

Cultural Information – Mussaenda
(mew-say-EN-duh)

<u>Light:</u>	Full sun; a southern exposure.
<u>Temperature:</u>	Maintain indoor temperatures above 60°. They like it warm, especially in the winter.
<u>Humidity:</u>	Best to maintain humidity above 50% although they will tolerate lower levels without harm for short periods of time.
<u>Watering:</u>	Bring the soil to a state of visual dryness between waterings and the thoroughly saturate the soil until a little water trickles from the bottom of the pot. Growing in a clay pot will help ensure a healthy root system.
<u>Fertilizer:</u>	Moderate to heavy feeders during the summer months. Feed with a balanced fertilizer like a 15-15-15 or lower at ½ tsp per gallon of water at regular intervals through the active growing season. Discontinue in fall and winter and resume feeding once new growth has begun in the spring.
<u>Pruning:</u>	Prune in late winter or spring as new growth begins. Plants can be headed back fairly hard at this time. They can be pruned during the summer to manage shape and form but cutting back new growth will inhibit flowering.
<u>Insects and Disease:</u>	Mealy bugs and spider mite can be troubling from time to time. They are susceptible to root diseases especially during the winter when growth has stopped.
<u>Comments</u>	Mussaenda are spectacular summer flowering plants that have long lasting blooms and a vigorous nature. The most challenging part in their culture is bringing them through the winter as they go into a dormancy in the north and at this time they are highly susceptible to root diseases. Growth stops and they can drop foliage. It is important to maintain warm temperatures and be careful to not over water, erring on the dry side. Growing in a clay pot at this time of year will help maintain a healthy root system. For flowering, the more sun the better.