

Title Postharvest biology and technology for new floricultural crops
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Abstract

Although a large number of taxa are already used commercially as cut and potted flowers and foliage, they represent a tiny fraction of the species that have potential value as ornamentals, and the market is dominated by relatively few major crops. The importance of adequate postharvest performance to the successful introduction of a novel floricultural crop cannot be understated. The most successful 'new' crops that have been introduced in recent years are characterized by outstanding postharvest life as well as ease of production. In considering a new species as a target for introduction into commerce, a range of factors affecting postharvest performance need to be considered, including sensitivity to temperature, performance in low light, sensitivity to ethylene, and ultimate display life. Some wild species that may not appear to have good postharvest potential might be considered for introduction in the light of new technologies that can, for example, inhibit the effects of ethylene or delay leaf yellowing. Others may become candidates as we develop molecular tools to modify the postharvest performance of beautiful but short-lived species.