'Silver Bay' *Aglaonema*

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Aglaonema cultivars are important ornamental foliage plants because they tolerate the low light and humidity conditions encountered under interior conditions. Most commercially grown *Aglaonema* are selections from material that was collected in the wild and asexually propagated. To use the genetic diversity present in this genus, *Aglaonema* were included in the foliage plant breeding program at the Central Florida Research and Education Center-Apopka. 'Silver Bay' *Aglaonema* is being released from that program.

Origin and description

Aglaonema 'Silver Bay' was selected from the F₁ progeny of a cross between *Aglaonema* 'Manila Whirl' x *A. nitidum* 'Ernest's Favorite'. 'Silver Bay' is a medium-sized plant with a compact growth habit suitable for production in 15 to 25-cm-diameter (1.6- to 8.8-liter) pots. Mature leaves may reach 30 cm in length and 10 cm in width. Leaves are highlighted by a central band of silvery-gray variegation that covers about half to two-thirds of the width of the leaf (Fig. 1). Darker-gray asymmetric islands extend beyond the primary central pattern into the outer leaf margin to generate a narrow uneven border of gray and green.

Performance trials

Growth characteristics of 'Silver Bay' *Aglaonema* were determined in three trials using rooted tip cuttings (10 to 15 cm long) potted in 15-cm (1.6-liter) pots containing Vergro Container Mix (Verlite Co., Tampa, Fla.). Dates of the trials were 15 Mar. 1988 to 21 Sept. 1988 (Trial I), 4 Dec. 1989 to 4

Sept. 1990 (Trial II), and 3 Mar. 1987 to 7 Mar. 1988 (Trial III). Plants were grown in a shaded greenhouse under 125 or 250 $\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{m}^{-2}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$ maximum light intensity with an air minimum of 18C. Fertilizer was tested at 2.2, 4.4, or 6.6 g 19N-2.6P-10K Osmocote (Sierra Chemical, Milpitas, Calif.) per pot every 3 months.

Results from the trials were similar, so only results from Trial I are presented, when 'Silver Bay' liners reached marketable size in 6 months. Fertilizer level and light intensity had no effect on plant height (45 to 47 cm), leaf length (27 to 28 cm), or leaf width (10 cm). Plants had significantly more shoots, better foliage quality, and better overall plant grade at the higher fertilizer levels. There were more shoots at the higher light level but better foliage color at the lower light level; final plant grade was unaffected by light intensity (Table 1).

Plants were placed in interior rooms with temperatures between 21 and 25C and light intensity of 15 $\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{m}^{-2}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$ from cool-white fluorescent lamps 12 h-day⁻¹. Plants were of good to excellent quality after 3 months.

Table 1. Evaluation of light intensity and fertilizer rate (Osmocote 19N-3P-10K) on growth of *Aglaonema* 'Silver Bay' liners grown in 15-cm containers. This trial was initiated 15 Mar. 1988 and data were taken 6 months later, on 21 Sept. 1988.

Fertilizer (g/pot per 3 months)	Total shoots (no.)	Foliage color grade ^a	Final plant grade ^b
2.2	4.2	2.8	3.1
4.4	4.8	4.2	4.6
6.6	5.7	4.5	4.9
Significance			
Linear	*	*	*
Quadratic	*	*	*
Light level ($\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{m}^{-2}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$)			
125	4.4	4.3	4.3
250	5.4	3.3	4.1
Significance			
Linear	*	*	NS

^aVisual rating, where 1 = poor color; 3 = acceptable color; and 5 = excellent color.

^bVisual rating, where 1 = poor quality (not salable); 3 = acceptable quality (salable); and 5 = excellent quality.

NS, *Not significant or significant at $\alpha = 0.05$, respectively.

Availability

'Silver Bay' *Aglaonema* has been released through the Florida Foundation Seed Producers to Florida nurseries licensed for propagation and distribution of this hybrid. Inquiries regarding participating propagators may be obtained by writing the Florida Foundation Seed Producers, P.O. Box 309, Greenwood, FL 32443.

Fig. 1. A mature plant of 'Silver Bay' *Aglaonema*.

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