

## **Present Situation of Floriculture Industry in Southern Sri Lanka**

K.G. Ketipearachchi and D.L.C.K. Fonseka\*

*Department of Crop Science, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka*

The floriculture industry is considered as a popular agribusiness for decades in Sri Lanka. The Southern province was identified as a possible area for expansion of the industry. But lack of adequate literature and information on the present situation about the floriculture industry hinders the expansion. Therefore, this study was designed to identify the present situation of the floriculture industry in Southern Sri Lanka. Data were collected from the randomly selected 70 growers based on a pre-tested questionnaire survey conducted during August – November 2019 by visiting exhibitions and monthly meetings of flower grower societies in Galle (Galle, Nagoda divisional secretariat divisions), Matara (Matara, Akuressa, Weligama divisional secretariat divisions) and Hambantota districts (Ambalantota, Sooriyawewa Beliatta divisional secretariat divisions) belongs to the Southern Province. According to the analysed data, almost all (99%) the growers were female, educated up to O/Ls (54%) and the majority (73%) of them were more than the age of 45 years. Most (54%) of growers have earned monthly income more than Rs.10,000. Most (79%) of them had established shade houses while all growers are cultivating in the open field. This industry is involved in 43% of unemployed women and 57% of women after retirement from their occupations. Products are sold directly to consumers or in the exhibitions by 49% of the growers while a smaller number of products sold to a wholesaler and retailers. This business is run mainly (95%) by using family labour. Flowering plants (Anthurium, Orchids, Roses, Bogunvellia, Aquatic flowering plants, Jasmine, etc) and foliage plants (Dracaena, Agloneama, Calathea, Philodendron, Cordyline, Maranta, etc) are sold as pot plants and high demand can be seen for new varieties. Planting materials are collected from local farms, exhibitions, or exporters. Chemical or organic fertilizer combinations are applied by the majority of growers (59%). Chemicals are mainly (81%) used for disease and pest control. Almost all the growers had been stated that there is sufficient demand for the floriculture industry in southern Sri Lanka (100%, p-value 0.05). Therefore, this study revealed that floriculture is a popular industry among people, further studies should be conducted to find potentials and constraints for expansion of the industry in the region.

*Keywords:* Floriculture, Growers, Present, Southern, Sri Lanka