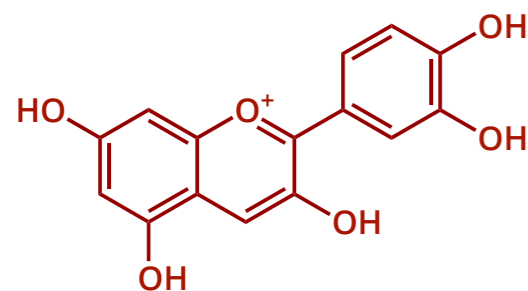


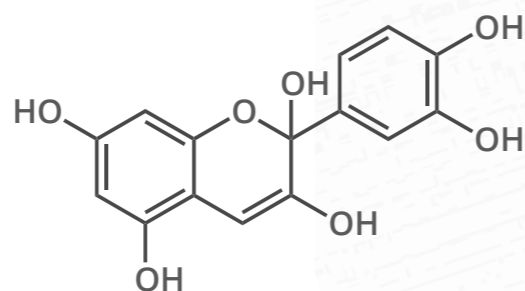
THE CHEMISTRY OF POINSETTIA PLANTS

Poinsettia Plants & pH

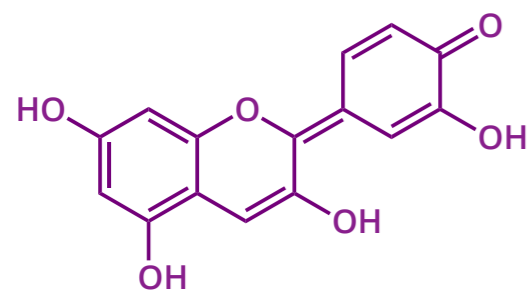
The poinsettia plant can be used to make an indicator solution to test for pH. This is because the red leaves contain anthocyanin pigments, the structure of which subtly changes at varying pH. Red cabbage contains similar pigments, and as such can be also be used. Some possible structures & colours are shown below.



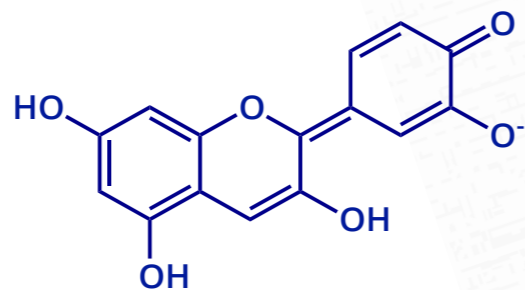
RED (pH < 3)



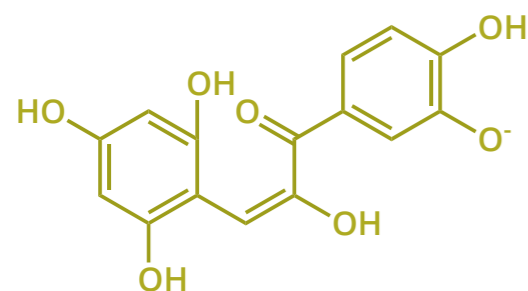
COLOURLESS (pH 3 - 4)



VIOLET (pH 4 - 7)



BLUE (pH 7 - 8)



YELLOW-GREEN (pH > 8)



Poisonous Poinsettias?

- Poinsettia plants have a false reputation for being poisonous. Whilst eating a lot of the leaves could cause stomach pain and vomiting, this is unlikely due to their awful taste!