



We create chemistry

Case Study: Bates Sons & Daughters

A KALEIDOSCOPE OF CALADIUMS

How Pageant® Intrinsic® Brand Fungicide and Trinity® Fungicide from BASF help Bates Sons & Daughters achieve consistent, high-quality caladium crops in a demanding environment.

Bates Sons & Daughters in Lake Placid, Florida, is one of only eight remaining caladium farms in the world and is the only one run solely by women. The original Bates and Sons was started by Terri Bates' grandfather in 1944 with a 5-gallon bucket of mixed bulbs. After the farm was passed down to Terri's father, it was renamed Bates Sons & Daughters. Three of his four daughters work in the business — Terri and Sheri Bates own the business and Heidi Bates is the office manager.

The Bates Sons & Daughters farm is located in the “Caladium Capital of the World” and specializes in larger tuber sizes of plants. All the caladiums on the farm are grown 100% outdoors and then processed in greenhouses. “We always offer between 40 and 50 varieties depending on how many new ones we’re releasing. We only have 100 acres, so we have a limited amount of space,” Terri says.

While the location of the farm is prime for caladiums to thrive, that doesn't mean growing them is easy. “We're right between tropical and subtropical, so there are hurricanes and massive amounts of rain and whole periods of drought and disease issues that can come in,” Terri says. With only eight caladium farms left, it's crucial to provide an environment where these crops can thrive, which means closely monitoring anything that could cause unnecessary stress to the plant. Weather patterns, soil pH levels and plant disease are all top of mind when working toward a successful caladium harvest.

The biggest culprit for the Bates Sons & Daughters farm has been pythium. “It's a root rot disease, and you're growing in a very hot and humid, moist environment. It's a perfect playground for pythium,” Terri says. To help control the disease, the farm leans on Pageant Intrinsic brand fungicide. “The goal with Pageant is to stop the plants from being stressed — it's preventative,” Terri says. “A couple of weeks after we plant, I apply the first application and I've pretty much knocked pythium

out of my scenario.” That first year of using Pageant Intrinsic brand fungicide, the farm saw a 50-70% increase in white caladium varieties alone in size and number.

Fusarium is another common threat. To protect their plants, Terri and her team began using Trinity fungicide. “I tried it for the first time last year. Again, it did the same thing. I went from a certain amount of disease pressure to a half or a quarter of that,” says Terri. Bates Sons & Daughters has had a long-standing partnership with BASF. “I'm just so impressed that they're on top of everything they do. I have a very unique crop. It's not like there's a whole lot of caladium research being done, and BASF is always there to answer our questions.”

Bates Sons & Daughters have been working with BASF for more than 20 years, using products like Pageant and Trinity to help their caladiums stay healthier and more vibrant, and to help keep their crucial operation running smoothly. “They're taller; they're more colorful; there are no significant weed issues going on — they just look better,” Terri says.

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— Terri Bates,
Co-Owner, Bates Sons & Daughters