



THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES

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June 7, 1991

Richard K. Irwin
Ecologel U.S.A.
5001 Rio Vista Ave.
Tampa, FL 33634-5321

Dear Rick:

Terril and I have recently completed some very positive research with Hydretain on geraniums. The plants were grown in 4-inch pots and were treated with Hydretain at the stage at which they would be sold. The Hydretain rates were dilutions of 1:5, 1:10, 1:15 and 1:20, and these were compared to a water only set of plants. The water only plants wilted in 5 days, whereas the hydretain treated plants went 9 to 11 days before wilting. Not only did they last longer, but the treated plants were using water at a slower rate than were the water only plants. The geraniums were under heavy shade in the greenhouse, which would be a high humidity environment similar to most garden center sales areas.

The effect obtained on the geraniums was dramatic; a 25% increase in longevity would be considered significant. We have never seen another water management product that came close to doubling the time a plant could go without water. With results like this and assuming that no unforeseen negative effects develop, hydretain will be considered an important product by geranium growers and will be widely used. Geraniums could be a good item for the early marketing of hydretain. In terms of numbers of pots produced, they are the number one greenhouse-produced crop. In 1989, there were 98.1 million pots (mostly 4-inch) and 3.6 million bedding plant flats produced in the U.S. Probably 75% of all growers are growing geraniums. After they learn how to use hydretain and see its benefits on geraniums, they are very likely to use it on other crops as these are identified.

Sincerely,

James E. Barrett
Professor

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