



SUMAGIC[®] ADVISOR

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Sumagic[®] PGR: A 'Useful Option' for Persian Shield

By Brandy E. Craig

Persian shield (*Strobilanthes dyerianus*) is quickly catching the attention of growers and customers throughout the nation with its exotic quilted leaves and rich, marbled purple and green iridescent markings. A favorite in Victorian times, this unique tropical annual plant is quickly on its way to becoming one of the hottest plants today.

However, Persian shield's vigorous growth in popularity is similar to the plant's vigorous growing patterns. *Strobilanthes* can reach up to five feet tall and more than 40 centimeters in diameter. Because the plant can quickly outgrow its marketability, growers have struggled to find a consistent way to significantly slow down and reduce overall growth of the plant.

Sumagic Trials Prove Effective

Brian Whipker, floriculture extension and research specialist at North Carolina State University, recently looked at a couple of effective options using Sumagic[®] Plant Growth Regulator (PGR), marketed by Valent Professional Products. In his trials, Whipker found that both liner soaks and foliar sprays of *Sumagic* reduced plant height and diameter and were able to provide adequate growth control.

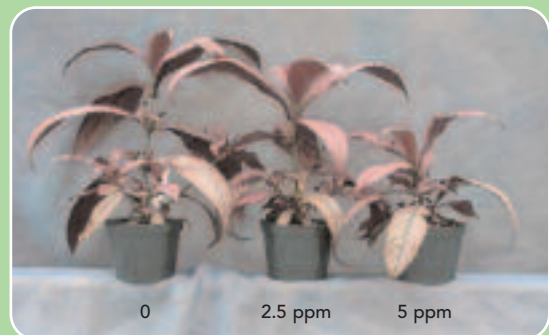
"*Strobilanthes* is an aggressively growing plant and requires assertive techniques to produce the compact plants popular right now," he said. "Our trials showed that both liner soak and foliar spray *Sumagic* applications are useful

options to control excessive growth. Plus, *Sumagic* is a pretty potent PGR and is effective on tropical annuals like *strobilanthes* at lower rates."

Liner Soak Trials

In his liner soak trials, Whipker thoroughly irrigated the plugs one hour prior to treating. The root ball of the plugs were soaked for 2 minutes. He found that plant height was significantly shorter and diameter was smaller with all concentrations but that 2 parts per million (ppm) of *Sumagic* provided the most adequate control.

The photo shows the height control provided six weeks after a *Sumagic* foliar spray application of 0 (control), 2.5 and 5 ppm on Persian shield (*Strobilanthes dyerianus*). Dr. Brian Whipker of North Carolina State University conducted the trials and recommends 5 to 7 ppm of *Sumagic* for *strobilanthes* grown under his growing conditions.



“With 2 ppm of *Sumagic*, plants were 50 percent shorter in height and 28 percent smaller in diameter than the non-treated control,” Whipker said. “A low rate of 1 to 2 ppm would provide adequate control under North Carolina conditions and is a very economical option for growers wanting to capitalize on the popularity of the plant.”

Because strobilanthes is such a vigorously growing plant, Whipker said Southern growers may want to use a slightly higher concentration. Under cooler climates, growers should start out with a lower rate of 0.5 to 1 ppm. Alternatively, growers may choose to use a liner soak at a lower concentration to initially control excessive stretch and then follow up with a *Sumagic* foliar spray if further growth control is required.

Foliar Spray Trials

Foliar spray applications of *Sumagic* also did a good job controlling plant growth in Whipker’s trials. The best foliar spray results were seen with *Sumagic* rates of 5 to 7.5 ppm under North Carolina conditions. At 5 ppm, the plant’s height was reduced by more than 30 percent, and its diameter was 26 percent smaller. Like with the liner soaks, Whipker recommends slightly higher rates for Southern growers and slightly lower rates for Northern growers.

“Plant height was significantly shorter for all foliar spray concentrations of *Sumagic*,” he said. “Concentrations more than 10 ppm gave excessive amounts of control, but the 5 to 7.5 ppm applications provided good control in the mid-Atlantic region.”

Control Without Compromising Crop Safety

In his trials, Whipker said he did not observe phytotoxicity with any of the concentrations used. He said it is important that growth is controlled in the plant because it can become leggy if it is not treated properly.

“*Sumagic* provided the control we needed to keep Persian shield an acceptable size,” Whipker said. “Phytotoxicity did not occur and plant height and diameter was significantly reduced at an economically feasible rate of *Sumagic*.”

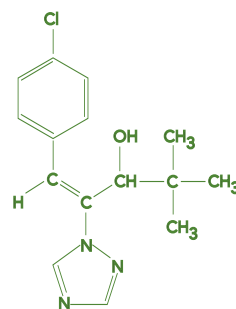
For more information about Valent’s Professional Products, Valent U.S.A. Corporation or our full product line, call 800-89-VALENT (898-2536), or visit the Valent Professional Products Web site at www.valentpro.com.

SUMAGIC RATE TABLE FOR PERSIAN SHIELD (*Strobilanthes dyerianus*)

CONTRIBUTED BY: Brian Whipker | North Carolina State University

APPLICATION	STATE	SUMAGIC RATE* (PPM)	SUMAGIC RATE* (FL. OZ./GAL.)
Liner Soak	North Carolina	1–2	0.26–0.52
Foliar Spray	North Carolina	5–7	1.3–1.95

*Rates listed are for growing conditions in North Carolina. To determine optimal *Sumagic* rates for your growing conditions, conduct trials on a small number of plants using the lowest recommended rates. Northern growers may find lower concentrations more suitable for cooler climates.



Got *Sumagic* questions? Consult the *Sumagic* Hotline at www.asksumagic.com or 866-GROWPGR (476-9747).