Title The effect of bulb size and bulb temperature storage treatments on flowering of *Iris xiphium*

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Abstract

Iris xiphium is a native plant to the Western Mediterranean, among which some selection from wild forms and hybrids are used for year-round cut flower production. The influence of bulb size and bulb temperature treatments on sprouting, earliness, yield and quality parameters of *I. xiphium* was studied. Four bulb sizes (>2 g, 2-4 g, 4-6 g, >6 g) and two bulb temperature treatments 20°C (control) and 9°C for 7 weeks were tested. Bulbs were planted in an unheated greenhouse in the Campo de Cartagena (Mediterranean coast of SE Spain). Sprouting was not affected by bulb size and temperature. Bulbs stored at 9°C flowered 18 days before bulbs stored at 20°C. The length of the flowering period increased by 15 days after higher storage at 20°C compared to 9°C. The number of flowering stems was higher in the largest bulb size and in bulbs stored at 9°C. In general, it was shown that the quality and vegetative parameters improved with increased bulb size but not by increased temperature treatments, but flowering features (the number of days to onset on flowering and length of harvest period) and yield were improved by low temperature treatment.