



Cut Flowers: A Wonderful Milestone in Field of Decoration

*Suvigya Gautam

Mahatma Gandhi Udyanikee Evam Vanikee Vishwavidyalaya (MGUVV), Sankara,
Patan, Durg Chhattisgarh, India

*Corresponding Author's email: suvigygaughtamedge50@gmail.com

Cut flowers are flowers harvested for decoration, bouquets, floral arrangements, ceremonies and other ornamental uses. Important cut-flower crops include rose, chrysanthemum, carnation, gerbera, gladiolus, lily and orchid. Unlike many field crops, flowers are often sold for appearance, freshness, stem quality, colour and vase life. Cut-flower production is therefore a combination of horticulture and careful post-harvest management. A farmer may grow an excellent crop but still receive a low return if harvesting, grading, cooling, packing or transport is poorly managed.

Importance of Cut-Flower Cultivation

The cut-flower industry creates opportunities in nurseries, protected cultivation, farming, harvesting, grading, packaging, transport, decoration and retail. Demand can rise during weddings, festivals, religious functions, celebrations and institutional events. Because flowers have high value per unit of weight, they can be attractive for farmers who have suitable land, irrigation, skills and access to markets. However, they are highly perishable, so market planning is essential.

Selection of Crops and Varieties

Variety selection should consider local climate, soil, protected-cultivation facilities, market demand, flower colour, stem length, flower size and vase life. A variety that produces attractive flowers but cannot tolerate local transport conditions may not be commercially successful. Farmers should also consider whether the market prefers a particular colour or flower type. Growing decisions are stronger when they are based on both production information and actual buyer requirements.

Cultivation Practices

Good land preparation, healthy planting material, suitable spacing, irrigation and balanced nutrition are essential. Some crops require pinching, pruning, staking or training to obtain desired stem length and flower quality. Weed, pest and disease management should be based on regular field observation. Protected cultivation can help manage temperature, humidity and other environmental factors for suitable crops. It may improve quality but also requires investment, technical knowledge and regular monitoring.

Harvesting

The correct harvesting stage varies between flower crops and also depends on whether flowers will be sold locally or transported over a longer distance. Harvesting too early may reduce flower opening, while harvesting too late can shorten market life. Clean cutting tools and clean containers are important. Stems should be protected from physical damage, and harvested flowers should be moved quickly into appropriate post-harvest conditions.

Post-Harvest Management

Flowers continue to lose water and use stored food after harvest. Keeping them cool and maintaining good hydration can help preserve quality. Clean water and hygienic handling are important because microorganisms can block water movement through stems. Grading helps separate flowers according to stem length, size, colour and quality. Proper packaging protects flowers during transport and can reduce mechanical damage. A well-managed cold chain can be especially valuable for longer-distance marketing.

Marketing and Value Chain

Cut flowers may be sold through wholesalers, local flower markets, retailers, decorators, hotels, event companies and online businesses. Direct marketing can provide better contact with customers, while wholesalers can provide access to larger markets. Farmers should study seasonal demand and price patterns. Production scheduling can be adjusted when market information is reliable. Cooperation among growers can also help with grading, packaging and transport.

Economic Importance

Cut flowers can provide higher returns per unit area than some traditional crops, but the enterprise may also require greater investment and management.

Costs can include planting material, protected structures, irrigation, fertilizers, labour, packaging, transport and post-harvest facilities. Profitability should be calculated after considering losses. Flowers that are damaged or remain unsold may have little value. Therefore, a strong marketing plan is as important as high production.

Challenges

Major challenges include temperature extremes, pests and diseases, perishability, price fluctuations and transport difficulties. Demand can also change quickly. Poor roads or delays in transportation may reduce quality before flowers reach the customer. Farmers can reduce risk by diversifying varieties, improving post-harvest handling, developing more than one market channel and keeping records of production and sales.

Conclusion

Cut-flower cultivation is a specialized horticultural activity with strong links between production, quality and marketing. The best results come from selecting suitable varieties, maintaining healthy crops, harvesting at the correct stage and protecting flowers after harvest. With technical knowledge, market information and efficient handling, cut flowers can contribute to farm income and rural employment. Sustainable production should also consider water use, responsible input management and reduction of post-harvest waste.