



**CULTURAL INSTRUCTIONS**  
**HELLEBORUS®**

# Cultural Instructions

# Helleborus

## General

Helleborus or hellebore is a member of the buttercup family (*Ranunculaceae*) and is also known as the Christmas or Lenten rose. The name "Christmas rose" originated due to growers' practice of forcing the plants under glass in order to offer them to the consumer in December in full bloom. Helleborus Winterbells® is an evergreen perennial plant with a very long flowering period (7 months). It is one of a kind as regards cultivation and plant structure. The most striking part of the flower is its sepals, with their lime green colour and superb ornamental value.

## Characteristics

Early flowering, from November to May (7 months!)  
Suitable for indoors and outdoors  
Single-flowered  
Lime green flowers  
Pot size 12 – 19 cm  
1 cutting per pot (5 cm Jiffy pot)

## Availability

Available from week 3 to week 20  
Tray of 45 plants (5 cm Jiffy pot)

## Compost

Helleborus prefers a soil mix consisting of:

- 10% pumice
- 45% Irish peat
- 15% Irish coarse
- 15% peat moss (medium)
- 15% peat fibre
- 40kg clay granulate
- pH 6.0!!
- 1.0 kg PG mix 15-10-20
- 1.0 kg Lime soil with extra trace elements

## Feeding

Feed carefully, especially at the start of cultivation, with a compound fertiliser such as Kristalon Blue (19-6-20).

*Take care:* too much fertiliser results in an over-grown, elongated plant. Especially in the first few months

of cultivation, be very cautious with feeding to avoid the plant growing too tall and rugged.

## Growth regulation

The plant should form a compact rosette and must not become too leggy; as soon as it begins to stretch its growth should be controlled with the usual regulators. Alar 64 at a concentration of 40 g to 10 litres together with 5 ml of Tilt (note: only approved against leaf spot) works very well. This is only needed a few times at the start of cultivation! Excessive regulation restricts rosette growth, with potentially adverse effects on flowering.

## Topping

Helleborus doesn't need to be topped.

## Diseases/Pests

### Diseases

Helleborus can be susceptible to root diseases. This can be controlled with Rhizolex, Ridomil Gold, Aaterra or Previcur for example. Leaf spot is another common disease. Spray the foliage regularly with a product such as Daconil, Topsin or Rovral. This helps to control leaf spot and rot and is particularly important after July. Note: Daconil leaves a residue on the leaf.

### Pests

Helleborus is particularly susceptible to aphids. Other potential pests are whitefly and leafminer. Thrips is not known to cause leaf damage but *can* damage the flower in winter.

## Outdoor cultivation

Outdoor cultivation is preferable to glasshouse production, possibly in a shade hall. Strong sun can sometimes scorch the young foliage. Outdoor cultivation produces a more compact, stocky plant but damage is a possibility in the winter if there is a hard frost, hail and/or snow. The plants are better off in a frost-free glasshouse in the winter, but in any case they should be well protected from winter weather.

## Glasshouse cultivation

Helleborus can also be grown in a whitewashed glasshouse. An unwhitewashed glasshouse gives a greater risk of root problems due to high temperatures, particularly in the summer. However, plants in the glasshouse do have a tendency to become leggy. Well-timed growth regulation is vital to keep the plant compact.

We hope this short cultivation guide has contributed in a small way to the success of your Helleborus Winterbells® production. Note that all information given is based on trial plantings conducted in the Netherlands. Although this information has been compiled with the greatest care, it does not constitute any form of guarantee: it is intended solely as a general guideline.

For more detailed information, please visit our website: [www.hilverdakooij.nl](http://www.hilverdakooij.nl)  
Or you can of course contact one of our sales representatives.

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