

Growth performances of selected anthurium (*Anthurium andraeanum* L.) varieties in the Batticaloa district of Sri Lanka under appropriate management practices

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Abstract

Anthuriums are popular cut flowers due to its attractive flower and foliage, higher demand and returns per unit area. Commercial anthurium cut flower production is mainly practiced in Western, North Western and Central Provinces of Sri Lanka. The export of anthuriums is not very significant at present. However, there is demand for quality anthurium flowers at the export market. Therefore, anthurium nurseries should be expanded in Sri Lanka to cater the global demand. As such, it is essential to find new niches for anthurium cultivation. The Batticaloa district in the Eastern region satisfies most of the ecological requirements necessary for anthurium cultivation. Therefore, an experiment was conducted to evaluate the performances of three popular anthurium varieties viz. 'Pistache', 'Calisto' and 'Angel'. Nine months old plants were obtained from a commercial nursery and planted in pots under 80% shade at the Crop Farm, Eastern University, Sri Lanka. The pots were arranged in a completely randomized design (CRD) with three replications. All the treatments were managed uniformly as per recommendation. Measurements were taken at monthly interval. Varieties 'Angel' and 'Calisto' produced flowers one month after planting in the pots. Three months after planting significant ($p < 0.05$) differences were observed in the growth parameters of the varieties. Among the three varieties tested, plant biomass and leaf area were highest in variety 'Angel'. Further, this variety showed early and more flower production too. Therefore, this study concluded that, variety 'Angel' is suitable for growing in the Batticaloa district as its growth rate was higher than the other varieties.

Keywords: Anthurium, Biomass, Leaf area, Shade house, Varieties