Ornamental Potted Plants: Production under Organic Fertilization.

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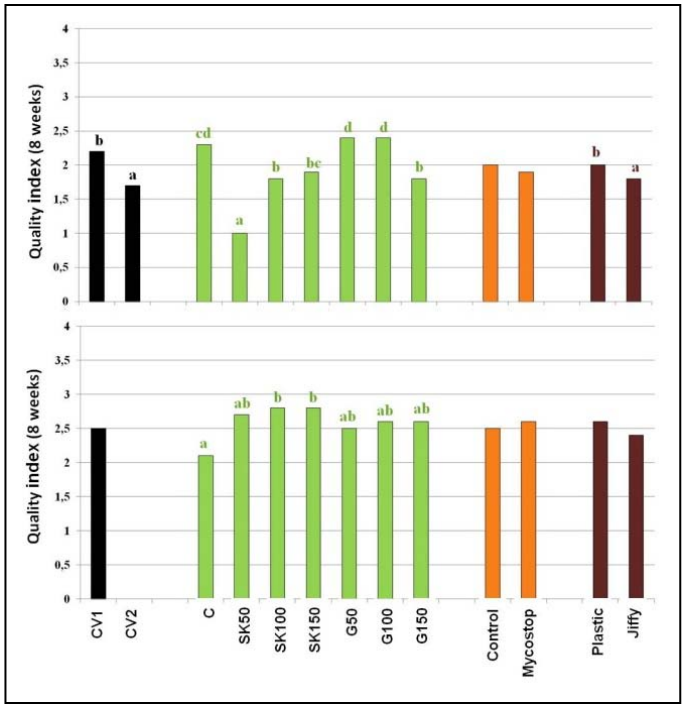
Background :
The ability to grow ornamental crops organically would be an asset for greenhouse growers to meet with the increasing demand of consumers for environmentally friendly products. Ornamental plant quality is directly related to fertilization, especially in organic crops, and must be taken into consideration when developing a production system.

Project Overview:
Seven solid fertilizations were tested: Nutricote (conventional), a mixture of shrimp meal and kelp meal (50, 100 and 150% equivalent of the input from the solid conventional fertilizer) and Gaia Green (50, 100 and 150% equivalent of the input from the solid conventional fertilizer). Plants were inoculated or not with the biofungicide *Streptomyces griseoviridis* (Mycostop®). Two types of containers (10-cm) were also tested: Standard plastic pots and Jiffy peat pots.



Results: Treatment with Mycostop® did not affect quality index (QI) in either plant types. Growth containers only affected QI of impatiens plants.

For that same species, CV2 had a lower QI than for CV1. Impatiens plants that received fertilization SK150, G50 and G100 had a similar QI than conventional plants. By 8 weeks, a high mortality rate was observed for petunias CV 2 whereas for CV1, QI was in general higher for plants that received organic fertilizers compared to conventional.

Conclusions:
Overall, a strong cultivar effect was observed for all species and the effects were also highly species dependent. Nevertheless, both petunias and impatiens plants with a similar quality than conventional could be obtained using organic fertilization.

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