

Title Storage temperature affects the quality of cut flowers from the Asteraceae.
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Abstract

The respiration of cut flowers of gerbera (*Gerbera jamesonii* H. Bolus ex Hook.f. 'Vesuvio') and sunflower (*Helianthus annuus* L.) increased exponentially with increasing storage temperature. Poststorage vase life and negatively gravitropic bending of the neck of the flowers were both strongly affected by simulated transport at higher temperatures. Vase life and stem bending after dry storage showed highly significant linear relationships (negative and positive, respectively) with the rate of respiration during storage. The data indicate the importance of maintaining temperatures close to the freezing point during commercial handling and transport of these important commercial cut-flower crops for maximum vase life.