

Cleaning the greenhouse



Before cleaning

Grodan takes its position in respect to sustainable cultivation seriously. Before cleaning the greenhouse please ensure that appropriate steps have been taken to minimise the emission of cleaning agents to the environment. For more information on emission and environmental policy where it applies locally we advise that you contact your local Environmental Officer.

If the crop is infected with a disease, such as Verticillium, Bacterial Canker or an aggressive virus, seek specialist advice prior to cleaning. A robust hygiene protocol specific to your nursery is required in order to plan an affective clean up strategy.



Cleaning

- 1** Empty out the entire greenhouse: remove all plant material, slabs and floor polythene (if used). Sensitive equipment such as the WCM should be protected and remove the sensor to the slabs. Due to risk of pest and disease do not compost infected plant debris nearby the greenhouse.
- 2** If slabs are not placed in gutters correct the soil profile if it is uneven. This will improve irrigation management and reduce risk of Pythium infection caused by pools of surface water. Be sure to create slight drain channels of 0.1% slope toward the end of the greenhouse.
- 3** If required now is the best time to re-skin plastic greenhouses.
- 4** Before disinfecting the greenhouse all surfaces need to be clean and free from organic matter. Check with your dealer for a disinfectant most suited to your needs. Treat the furthest bay from the door first and prevent re-contamination by clearly marking the cleaned areas.

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Glasshouses need to be washed to remove dirt accumulated over the season in order to enable maximum light penetration for the new crop. Also wash the greenhouse structure on the inside. In case of multi-year mypex floor coverings, wash the floor with an appropriate disinfectant.

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Work backwards towards the greenhouse entrance and prevent re-entry to cleaned areas. Use clean water applied as a high pressure wash to which detergent or acid can be added (for example per-acetic acid, hydrofluoric acid or oxalic acid). For outside use an acid concentration of 10%, for inside use a concentration of 1%. As with all chemicals use appropriate protective clothing when applying them and read the manufacturers label before use. If you are in any doubt contact your dealer for the best course of action.

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After 24 hours wash again with clean water to prevent the glass becoming cloudy.

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The irrigation system also needs to be cleaned. See factsheet 'Cleaning and checking the irrigation system'.





Preparing for the new crop

1 After cleaning and if required, new plastic floor covering can be laid. Multi-year mypex floor coverings should be swept clean of plant debris and washed with an appropriate disinfectant. Make sure the polythene does not get contaminated: lay it onto dry soil and use two teams (one to remain on the bare soil and one on the plastic). Make sure that edges overlap sufficiently to prevent soil from uncovering later in the season and also be aware of contamination of the concrete floor with soil debris by people walking back and forth.

2 Re-clean and sterilize the concrete floor once the polythene is laid

3 Lay-out and space the new slabs. See factsheet Handling and placing of the slabs.



Considerations

Do not forget before the new crop arrives to undertake some general house keeping. For example:

- a** Clean and disinfect grading and harvesting equipment
- b** Ensure drain water systems are clean
- c** Adjust the tension arms supporting hanging gutters to enable free flow of drain water
- d** Calibrate CO₂ meters, temperature sensors and the light meter.