

Kong™ Coleus

These Large-Leafed Plants Make Quite An Impression!

- The **Kong** series features extremely large leaves and unique patterns on well-branched plants that grow tall in the garden.
- Plant with other shade-loving plants for striking flowerbeds.
- **Kong** coleus series is excellent for landscape and large container plantings.
- This variety is available as seed or plugs. Call your local distributor or PanAmerican Seed at 800-231-4868 today.

Solenostemon scutellarioides
Approximate Seed Count:

Plug Production

Stage 1 – Time of radicle emergence
(4 to 5 days)

- Plug tray size 288 cell or larger.
- Soil temperature 72 to 75°F (22 to 24°C).
- Keep media evenly moist, but not saturated.
- Cover with vermiculite.
- Light is not necessary for germination until radicle emergence.
- Soil pH should be 5.5 to 5.8 and soluble salts (EC) less than 0.75 mmhos/cm (2:1 extraction).
- Coleus is very sensitive to high salts – particularly high ammonium – during germination.
- Keep ammonium levels less than 10 ppm.

Stage 2 – Stem and cotyledon emergence
(10 days)

- Soil temperature 72 to 75°F (22 to 24°C).
- Reduce moisture levels once radicle emergence occurs. Allow the soil to dry out slightly before watering for best germination and rooting.
- Keep soil pH at 5.5 to 6.2 and an EC less than 1.0 mmhos/cm.
- Keep ammonium levels less than 10 ppm.
- Begin fertilizing with 50 to 75 ppm N from 14-0-14 or a calcium/potassium nitrate feed once cotyledons are fully expanded.
- Alternate feed with clear water. Feed between 2 to 3 clear irrigation.
- Irrigate early in the day so foliage is dry by nightfall to prevent diseases.

Stage 3 – Growth and development of true leaves
(14 to 21 days)

- Soil temperature 68 to 70°F (20 to 21°C).
- Allow the soil to dry thoroughly between irrigations but avoid excessive wilting to promote root growth and control shoot growth.
- Maintain soil pH at 5.5 to 5.8 and an EC less than 1.0 mmhos/cm.
- Increase feed to 100 to 150 ppm N from 20-10-20, alternating with 14-0-14 or other calcium/potassium nitrate fertilizer.
- Fertilize every 2 to 3 irrigations.
- Slower-growing colors may need more frequent feeding to get desired height.
- Use temperature differential (DIF) whenever possible, especially the first 2 hours after sunrise, to control plant height.
- A-Rest, B-Nine and Bonzi are effective on coleus, but PGRs are generally not needed. Always follow label recommendations.

Stage 4 – Plants ready for transplanting or shipping
(7 days)

- Soil temperature 60 to 62°F (16 to 17°C).
- Allow soil to dry thoroughly between irrigations.
- Maintain soil pH at 5.5 to 5.8 and an EC less than 0.75 mmhos/cm.
- Fertilize with 14-0-14 or calcium/potassium nitrate feed at 100 to 150 N as needed.

Growing On To Finish Temperature

- Night: 62 to 65°F (17 to 18°C)
- Day: 70 to 75°F (21 to 24°C)

Light

Provide shade if over 5,000 f.c. (50,000 Lux).

Media

Use a well-drained, disease-free soil-less medium with a medium initial nutrient charge and a pH of 5.5 to 6.0.

Fertilization

- Fertilize every other week with 15-0-15 alternating with 20-10-20 at 150 to 200 ppm nitrogen.
- Maintain medium electrical conductivity around 1.0 mmhos/cm (using 1:2 extraction).

■ Coleus are low to moderate feeders. Excessive feed can lead to dull coloration and decreased vigor.

Pinching

■ Pinching is not needed. It will result in smaller leaves and delay crop time.

Controlling Height

Kong coleus has very short internodes. Because of the large leaves, the plants tend to get too wide and need more space before they get too tall. Growth regulators are generally not needed.

Post Production Care

Temperature

- Night: 62 to 65°F (17 to 18°C)
- Day: 70 to 75°F (21 to 24°C)
- Optimal conditions may be difficult to maintain, especially if plants are displayed outside.
- Using a negative DIF will help keep the plants short and of high quality.

Light

- **Kong** will tolerate shade to partial sun. Shady locations are recommended for retail display.
- Plants will get leaf burn under high light intensity.

Crop Schedule & Uses

(Crop Schedule In Weeks)

Sow to transplant (288 plugs)	5-6 weeks
Transplant to Sale 1801 premium pack 5 to 6 in. pot Gallon pot	3-4 weeks 5-6 weeks 6-7 weeks

Note: Growers should use the information presented here as a starting point. Crop times will vary depending on the climate, location, time of year and greenhouse environmental conditions.

Garden Tips

- Full shade is recommended for best performance. Leaves may burn if planted in full sun.
- Space approximately 12 in. on center in the garden. Plants will grow 18 to 20 in. tall.
- When using in combination planters, **Kong** performs best when planted near the outside of the container.

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PanAmerican Seed Co.
622 Town Road, West Chicago, Illinois, USA 60185-2698
630 231-1400 Fax: 630 231-3609 www.panamseed.com

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