

Abstract

Gerbera is a popular ornamental plant commercially grown throughout the world for its attractive flowers. Among the cut flowers, gerbera ranks fifth in the international market. It is known for its long lasting quality, but problems like stem bending, bendneck and stem breaking are commonly noticed. These reduce the sale value of the flowers. Postharvest handling operations would add value to the product assuring better returns to the growers. Hence, experiments were undertaken on gerbera cut flowers in order to enhance the vase life of gerbera cut flowers cvs. Kabana and Sangria. Cultivar Kabana responded well to pulsing and was superior in maintaining better water balance and fresh weight during the vase life period. Pulsing gerbera varieties with sucrose at 15 and 20 percent showed favourable results with respect to water uptake, water loss, water balance, fresh weight and vase life. Pulsed gerbera flowers recorded a vase life of 11 to 12 days when compared to control flowers (9 days). Pulsing of cut gerbera in solutions having 200 ppm CoSO_4 resulted in improved water uptake, water balance, and fresh weight which ultimately led to increased vase life (16 days) in both cvs. Sangria and Kabana. The flowers pulsed for four hours recorded favourable results than other durations of pulsing. Among the interaction effects of pulsing with different concentrations and pulsing durations, the flowers pulsed with 200 ppm CoSO_4 , irrespective of duration of pulsing, recorded enhanced vase life of 16 days in both the cultivars. In general, pulsing of gerbera flowers with 15 or 20 percent sucrose and 200 ppm CoSO_4 for four hours will help in extending the vase life of cut gerbera flowers.