

## Effect of packaging and storage on shelf life of dried flowers of *Dendrobium orchid* var. SONIA-17

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**SUMMARY :** An investigation was carried out to evaluate the shelf life of dried flowers of *Dendrobium* orchid var. Sonia-17 for long term storage. Dried flowers packed in an air tight plastic container and stored under dark condition, resulted in good colour (19.37) and texture (21.00). Flexibility was good in control (open) which was at par with flowers packed in an air tight plastic containers. Shelf life of dried flowers can be extended up to six months if stored under dark in an air tight plastic container.

**Key Words :** Packaging, Storage, Shelf life, *Dendrobium*, Drying

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Drying and preserving of flowers and plant materials is a form of artistic expression that was very popular during the Victorian age and has once again gained popularity. The beauty and fresh look of cut flowers can be retained only for few weeks even by the best techniques of post-harvest technology but the charm of dried flowers and foliage can be maintained from a few months to years together, if these protected from the damage of high humidity. By drying in absence of moisture the microbial activity causing the ageing effect is drastically reduced. The main qualities of dried flowers include novelty, longevity, aesthetic, flexibility and year round availability (Singh, 2009). Keeping this in view, the present investigation was undertaken to evaluate the shelf life of dried flowers in different package and storage conditions.

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### EXPERIMENTAL METHODS

The present investigation was carried out at the Division of Post harvest technology, Indian Institute of Horticultural Research, Hesaraghatta, Bengaluru, during 2009-2010. Dried flowers of *Dendrobium* orchid var. Sonia-17 were packed in different packages viz., plastic container, 300 gauge thick polyethylene covers and without any package (open) and stored under dark and light condition. The experiment was laid out in a Completely Randomized Design with factorial concept. Observations on shelf life and quality parameters of these dried flowers were evaluated at monthly interval. 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.

### EXPERIMENTAL FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Quality parameters like colour, texture and shape of dried flowers of *Dendrobium* orchid var. SONIA-17 as affected by different package and storage are presented in Table 1. Packaging had significant effect on quality of dried flowers. Dried flowers were packed in an air tight plastic container retained good colour (17.87), texture (20.75) and shape (21.89)