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Culture Report: Lavandula stoechas LaVela Series

By Gary Vollmer

With its earliness, versatility, attractiveness to pollinators, pleasing fragrance and eye-catching blooms, this new lavender is a big hit with growers and consumers alike.



We in the industry hear it often: “The new gardener wants ‘dual-purpose plants.’” Nowadays it’s simply not enough for a flower to be pretty, but it should be fragrant, pollinator-friendly, gift-y, useful, oh, and easy to care for, too.

There’s not many crops that can boast hitting so many checkmarks on a list like that. However, lavender is one of them. Not only is lavender a bee and butterfly magnet, its fragrance has been linked to health and wellness, it makes an excellent gift, and its blooms offer craft-minded folks a multitude of DIY projects. Add to those benefits a pleasing color, garden habit and low-maintenance nature and you’ve got a winner for the next generation of gardeners.

Breeding to meet this market need, the team at Selecta One introduced the LaVela series of *L. stoechas* at last year’s Spring Trials. LaVela promises flowers four weeks earlier than its competitors. This gives growers a chance to hit early-season sales at retail. The series’ tight habit and great branching makes it ideal for producing quart and gallon containers; plus it offers a beautiful presentation with less breakage and a long shelf life. For the end user, gardeners will appreciate LaVela’s large, showy (and useful)

florets from spring through summer with vivid colors of Dark Violet and Dark Pink. To help you grow a beautiful lavender program, here are a few culture tips from Selecta One experts.

Rooting Guidelines

LaVela is supplied as unrooted cuttings and liners through select Root & Sell locations. The recommended cell size is 2mm (128, 102 and 72-cell trays) and it does not require a rooting hormone. Provide LaVela an average 14 days with mist using a well-drained media. Avoid saturation, though, reducing mist early for best results. No plant growth regulators are needed for this series due to its natural compact habit, but a pinch is recommended. Propagation takes six to seven weeks.

Table 1. Crop time.

Rooting & Finishing

Best results are achieved if media with the correct pH is used. For LaVela that is 5.8 to 6.2. Provide 150- to 200-ppm nitrogen after roots show and increase as the plant develops. Maintain light levels of 5,000-9,000 foot-candles. As for moisture, growing LaVela on the dry side is recommended. This means letting the substrate become dry (substrate color turns light brown and starts to separate from the pot edge) before watering.

In addition, LaVela plants look their best when grown cool. Day temperatures should be at 60 to 75° F with night temperatures at 38 to 60° F. A “cool morning” treatment improves plant quality, flower and foliage color and plant habit. It also helps harden the plants. Lower the temperature by 8 to 12 degrees F hours before sunrise until two to three hours after sunrise. Start treatments after plants are rooted in, well-branched, and cover the media. To avoid any delayed flowering, keep the average day temperature under a close watch and if necessary, increase night temperatures.

For the healthiest crop, watch for signs of Rosemary beetle during finishing, and scout for Pythium and Rhizoctonia, a common disease affecting lavender.

So, make sure you are reaching that “new” gardener with plants that fit their lifestyle, like new LaVela lavender. With the tips above you’ll soon be supplying them with a useful — and beautiful — new option for garden success.

[PDF: Culture Report: Lavandula stoechas LaVela Series](#)

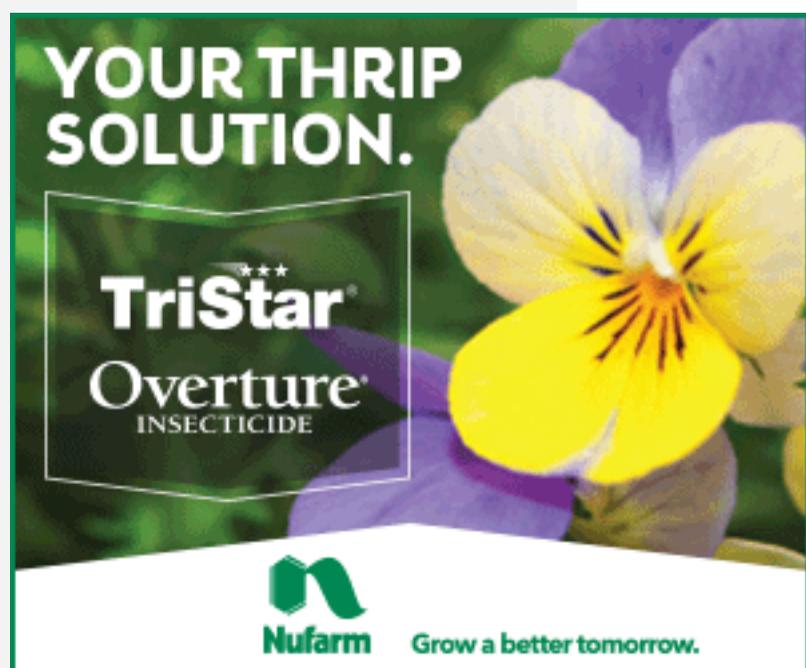
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 75 Applewood Drive, Suite A
P.O. Box 128
Sparta, MI 49345

 frontdesk@greatamericanpublish.com

 616.887.9008

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