Postharvest performance of forced cut lilacs as affected by hot water scalding and preservatives

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Abstract

Due to forcing cut flowers of lilac (*Syringa vulgaris* L.) are available on the market for 6 months. The trials were undertaken to improve postharvest performance of cut stems of the purple lilac cultivar 'Andenken an Ludwig Spaeth' forced in spring. Effect of stem length and hot water scalding were evaluated. Chrysal Professional 2™ and a standard preservative (composed of 8-HQC and sucrose) used as holding solutions were compared to water. Hot water scalding proved harmful, shortening flower longevity. No clear relationship was observed between vase life and stem length. Both preservative solutions prolonged flower vase life increasing as well floret diameter and water uptake by stems. In wilting control florets the contents of soluble sugars decreased but their accumulation occurred in florets of lilacs held in the standard preservative solution, and such changes were observed both in the lower and upper part of the inflorescence.