# IMPROVEMENT OF THE GROWTH PERFORMANCES OF GERBERA (*Gerbera jamesonii)* THROUGH AGRONOMIC PRACTICES

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# ABSTRACT

Gerbera *(Gerbera jamesoni)* is one of the top ten most common commercial cut flowers in the world according to global floriculture trends. In Sri Lankan export floriculture industry Gerbera plant has contributed in earning foreign exchange over the last few years. Therefore, this study was aimed to improve growth performances of Gerbera through modifying agronomic practices for the period of ten weeks from transplanting. Hence, potting media and irrigation schedule were modified and evaluated for the improvements of growth performances of Gerbera. The research was conducted as two experiments. In the first experiment, effect of three different media (Media A: Coir dust only, Media B: Coir dust: half burn paddy husk: sand= 7:2:1, Media C: Coir dust: paddy husk: sand: black soil: cow dung= 4:2:1: 2:1) were tested under two different irrigation schedules (schedule X: 1 to 4 weeks,100 ml; 5 to 7 weeks,120ml; 8 to 10 weeks,135 ml in every two days, schedule Y:1 to 4 weeks,50 ml; 5 to 7 weeks,60 ml; 8 to 10 weeks,70 ml in every alternate day) as pot experiment in Completely Randomized Design with ten replicates. Combined treatment of Media A with irrigation schedule of X was observed as the best as it reported the significantly highest plant average leaf height (37.8 cm), plant average diameter (46.4 cm) and percentage of flowering (46%).The second experiment was conducted to understand the differences in germination percentage of seeds which were subjected to storage condition and without storage and found the highest seed germination percentage (78.48%) in seeds which were subjected to storage conditions. Adopting to above practices in Gerbera cultivation will be benefited in quality flower production.



Key words: Agronomic practices, Germination percentage, Irrigation schedule, Potting mixture