

2025 EASTER LILY SCHEDULE

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Weeks Before Easter	Date	Forcing method	
		Case-Cooled	Pot-Cooled (CTF)
25	Oct. 27	<i>This schedule designed to produce 16" lilies that bloom 1-week before Easter. See notes on next page & article for details. Programming starts immediately. Prep for lily arrival. Test soil & inspect bulbs.</i>	
23	Nov 10	Start bulb programming as soon as bulbs arrive but no later than 23 weeks before Easter.	
20	Dec 1	---	<i>Pot and allow roots to grow at 60-62°F for 3 weeks</i>
17	Dec. 22	<i>Cool at 40-45°F for 6 weeks</i>	<i>Cool at 40-45°F for 6 weeks</i>
14	Jan 12	<i>For case cooled lilies, pot no later than 17 weeks before Easter</i>	---
13	Jan 19	Force in greenhouse at 60-62°F in pot.	
12	Jan 26	Shoots emerging ~ 0.5" tall & buds beginning to set.	Start fertilizing & keep moist.
11	Feb 2		For pot cooled lilies, begin greenhouse forcing no later than week 14. Maintain at 60-62°F in pot.
10	Feb 9	1.25-1.5" tall. Keep lilies moist & use fungicide drench as needed. Bud initiation coincides with stem root development.	
9	Feb 16	2.25-2.5" tall. Run 60-62°F day/night during bud initiation. Check for bud set and begin leaf counting as soon as bud set is complete.	
8	Feb 23	3-3.5" tall. Apply growth regulator as needed. Maintain temperature below 65°F until bud initiation is done.	
7	Mar 2	4-4.5" tall. Begin leaf counting and graphical tracking as soon as bud set is complete. Use temperature to control the rate of lily development & DIF to control height. ADT 65-70°F. Check for aphids & root problems.	
6	Mar 9	4.75-5.5" tall. Space lilies to avoid yellow leaves & stretching. Soil test & if leaf scorch is evident, use calcium nitrate (or 15-0-15) for balance of schedule otherwise maintain complete nutrition. Repeat leaf count on late batches of lilies.	
5	Mar 16	5.5-6.5" tall. Adjust temperatures as needed.	
4	Mar 23	6.5-7.5" tall. 42 days to sale. Buds can be felt. If buds are visible on early planting run 60°F until finish. Monitor for aphids.	
3	Mar 30	7.25-8.5" tall. Buds ~0.75". Lilies are about half final height. Buds should be visible no later than 30 days prior to sale. Grade for uniformity as buds become visible. Apply Fascination or Fresco if leaf yellowing is evident, or if cooling is anticipated.	
2	Apr 6	Lilies 9-10.25" tall. Buds 1.25" long.	
1	Apr 13	Lilies 10.5-12" tall. Buds 1.75-2" some bending down.	
0	Apr 20	Lilies 12-13.5" tall. Buds 2.75".	
		Lilies 13.5-15.25" tall. Buds 4-4.25" long; some turning whitish. Stop fertilizing & apply clear water once before sale. Cool lilies at 35-45°F to hold. Apply Fascination or Fresco prior to cold storage.	
		Final lily height 15-17" tall. Buds 6-6.25" long & at or near bloom. Shade lilies immediately after removing from storage.	
		Easter Sunday 2025	

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NOTES & COMMENTS ON THE 2025 EASTER LILY SCHEDULE

Easter 2025 outlook: Easter falls on a **late date** in 2025 (**April 20**). This schedule has more than enough time to complete the full 23-week program without cutting corners. In fact, most growers will be challenged with holding the crop back from finishing too early.

Pot-cooled bulbs are normally potted & held for 3 weeks at 60-62°F before the six weeks of bulb cooling (at 40-45°F) begins. The bulbs then require 14 weeks of greenhouse forcing. This entire process requires 23 weeks from initial potting to Easter. This same process is used for both naturally cooled or CTF bulbs.

Case-cooled bulbs require 6 weeks of cooling followed by 17 weeks of greenhouse forcing to flower in time for Easter. Be sure that commercially case-cooled bulbs arrive & are planted by Dec. 22nd 2024. If you cool your own bulbs, start as soon as the bulbs arrive but not later than Nov 10th, 2024. (23 weeks before Easter).

Insurance lighting: Insurance lighting WILL NOT BE NEEDED this season. Everyone should be able to complete the full 6 weeks (1000 hours) of bulb cooling before the designated greenhouse forcing date.

Fertigation: Start fertilizing using a 15-0-15 formulation when lilies emerge and continue to within 7 days of sale. If phosphorus was not added to the medium, 20-10-20 can be used on an alternating basis with a 15-0-15. Fertilizer rates should range from 200-250 ppm. Do not allow medium EC to exceed 3-3.5 mS/cm based on a Saturated Media Extract. Stop fertilizing just before sale. Provide one clear watering before shipping Lilies, this will reduce salt levels and maximize shelf life. Do not withhold water or fertilizer to slow development but avoid over watering (i.e. water too frequently) or root rot problems may occur.

