

CHAPTER 15

VEGETATIVE PROPAGATION

Leaf cuttings.

Leaf cuttings may be used to propagate all the rhizomatous begonias, including the Rexes, whilst a few of the other types (ie the cane-likes) may propagate from leaves, but this is not certain and is not recommended as a general rule. Use as follows:

a. small leaves up to about 5 cms (2 inches) in length:

i) start with a healthy, undamaged adult leaf and shorten the petiole to about

2.5 cms (1 inch). (fig 1)

ii) dibble a hole in a suitable container of cutting medium and insert the leaf at a 45° angle so that the leaf blade lies on the surface of the mix. Firm in and water

sparingly. (fig 2)

iii) a callus will form over the cut end of the petiole which will then produce a root system followed by one or more plantlets. This process may take anywhere from 8 to 12 weeks. (fig 3)

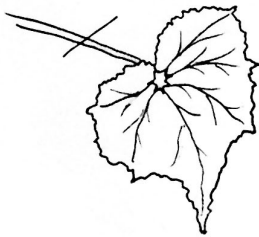


Figure 1



Figure 2

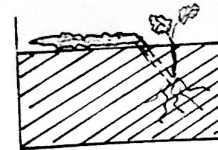


Figure 3

b. large leaves 5 cms (2 inches) or more in width and length can be used in two ways:

i) by cutting through the main veins in several places on the underside of the leaf and then lying it back down on the surface of the cutting medium, ensuring that the leaf remains in contact with it. This may entail the use of suitable weights such as small pebbles to keep the leaf flat. Root systems and new plantlets will eventually form from some of the cuts.