

**“HOW IT IS DONE” — THE COMPANY THAT PRODUCED THE
BEST RESULTS IN RESPONSE TO THE G.B. & I. IPPS
QUESTIONNAIRE**

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The following is an outline of the methods we use in cutting preparation and in insertion of the cuttings. We have no special facilities available for this operation. In common with other nurseries, benches have been accommodated in existing buildings and the operation has had to fit into the existing layout.

To complete the I.P.P.S. questionnaire we recorded cuttings prepared and inserted during the third week in June, as shown in Table 1. These were all softwood cuttings of deciduous shrubs such as *Buddleia*, *Chaenomeles*, *Fuchsia*, etc. Twenty percent were inserted in paper pots, the remainder directly in trays.

Table 1. A record of cutting propagation during the third week of June, 1982.

Date	Number of workers	Number of hours worked	Total hours	Total cuttings prepared and inserted
14/6	8	4	32	13,200
15/6	8	6	48	22,300
16/6	8	6	48	22,300
17/6	8	6	48	20,100
18/6	7	6	42	18,100
			<u>218</u>	<u>96,000</u>
Less 9¾ hours for 10 min breaks:			<u>9¾</u>	
			208¼	

Approximately 461 cuttings were prepared and inserted per worker-hour.

Staff: All staff involved in cutting preparation are females and work as a team of eight. The team is made up as follows:

4 — Grading and trimming cuttings and applying rooting hormone via a soaked sponge.

1 — Inserting cuttings.

1 — Grading and trimming cuttings or inserting as required.

1 — Labelling, recording, transporting trays of cuttings to the propagation houses.

1 — Preparing and filling trays with pre-mixed compost, transporting trays of cuttings to the propagation houses. Can be used to insert cuttings if required.

The team has been working together for at least ten years, and are highly skilled. They organize their own work and interchange if necessary. The work is carried out on a piece-work basis at a current rate of 25½p or 28½p per tray — each tray contains 72 cuttings. The differential in rate allows for the relative difficulties encountered among species. Farm labour in East Anglia has a tradition of working on a piecework basis.

Operation:

1. Cutting material is gathered from a stockbed and placed in a cold store where it is held for at least 24 hrs but not more than 48 hrs.

2. Cutting material is taken from cold store and placed on cutting preparation table.

3. Cuttings are sorted, graded, trimmed, and dipped in a hormone solution then placed in trays.

4. Trays of prepared cuttings are passed to person responsible for insertion.

5. Compost is prepared in an Adelphi mixer and conveyed to end of potting bench.

6. Trays are filled and taken to cutting preparation area on a hand trolley.

7. Cuttings are inserted and trays of cuttings replaced on trolley.

8. Trays are labelled with cultivar name and date of insertion. Numbers are recorded in stock book.

9. Finished trays are transported to the propagation house.

HOW CAN IPPS HELP IN FUTURE PROPAGATION TRAINING?

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I will concentrate on two areas: one is in continuation of the immediately preceding sessions on work rates and standards, and the other is on the future relationship of IPPS to the provision of industrial training in the nursery stock and related interest sectors of horticulture.

To ensure that we all have the same understanding, my definition of “work rates” and “standard rates” are: