

GERBERA CULTIVATION IN POLYHOUSE

Introduction

Gerbera cultivation can be very profitably—for farmers or Goa who have small land holdings but Ä'0d market for this high value flower. Transportation by trains and buses is possible to reach Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai and other nearby markets within 12-36 hrs. Flowers fetch price of R s. 40-50/ ten spikes during New year season, Festivals, Christmas, Valentine Day celebrations etc. Flowers fetch very good price in marriage seasons also. Growers can avail finance facilities under various schemes of state and central Govts so that venture becomes very remunerative.

Gerbera (*Gerbera jamesonii*) is a herb and its flowers are like Daisy. Flower stalks are long, thin and leaf-less. It flowers year-round in warm, humid conditions. It can also be grown as a field crop in open air on raised beds, as a greenhouse plant under controlled conditions (protected cultivation) and as a potted plant.

The uses of gerbera are many. It is gown as a garden plant for beautification or on flower beds, borders and in rock garden. Flower arrangements can be made in vase. Use in flower bouquet is quite common. Gerberas are propagated by seeds , cuttings Of clumps with buds, and from tissue-cultured plants.

Varieties

There are several varieties. Many varieties are released by private companies also. Some of the varieties are: Dalma (white), Dana Ellen (yellow), Rosalin (pink), Savannah (red), Cream Clementine (cream white) and Maron Clemetine (orange). It is recommended that tissue cultured plants of good varieties from reputed companies may be procured.

VISIT - <https://eagrovision.com/gerbera-cultivation-beginners-guide-2019/>

What is polyhouse and why is it required ?

It is a greenhouse covered with UV stabilized thick transparent white polyethylene. The structure is made of galvanized iron pipes with aerodynamically suited design to withstand winds. The low cost structures are made of locally available timber and bamboos but their durability is less. The Naturally ventilated polyhouse is suitable for Gerbera cultivation under Goa conditions. It does not require fan and cooling system. Openings on sides and on top provides sufficient ventilation. The nets are provided at openings to avoid entry of insects.

Advantages of polyhouse

- 1) Controlled conditions of RH, Temperature, Light as required for best results
- 2) Protection from rains, storms scorching sunlight

3) Protection from pests and diseases

Conditions most suitable for Gerbera cultivation

1. RH 70-75% (High RH increases disease incidence and flower deformity)
2. Temperature 20-30 C (Less than 12 oc and higher than 35 oc adversely affects flower production)
3. Shade net for 50-70% sunlight (400 Watt {sq. m is required). The shade-nets cut the scorching sunlight to 50-70%

Polyhouse area and other features

For commercial production, the units of the size of: 500-1000 sq m and above are very viable. Polyhouse of area lower than 500-1000 sq. m would also be feasible for commercial cultivation provided labour and other over- head costs are reduced. The height 5-6.5 m in the middle is sufficient for air circulation.

Ventilation nets on sides and top are covered with polyethylene sheet for protection from rains during monsoon.

Fog or mist-system to lower the temperature and increase RH during peak summer season (April- May) in Goa conditions. It has to be operated for short duration during peak hours in summer when temperatures are high and humidity is low.

Fertigation system

It is an important feature of polyhouse. Drip system for fertigation consists of pump, filter and liquid fertilizer mixing unit. The distribution manifold, laterals with drippers and water tanks are the other parts of the system. Water supplied to the system should be clean and tank of 5000 lit is sufficient for 500 sqm unit.