Lily timing: Monitor lily development each week (use leaf counting to accurately gauge crop timing). Adjust temperature to keep plants on schedule. Use average daily temperatures of 70-75°F to speed development, use temperatures of 55-60°F to slow development.

Bud initiation: Run 60-62°F day & night during bud initiation. **The final critical date is March 9th. This marks 6 weeks before Easter.** To maintain a normal schedule, you should be at visible bud by this date.

Decrease Leaf Yellowing & Delay Flower Senescence: To prevent early-season leaf yellowing (7 to 10 days before visible bud) & mid-season leaf yellowing (7 to 10 days after visible bud) spray Fascination or Fresco at 10/10 ppm. Apply only to lower leaves & cover thoroughly. To prevent late-season leaf yellowing and post-harvest flower senescence, thoroughly cover all foliage & buds with spray at 100/100 ppm to thoroughly cover all foliage & buds. Apply when buds are 3 to 3 ½" long BUT NOT MORE than 14 days before shipping or cooling. Protects leaves from yellowing for up to 14 days. Note: Avoid direct contact of spray to immature leaves during early- & mid-season applications or increased stem stretch will result.

Disease and pest control: Before planting, clean bulbs of debris removing any damaged scales, or especially scales that show evidence of infection. Once potted, root rots associated with Rhizoctonia, Fusarium, and Pythium are a concern. Drench immediately with Banrot, or a broad-spectrum tank mix of compatible fungicides. You can also treat to control these diseases separately by selecting from the fungicides specifically registered for Rhizoctonia, Fusarium and Pythium control on lily. Materials registered for Rhizoctonia stem and root rot and/or Fusarium root rot include 3336, OHP 6672, Chipco 26019, Heritage, Pageant Intrinsic, Postiva, Spirato, Mural (Terraclor for Rhizoctonia). Materials registered for controlling Pythium include Alude, Banol, Subdue Maxx (beware of using mefenoxam exclusively because of widespread fungicide resistance issues with this active ingredient), Segway O, and Truban/Banrot. Check with manufacturers regarding compatibility when tank mixing fungicides. Re-apply fungicides later in the crop as needed, check labels for guidance. Preventative biological fungicides (RootShield, Rootshield Plus, Cease, Actinovate, Mycostop, Companion, LALSTOP, and Triathlon BA) may be applied at planting for disease suppression and to enhance root growth. Check with company or product label information for safe time intervals between application of biological agents and chemical fungicides. Note: Registration of pesticides varies by state so consult and follow labels for registered use. To avoid any potential phytotoxicity or residue problems, spot test before widespread use. No discrimination intended for products not listed.

Aphids, fungus gnats and bulb mites are a major concern. Many chemicals are listed for aphid control, including: Safari, Flagship, Altus, Tristar, Enstar AQ, Kontos, Endeavor, Aria, Mainspring GNL, Pradia, Rycar, Ventigra and XXpire. Fungus gnats can be controlled with some of these same chemicals as well as Citation, Distance, Adept, Azatin, Pylon, insect parasitic nematodes (Nemays, NemaShield, Entonem) and Gnatrol WDG. Bulb mites, Rhizoglyphus robini, represent one of the more troublesome insect pests on lilies and effective management requires an integrated approach. Bulb mites are a secondary pest commonly associated with decay caused by fungus gnat damage and soil-borne fungal pathogens. Avoid planting decayed bulbs. Note: Registration of pesticides varies by state so consult and follow labels for registered use. To avoid any potential phytotoxicity or residue problems, spot test before widespread use. No discrimination intended for products not listed.

Controlling Lily Height: Monitor lily height regularly during forcing. If height exceeds the target size, run negative DIF or use a growth retardant such as A-Rest, or Sumagic (thorough coverage needed) to slow stem elongation. If height is less than the target size, run positive DIF or use a gibberellin PRG such as Fascination or Fresco to increase stem elongation. Split applications of PGRs provide the best results. You can apply any of the PGRs at ½ to ¼ the normal rate (or even less) and use multiple applications as needed. Reduce the concentrations of Sumagic used when combined with DIF. Use DIF, or cool morning DIP, to control lily height. Equal day/night temperatures, high night/low day temperatures or a cool morning temperature dip will produce a DIF effect and keep lilies short.

Lily storage: Lilies can be stored for up to 14 days in the dark at 35-45°F when buds turn white but before they open. Spray for Botrytis control prior to moving lilies to cold storage. Fungicides labeled for Botrytis control include Affirm, Disarm, and Postiva. Always follow label directions and test fungicides on a small group of lilies for damage to or residue on lily buds before using on the entire crop. Water Easter lilies thoroughly before starting cold storage. After removing from the cooler, place lilies in a shady location to avoid excessive wilting. Note: Registration of pesticides varies by state so consult and follow labels for registered use. To avoid any potential phytotoxicity or residue problems, spot test before widespread use. No discrimination intended for products not listed.

Please read the pesticide label prior to use. All agrichemical/pesticides listed are registered for suggested uses in accordance with federal and Connecticut state laws and regulations as of the date of printing. Trade names used herein are for convenience only; no endorsement of products is intended, nor is criticism of unnamed products implied.

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