

Do we take enough care of plants when there is no market for flowers?

Do we take good care of human being when he is ill and not able to work? The answer is “of course yes!” Then why do we neglect the plants which are as living as human beings? Why do we neglect the crop in greenhouse during the period of “poor market”? Again the answer is very simple “to reduce the cost of production”! However; neglecting the crop during this period leads to irreversible damage to the crop and eventually hamper the crop performance when you need flowers to cater high demand of market. And therefore; every grower needs to maintain the crop with minimum inputs wherein the cost is under control and the plants are ready whenever you need them to perform.

Following are few tips which will make greenhouse management cost effective & maintain plant healthy and physiologically fit for upcoming season:

- **Basal Dose**: One year and more old plants should be given an additional basal dose at the beginning of lean season.
- **Deleafing**: This is the process of removal of old and damaged leaves. The lower non – functional leaves; which are either dead or over matured, should be removed and discarded. The crop canopy microclimate should be maintained though.
- **Disbudding**: This is the process of removal of the flower buds. This operation should be carried out since these blooms will only deplete the plant nutrients.
- **Fertigation with low EC**: The fertigation with low EC will help the crop to sustain and carry out its basic physiological activities and reduce fertilizer costs as well.
- **Moisture Content**: “Wapsa” or the optimum moisture condition should never be compromised. During this period; under no circumstances should the plants be exposed to any biotic or abiotic stress.
- **Silicon Spray**: Silicon being an anti-stress element will safe guard the plants against any untoward stress.
- **Rooting Hormone**: Humic acid drenching; once in 10 days, will also prove useful in the root formation.
- **Preventive sprays**: Depending on the existing climatic conditions; regular preventive sprays with Fungicides and Insecticides should be carried out. Regular scouting for pests and diseases should be carried out on priority basis.
- **Soil and water analysis**: Once the lean period is over; the EC and pH of the soil should be tested before starting with the full fledged fertigation schedule

Note: The regular fertigation schedule has to be commenced two weeks prior to the demand of flowers in the market!