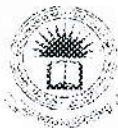


**EFFECTS OF DIFFERENT LEVELS OF POTASSIUM ON THE
GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF *Cordyline fruticosa* VAR.
'PURPLE COMPACTA'**



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ABSTRACT

Cordyline fruticosa (Cordyline) is an ornamental shrub with attractive leaves and it is a popular foliage plant in the export markets. 'Purple compacta' is a striking variety of *Cordyline fruticosa*. Potassium plays an important role in enhancing crop quality. A shade house (50%) experiment was conducted to find out the effects of graded potassium levels on vegetative growth of cordyline (*Cordyline fruticosa* var. 'purple compacta') plants in the Crop Farm, Eastern University, Sri Lanka from January to April 2019. The experiment was arranged in a completely randomized design with twenty replications. Six treatments were defined viz. 0.0 (T1- Control), 0.5 (T2), 1.0 (T3), 1.5 (T4), 2.0 (T5) and 2.5 (T6) g potassium/plant/month (g/p/m). Muriate of potash (MOP) was used as a potassium source nitrogen (Urea) and Phosphorous (TSP) were applied at the recommended and fixed rates (0.5 g/plant/month and 0.5g/plant/month respectively). Recommended agronomic practices were followed uniformly for all treatments. Growth parameters viz. plant height, leaf area, plant biomass and leaf nitrogen content (SPAD) were measured at monthly interval. Results revealed that plants belong to T2 showed significantly ($p < 0.05$) better performance in the measured growth parameters viz. plant height, leaf area, plant biomass and leaf nitrogen content, while the lowest performance was observed in T5 at 3 months after transplanting. From these findings, it could be stated that potassium level of 0.5 g/p/m could be optimum for maximum growth of cordyline plants (*Cordyline fruticosa* var. 'purple compacta') under 50% shade level in Batticaloa district. A commercial scale evaluation is required to recommend these findings to floricultural industries.

Keywords: Cordyline, Leaf area, Leaf nitrogen content, Plant biomass

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
LIST OF PLATES	ix
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	x
CHAPTER 1	1
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 2	5
2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	5
2.1 Floriculture	5
2.2 Study plant.....	12
2.2.1 Classification of study plant	12
2.2.2 Family characters of study plants	13
2.2.3 Agronomic practices	17
2.3 Plant Nutrition	20
2.3.1 Fertilizers in Agriculture.....	20
2.4 The Potassium in Agriculture.....	22
2.4.1 Importance potassium.....	22
2.4.2 The potassium cycle	26
2.4.3 Potassium leaching losses.....	27
2.4.4 Potassium Fertilizer Application	28
2.4.5 Potassium in soils	28
2.4.6 Effect of potassium on plant growth.....	29
2.4.7 Effects of potassium in cordyline	30
2.4.8 Potassium Deficiency Symptoms in plants.....	31
2.5 Effects of excess potassium.....	32
2.6 fertilizer and environment	34
2.7 Summary	37
CHAPTER 3	38
3.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS	38

3.1. Experimental duration and site description	38
3.2 Experimental design	38
3.3 Agronomic practices	40
3.3.1 Planting materials	40
3.3.2 Preparation of polyethylene bags and potting media	40
3.3.3 Spacing	40
3.3.4 Irrigation	40
3.3.5 Fertilizer application	41
3.3.6 Weeding	41
3.3.7 Plant protection	41
3.4 Sampling method and sampling interval	41
3.5 Measurements	42
3.5.1 Plant height (cm)	42
3.5.2 Leaf area per plant (cm ²)	42
3.5.3 Biomass of whole plant (g)	43
3.5.4 Leaf nitrogen content - Soil Plant Analysis Development (SPAD) value.	44
3.5.5 Stem diameter (cm)	45
3.6 Statistical Analysis	46
CHAPTER 4	47
CHAPTER 5	61
5.0 CONCLUSIONS	61