



## Does the Initial Charge Last?

Most mix manufacturers put an initial charge of media wetting agent in a mix to ensure that the mix wets up the first time water is applied. Depending on conditions, this charge can last up to 5 weeks from planting. It is important to understand that this initial charge of media wetting agent is just that – a beginning charge that is intended to get the mix wetted and the plant in it off to a good, healthy start.

### *What happens to the media wetting agent over time?*

Media wetting agents are made of carbon chains of varying lengths and configurations, but they all have one thing in common – they biodegrade over time. Microorganisms in the substrate feed off of carbon sources in the medium. Because the surfactants are made of carbon chains, the microorganisms feed off of them as well, destroying their performance in the process. While it does limit the life of the surfactant charge, biodegradation in general is a natural and beneficial process, breaking down dead plant material and other organic matter into nutrients that the plant can use.

### *Should the media wetting agent be replaced?*

This all depends on how long the growing cycle is and whether you have to guarantee your plants in the retail environment. If your growing cycle is longer than 4 weeks, re-applying a media wetting agent like Aqua-Gro L ensures that your plant continues to benefit throughout the production cycle. Depending on your operation's capabilities, replacement of the initial charge can be made in one large application, or as a series of smaller applications over time.

Reapplication can benefit you beyond the production cycle as well. Applying a modest amount of Aqua-Gro L media wetting agent just prior to shipping can help the

plants survive the stresses of the retail environment. Most retail environments don't have good watering habits, either over- or under-watering, which can make plant survival a challenge. Adding a media wetting agent helps to stabilize the water content in the substrate. It helps retain moisture to prevent the mix from drying out too quickly, while still allowing excess water to drain away so that over-watered plants don't become waterlogged. Fewer returns and less shrinkage are the result.

Media wetting agents like Aqua-Gro L help you control the interaction between the substrate and the water. Using them to manage your resources more effectively will lead to healthier plants, shorter growing cycles and less cost overall.

