

Title Effects of flower preservatives on the vase life of gerbera (*Gerbera jamesonii* H.Bolus) flowers

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Abstract

Gerberas are grown for garden decoration and also as cut flowers for interior decoration and for making bouquets. These easy to grow, light weight flowers with long (50-70 cms) and slender flower stalk, exquisite petal arrangements with different shades of attractive colours and moderate vase life, all in a combined way renders gerbera flowers to a prominent position amongst the elite group of top ten cut flowers of the international flower markets. Three cultivars of gerbera viz. Dana Ellen, Rosalin and Sun Way were subjected to twelve different treatment combinations, six of which were used as pulse treatment and the rest as holding solution. Pulsing treatment with AgNO_3 1000 ppm + Sucrose 4% + Distilled water showed significant beneficial effect in extending the vase life of all the three cultivars of gerbera. Treatment combination AgNO_3 100 ppm + Sucrose 4% + Distilled water as holding solution was envisaged as the second best in extending the vase life of cut flowers. SunWay registered the maximum vase life followed by Dana Ellen and Rosalin. A strong correlation existed between flower uptake and extension of vase life. Overall, pulsing treatments showed slightly better results on extension of vase life as compared to holding treatments.