

Post Harvest Treatments for Summer Flowers

Introduction

With summer on its way now is the time to be thinking of how to maximise the post harvest performance of summer cut flowers. Consumers have come to value the beauty of British grown summer cut flowers in recent years. In this issue we will look at new ideas for getting the best performance from Gladiolus and Sunflowers.

Arrangements of Delphinium, Larkspur, Sweet Peas, Phlox and annual Dianthus are some of the flower types that can provide a real point of difference in the offering of flower retailers. However, the vase life of these traditional summer flowers can be shorter than that of the better known flower favourites. Chrysal can help growers, bouquet makers and consumers to get the best of their summer flowers with a range of treatments and a little timely advice.

Why use a pretreatment?

There are important reasons why any type of flower should be treated at the growers, bouquet makers and by consumers. To maintain food balance – for optimal flower development, to maintain leaf colour and reduce premature aging and finally to maintain water balance - preventing wilting and premature death.

Sunflowers

Helianthus tend to callus over at the cut stem end after harvesting. This is a natural reaction to wounding and can limit the uptake of water and post harvest treatments. The use of CVBN as a post harvest treatment will help with water uptake in this situation.

Flower	Growers Treatment	Mode of Action	Bouquetmakers Conditioner	Consumer Food
Helianthus	CVBN	Improves water uptake	Professional 2 New Generation	Chrysal Clear Universal cut flower food
Helianthus (immature)	CVBN followed by Professional 2 (NG) or Professional 3	As above then followed by Professional 2 NG or 3 if further opening is required	Professional 2 New Generation	Chrysal Clear Universal cut flower food



1. Water – Day 5 Vase Life



2. CVBN as PHT – Day 5 Vase Life

Helianthus “Sun Rich Orange

Sunflowers are often harvested immature and the grower or bouquet maker may need to improve the opening. If this is the case use of Professional 2 New Generation or Professional 3 will encourage opening and help to create the greater impact in a mixed or straight line bouquet.



Gladiolus

The vibrant colours of newer varieties of gladioli are in part responsible for the resurgence in popularity of this crop.

Traditionally the crop is harvested dry and sent into store dry, and the challenge for the grower and packer is to ensure that the flowers arrive in the store looking fresh and that they remain fresh and do not become soft and droopy, or elongate excessively in transit.

Trials have shown that where a small amount of water with Professional 2 NG is used as the transport solution that the flowers remain fresher and hydrated for longer, thus helping to avoid drooping. There is an added benefit as our trials have also shown that a greater percentage of the flowers will open during vase life.

This may be in volumes as little as 1 litre of water with Professional 2 but the extra helps the flowers to remain fresher for longer without excessive elongation.

Flower	Growers Treatment	Mode of Action	Bouquetmakers Conditioner	Consumer Food
Gladiolus	Harvest Dry		Professional 2 New Generation	Chrysal Clear Bulb cut flower food

The addition of a Chrysal Clear bulb food sachet will improve vase life by on average 2 days and enable more of the flowers to open, than if no food is provided.

Gladiolus Cultivar	Average Vase Life (Days) Water	Average Vase Life (Days) Bulb Food
Sancere	10.5	12.7
Hunting Song	7.0	11.2
Nymph	11.4	13.7
Red (variety unknown)	7.0	8.7



1. Water – Day 9 Vase Life



2. Chrysal Bulb Food – Day 9 Vase Life

Gladiolus “Hunting Song”



Treatment for minority summer flower crops

Flower	Growers Treatment	Mode of Action	Bouquetmakers Conditioner	Consumer Food
Delphinium * Larkspur Sweet Peas Phlox Annual Dianthus	AVB followed by RVB Clear	AVB (anti-ethylene)	Professional 2 New Generation	Chrysal Clear Universal cut flower food

* Independent trials have shown that there can be a major effect of using a post harvest conditioner for Delphinium, with treated stems showing a doubling of vase life and improved flower quality scores when compared to stems harvested onto plain water. However for Delphinium the magnitude of the effect can be variety dependent so growers are advised to set up a trial with their own cultivars, Chrysal UK's Technical team are on hand to help with recommendations and samples of our Post Harvest Treatment range.



Should you have any comments regarding something you've read or require further product information then please feel free to contact either Claire or Martin directly on claire@chrysal.co.uk or martin.squire@chrysal.co.uk or for general enquiries email info@chrysal.co.uk

Let us have your e-mail address and we can then make sure you are kept up to date with all new developments and indeed any key issues that are relevant to your business, whilst at the same time helping to reduce our carbon footprint!

*It's putting a little bit in and getting a lot more out of itnow that's
The Beauty of Chrysal!*

