



Research Note

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Evaluation of *Dendrobium* orchid varieties for dried flower production

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Abstract : An experiment was laid out to evaluate the suitable variety of *Dendrobium* orchid for better quality dried flowers production. Maximum flower dry weight (0.31 g), per cent moisture loss (89.42%), drying rate (1.75 g/h) and flexibility of 42.00° was recorded in var. Sonia-17. Flowers of *Dendrobium* orchid var. Sonia-17 were more acceptable for colour (22.80), texture (23.40) and shape (23.20).

Key words : *Dendrobium*, Orchards, Dried flower production

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Orchids, the most fascinating and beautiful of all flowers comprise of about 800 genera and 25,000 species around the world. The exquisite diversity in colour, size and shape of these orchid flowers make them highly priced among the ornamental plants. *Dendrobium* is a diverse genus of orchids with more than 1000 natural species and are commonly used as a cut flower because of their sturdy stems and distinctive colours (Singh, 2009). They still ooze glamour and elegance with just a couple of stems adding a sophisticated touch to floral arrangements in any area.

Dried flowers are considered as value added products in floriculture industry and they are the major items for export and constitute 70 per cent of the total share of floriculture products of export from India (Singh, 2005). Keeping this in view, the present investigation was undertaken to evaluate the suitable variety of *Dendrobium* orchid for dried flower production.

The present investigation was carried out at the Division of Post harvest technology, Indian Institute of Horticultural

Research, Hesaraghatta, Bengaluru, during 2009-2010. Flowers of three different varieties of *Dendrobium* orchid viz., Sonia-17, Emma White and Caesar Red were dehydrated in hot air oven at 40° C for 48 hours with silica gel as embedding media. The experiment was laid out in a Completely Randomized Design with eight replications and five flowers per replication. Observations on fresh and dried weight, moisture loss percentage, drying rate, Diameter of fresh and dried flowers were recorded. Quality parameters like colour, texture and shape were assessed by means of sensory evaluation on a 25 point scale viz., very good, good, average, poor and very poor with a weightage of 21-25, 16-20, 11-15, 6-10 and 0-5, respectively.

The data on dry weight, per cent of moisture loss and drying rate of flowers of *Dendrobium* orchid varieties are presented in Table 1. Higher dry weight of flowers (0.31 g/flower) was recorded in *Dendrobium* orchid var. Sonia-17 whereas minimum dry weight (0.17 g/flower) was recorded in var. Emma White. Varietal variation in fresh flower weight was observed. Therefore, dry weight of flowers also varied among