

# ORCHID FOCUS

One of the enduring myths about orchids is that they do not require feeding. It is certainly true that orchids, particularly the epiphytes, have evolved in conditions where mineral nutrients are in limited supply and consequently they require smaller amounts than other plants. Orchids are nonetheless still green plants and like all green plants they rely on essential minerals and energy from the sun to convert those minerals into sugars and starches to produce shoots, leaves and blooms.

In order to achieve optimum growth and health, orchids require the correct nutrition supplied at the correct time. Orchids have highly specialized requirements and will perform best with a nutritional programme designed specifically for them. Over the years, numerous orchid specific fertilizers have appeared in the marketplace, all promising outstanding results. Very few are able to compete with the results driven **ORCHID FOCUS**.

As the name suggests, ORCHID FOCUS is specifically formulated to meet the exacting needs of most orchids, taking into account the nutritional specifics that are common across the different genera.

## **WHY CHOOSE ORCHID FOCUS?**

**ORCHID FOCUS** contains all 12 essential minerals – *calcium, nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium, magnesium, sulphur, iron, manganese, zinc, copper, boron and molybdenum* - carefully blended into an easily absorbed liquid solution and balanced to suit the requirements of most orchids. The revolutionary Single Pack Technology (SPT) required in blending all 12 minerals into a completely soluble and concentrated liquid form was first pioneered by Growth Technology 15 years ago. The technology remains elusive for mist fertilizer manufacturers and this is reflected in the absence of vital minerals in their solutions.

**ORCHID FOCUS** is manufactured using only high grade raw materials and chelated trace elements to ensure effortless absorption by the plant. Importantly, it is guaranteed not to contain sodium chloride and the potentially harmful and ineffective Urea. Urea is used by some manufacturers as an inexpensive source of nitrogen, an element essential for growth in orchids and all plants. Orchids are commonly cultivated in inert media such as bark or perlite. Urea is highly unsuitable for cultivation any plants in inert media quite simply because these media lack the soil bacteria and micro-organisms required to convert urea into a form accessible to the plant. Without the necessary conversion into a useable form, urea can become quite toxic very quickly. Nitrate is the ideal form of nitrogen for orchid cultivation. At the correct levels, it can deliver strong healthy growth over extended periods. **ORCHID FOCUS** contains 100% of its nitrogen in the nitrate form.

## ***SLOW RELEASE FERTILIZERS VS LIQUID NUTRIENT SOLUTIONS.***

Home gardeners are spoilt for choice when it comes to slow release fertilizers with numerous brands available on garden centre shelves. The nutrients are typically encapsulated in a polymeric coating. The underlying premise for these granular fertilizers is that nutrients are gradually and consistently made available to the plant via the breakdown of their polymeric coating. They are an attractive proposition for many plant enthusiasts in that they only require application anywhere from 2 to 6 months per year. The benefits to the plants are largely dependent on the quantity used, the quality of the release mechanism, temperature and water. The greatest problem with these types of fertilizers is consistency. Despite good intentions and claims to the contrary, the nutrients are rarely released in a consistent manner. Which minerals, and the quantities available to the plant are largely affected by temperature and watering habits.

Liquid nutrient solutions require more frequent application but their effectiveness and nutritional benefits are not compromised in the same way as slow release fertilisers. With every application of ORCHID FOCUS, the full profile of minerals is available to the plant in a complete and balanced form

## ***FEEDING YOUR ORCHIDS***

With a good quality liquid nutrient like **ORCHID FOCUS** in hand, there are few general rules that apply to most orchids and should be observed when it comes to feeding. A well-established rule of thumb amongst orchid enthusiasts is to fertilize ***“weekly, weakly”***. There will be dormant periods of growth for certain orchids where no feeding is required, however, during active periods of growth (spring and summer in particular), your orchid will need regular feeding for best results. Over feeding needs to be avoided as this can lead to root and leaf burn and ultimately inhibit flowering. Do not exceed the recommended dilution rates. ORCHID FOCUS should not be used at a dilution rate beyond 10 ml per litre of water for e.g. actively growing Cymbidiums which tend to be the heaviest feeders. Most other orchids will happily flourish at 5 ml per litre.

***Smaller doses on a regular basis typically result in more consistent growth and healthier plants compared to stronger solutions supplied infrequently. Remember, the ideal is ‘WEEKLY, WEAKLY’. Flush orchid pots once a month with clean and pure water to eliminate any build-up of minerals.***

## ***FOLIAR FEEDING***

Although not as efficient as delivering nutrition via the roots, foliar feeding can have a very noticeable and positive effect on orchids. Foliar feeding should be administered at half strength (2.5 – 5ml per litre) and via a good quality spray bottle allowing for a fine mist to be delivered. Mist foliage (including the underside of the leaf) but avoid the blooms. Spray early in the morning to avoid heat damage from the sun.

