

## BLOOMING FERTILIZER FOR FUCHSIAS

We here in Crescent City are discovering that a good quality blooming fertilizer helps our fuchsias to better bloom to their maximum potential. This spring I was told by Michael at Fuchsia Galore that he used "ROMEO" Soluble Plant Food on the fuchsias in his nursery. It is available online (<https://www.romeodirect.com/>).

He indicated he fertilized using the following program. In the spring when fuchsias start to grow he starts off using "ROMEO" All Purpose Garden Fertilizer (24-14-14) which is high in nitrogen and stimulates green growth. In his area (Watsonville) he uses this till the first of May. The first of May he then switches to "ROMEO" Blooming Fertilizer (15-30-15) which stimulates the formation of flowering buds. He uses the blooming fertilizer for the entire summer and fall till it is time for the fuchsias to prepare for winter.

As an experiment using his formula, I used two of his starts and his formula. The rest of the club used a 20-20-20 fertilizer we have recommended for years and a few others. At our mid-June meeting these two plants were covered with buds in one case and in full bloom with the second plant. None of the other club plants were nearly as advanced toward the bloom and in fact many plants had not yet started to bud.

The only problem encountered was the May first start date. In our area we need the plants to hit peak bloom the first week of August for our fair and plant sale. Starting the bloom fertilizer the first of June would have worked a lot better we now know.

The message is clear, if you want a super heavy bloom from your plants, start using bloom fertilizer two months before a show or sale, or the first of May if you wish an extended blooming period through the summer and fall.

You should note the directions which call for the application of fertilizer every three weeks for best results.

Donald Helsel (6-20-2015)  
Crescent City Fuchsia Society