

Abstract:

Cut flowers are among the most important horticultural produce in Kenya for domestic and export markets. Other than carnations, roses, statice, mollucela etc., bulbous plants such as liatris, arabicum, tuberosa, ornithogalum, orchids, gladiolus and alstroemeria contribute a small percentage of cut flower production in Kenya. Some of these bulbous plants are temperate in origin and require low temperature treatment for dormancy release, flower induction and floral stalk elongation. Due to lack of outdoor chilling temperatures in the tropics the use of cool chambers (3–5°C) is practised to chill propagative materials such as gladiolus and liatris corms. The other bulbous plants only require forcing practices such as irrigation, fertilization, and pest control to produce good quality cut flowers. The use of growth regulators in flower-bulb forcing has been minimal due to the high cost of the chemicals.