

Thursday, January 22, 2004

We first constructed Cravo greenhouse structures in 1996, building 17,280 s.q. ft. of facility. We needed area to grow cool crops which we had traditionally started inside poly greenhouses and moved outside to harden off. This usually led to freezing the plants, not to mention wind damage being a major problem as well.

Cravo structures have met our need culturally and economically. We grow a full line of annuals beginning March 1 with cool crop annuals, progressing toward warm season annuals as the season continues. Crops tend to be hardy with excellent leaf tone and vigor. We have saved on both PR's and fungicide application. Ivy geranium baskets are particularly nice with no odema problems.

Worker comfort is one of the big positive benefits of our Cravo structures. Natural ventilation and sunlight and lack of fan noise provide a great environment for our staff. There is no problem getting folks to leave double poly to work "outside" in the Cravo structure.

Our experience with heat costs are as follows. Keep in mind that we do not use our structure until March 1 and progressively open bays to production for six weeks, reaching capacity by April 15. We do not utilize a heat retention curtain. Our heating is LP gas forced air with HAF for circulation.

Year	Gals	\$/Gal	\$	\$/sq. ft.
2003	4905	.91	4474	.25
2002	4179	.78	3285	.19
2001	4322	.85	3709	.21
2000	3993	.88	3541	.20
1999	5881	.67	3963	.23
1998	4502	.63	2835	.16
1997	4423	.73	3243	.19

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Light quality and quantity are similar to our double poly greenhouse structures. Crops grown in the Cravo structure are probably about a week behind crops grown in the double poly houses, but quality and hardiness are superior. Plants are shorter and fuller, ship well and are better suited to the outdoor environment that most garden centers display them in.

We are very satisfied with our investment in Cravo greenhouse structures. We are now completing a 21,600 sq. ft. addition to our existing range and look forward to having it in production for the spring 2004 season.

Harry H. Crosby