug is needed per pot. For single-sown plugs, plant the plugs close together in the center of the pot.

**Gallon container crop time is for plants with flower spikes emerging. See Growth Regulator recommendations for producing shorter plants with flower spikes.

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When selling plants “green,” the crop time is for plants with roots established enough to hold the soil ball together and with a height of 12 to 16 in. (30 to 40 cm). Allowing plants to become excessively rootbound or to flower prior to planting in the landscape results in shorter plants.

Direct Sowing

Crop time can be reduced by two weeks if seed is direct sown into the final container. If directly sown, the seed can be easily germinated in the finished area. See **Plug Production** for sowing, temperature and soil moisture recommendations. Note: **Jester** does not perform as well in cooler temperatures.

Common Problems

Insects: Aphids

Diseases: No serious problems

Garden and Landscape Tips

- Plant in full sun for darkest purple color.
- Space plants 10 to 12 in. (25 to 30 cm) apart.
- Transplant into the garden before the plants become excessively rootbound. Rootbound plants will be shorter than non-rootbound plants.

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