

How to Apply PGR to the Invincibelle® Spirit II Hydrangea

Spring Meadow Nursery, Inc., May 2016

Applying PGR to the Invincibelle Spirit II Hydrangea can be a relatively simple process, if you follow these steps.

Spray for even wet coverage, until leaves begin to drip the solution. Plan on several foliar applications, using 10-20 day intervals.

We recommend using B-Nine (such as Daminozide) and starting with 5,000 – 7,000 ppm. If a stronger rate is required, use a tax mix with Cycocell (e.g. Chloromequat) at 500-1,500 ppm.

Important Note: Read the labels before you apply any chemicals.

Observe the apical meristems of the plants and see if they are newest leaves are laying flat, if they are, the chemical is still active. If they start to point upward, or if they are beginning to pull out of it, then you need to plan for another application – though not necessarily right away.

Ultimately, the growing environment will determine the number of applications necessary. It will depend on temperature, light, and fertility. Plan for a minimum of three applications –with the possibility of another before finishing.

We estimate the total application process taking about 12 weeks. The estimated cost per application is about \$0.05 per plant.

When to Apply PGR

It's best to spray when the sun intensity is low. Cloudy days are best, but if the forecast isn't cooperating, an early morning, or even late evening application will work. The sun can scorch the leaves while the chemical is drying.

Remember: The longer it takes for the leaves to dry after applying, the more effective the application will be.

What to Avoid

Late applications will reduce the flower size.

It's best to avoid drenching. B-Nine is not effective as a drench and drenching Cycocel will cause phytotoxicity. Drenching with Bonzi, Topflor, or Sumagic has growth regulation effects – however it is not uniform and the results overall are not as desirable compared to B-nine/ccc spray.

If they have reached a specified height already, you will struggle to get a quality plant with a late growth regulation application. However, you can at least tone it, or slow it down, but the plant may still be irregular in shape.

We also don't recommend trimming the hydrangea plants before spraying. However, you want to do your first application when they are smaller and build the plant as it grows.

If the plants are floppy or finished blooming, they can be cut back and they will re-bloom the same year. Just repeat the process. PGRs don't seem to persist very much after the plant is cut back and re-grown. After two weeks of being cut back and the new shoots are once again 2 inches tall, they are ready for their first PGR application.

Sprayers and PSI Settings

Use whichever sprayer and nozzle-type that is convenient. We've used hand pump sprayers for small groups, and 50 gallon power sprayers for larger groups – and the results were not significantly different.

Bottom line on sprayers: As long as you get good coverage, you should have a uniform result.

Arranging the Containers

We recommend spaced containers – with the more space the better.

A 2' center spacing with a 3 gallon should be adequate. You can however spray them pot tight and space them out later when the canopies begin to touch.

What to Expect For Growth

The amount of growth will depend on the grower and/or the height specifications for shipping. We prefer a 10-20 day spray schedule rather than a 1-3 inch growth-spray prerogative.

(Especially since PGRs don't technically stop or slow the rate of growth, but rather the expansion or elongation of the plant cells)

Tips on Forcing Growth

To force growth, a 60-90 day dormancy period is required. We also recommend a temperature 70° F. Although you can grow hydrangeas in relatively low light-levels, you can achieve tighter, more compact plants, as well as additional blooms, by using more sun.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS PROCESS?

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