

## CROCUS

### BOTANICAL NAME

*Crocus* spp. (KRO-kus)

### DESCRIPTION

*Crocuses* are corms that produce single, goblet-shaped blossoms that taper into tubular shapes at the base. The flowers can be up to 3 inches long.

### COLORS

*Crocuses* are most often seen in hues of yellow, mauve, blue, lavender, purple or white. They are often striped.

### CONSUMER LIFE

Individual flowers will last from two to five days, but plants can last from seven to 12 days. The lasting quality will vary greatly by cultivar as well as the temperature and light levels in which the plants are displayed. *Crocuses* usually are discarded when blossoming is finished because they can't be forced indoors a second time; however, the corms can be planted outdoors if desired.

### availability

*Crocuses* usually are available in the late winter through spring, but there also are fall-blooming varieties.

### in-store and consumer care

**LIGHT** Bright, diffused light is best for indoors. Full sun or filtered sunlight is best if *Crocuses* are displayed outside.

**WATER** Keep the soil evenly moist. Severe drying will cause leaf yellowing and drop and also will delay flower development.

**TEMPERATURE** Cool areas (55 F to 65 F) are best for displaying *Crocuses*. They can be stored in floral coolers at 33 F to 35 F for two to three days.

**HUMIDITY** Keep humidity at moderate levels for *Crocuses*.

**SOIL** *Crocuses* do best in a light, well-drained potting soil.



**CROCUS TOMASINIANUS**  
'RUBY GIANT'

### quality checklist

**BLOOMS** Market *Crocuses* when they are just sprouting.

**PESTS** *Crocus* blooms attract thrips and aphids. Control them with a solution of insecticidal soap.



**C. VERNUS** 'REMEMBRANCE'  
DUTCH CROCUS

### challenge

**ETHYLENE SENSITIVITY** Some varieties of *Crocuses* show signs of ethylene sensitivity. Make sure your plants have been treated with an anti-ethylene agent at the grower level or during transportation.



**C. SATIVUS**  
SAFFRON CROCUS

### fun facts

**MEANING** "*Crocus*" is Greek for saffron. The stigmas of *C. sativus* (saffron *Crocus*) are used to flavor food and as a dye.

**FAMILY** *Crocuses* are members of the *Iridaceae* (*Iris* family). Common relatives include *Iris*, *Ixia* (African corn lily), *Freesia* and *Gladiolus*.

**ORIGINS** *Crocuses* are native to areas from the Mediterranean region to Southwest Asia.



**CROCUS**

### of note

**CAUTION** The corms can be toxic to some people and other animals if eaten, but these flowering plants are listed as an allergy-safe pollen-producing plant.

**BRILLIANT DISPLAYS** These plants are the perfect choice for spring displays. They stand well alone or grouped with other spring-flowering and foliage plants. **sfr**

Some information provided by:  
The Chain of Life Network®, [www.chainoflifenet.org](http://www.chainoflifenet.org)  
University of Saskatchewan Garden Line,  
[www.gardenline.usask.ca/misc/crocus.html](http://www.gardenline.usask.ca/misc/crocus.html)  
Colorado State Cooperative Extension,  
[www.ext.colostate.edu/ptlk/1009.html](http://www.ext.colostate.edu/ptlk/1009.html)  
SAF's Flower & Plant Care manual

Reach "Blooming Plant of the Month" writer Steven W. Brown, AIFD, at [sbfloral@aol.com](mailto:sbfloral@aol.com) or (415) 239-3140.

Photos courtesy of the Netherlands Flower Bulb Information Center

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