

**IDENTIFICATION OF SUITABLE GROWING
MEDIUM FOR DIFFERENT *Gerbera jamesonii*
CULTIVARS AND EXTENDING THE VASE LIFE
BY LOW COST PRESERVATIVES**

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ABSTRACT

Gerbera jamesonii is an ornamental plant from the family Asteraceae which is very widely used as a decorative garden plant or as a cut flower. Good potting medium can increase the performance of flowering plant. Therefore experiment one was to identify of the best growing medium for different *Gerbera jamesonii* cultivars.

The current study was carried out at Henarathgoda Botanic Gardens at Gampaha. seven gerbera cultivars (Carambole, Pink fantasy, Kilimanjaro, Ruby red, Sazon, Winter Queen and Dana Ellen) were selected with five potting media (treatment 1-top soil 1: sand $\frac{1}{2}$: coir dust $\frac{1}{2}$ / treatment 2-coir dust 2: sand 1/ treatment 3-coir dust 2: partially burn rice husk 1/ treatment 4-red soil 1: dry cow dung 1: compost 1/ treatment 5-coir dust only). Plants were transplanted in black plastic pots which have 6.5 inches of diameter and 8 inches of height with used of steam sterilized growing media. Data collection was done at one time per two weeks interval period. Number of new leaves, number of new flowers and leaf length were recorded.

Most of the cultivars (carambole, ruby red, kilimanjaro, winter queen, pink fantasy & dana ellen) were performed well in medium (T₄) that consist reddish brown soil 1: dry cow dung 1: Compost 1. Medium one (top soil 1: sand $\frac{1}{2}$: coir dust $\frac{1}{2}$) also resulted higher growth performances in cultivar ruby red, kilimanjaro, winter queen, sazon & pink fantasy.

Experiment two was laid with four treatments with two replicates for each treatment for extending vast life of *Gerbera jamesonii* by low cost preservatives. Four treatments are respectively Clorox 0.5% (5ml/l of Distilled water), Lime juice 2.0% (20ml/l of Distilled water), Vinegar 0.8% (8ml/l of Distilled water) and tap water (control).

Four cultivars of *Gerbera jamesonii* were selected and those were Winter Queen, Dana Ellen, Black Jack and Rosaline. Cut flowers were collected from Bandarawela area and experiment carried out at Henarathgoda Botnic Gardens, Gampaha. Experiment two was failed due to several factors.

Key Words- *Gerbera jamesonii*, potting media, cultivars, vase life