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FLOWERS

FROM BULBOUS PLANTS



S. C. DEY

*Flowers from
Bulbous
Plants*



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Dedicated
To
Captain S. Maity

Preface

Flower growing from bulbs or storage roots is most interesting. It economizes on time, space and expenses involved in cultivation. In cold climates flower growing from bulbs can be quite profitable. Commercial floriculture largely depends on the bulbous ornamentals. For a long period of the year the bulbs can be kept indoors. Only in the growing season they are planted outdoors. On planting some species, produce flowers even before producing leaves. The bulbs in the dormant condition can be transported easily like other non-perishable commodities to the customers of the far-off places. Home gardeners can purchase flower bulbs from a distant nursery through the surface mail with minimum chances of mortality.

The storage roots have different forms. They may be roots or stems that grow underground. They are perennial. But the shoots that grow from them are annual. They are classified by their scientific names. According to the different forms of the storage roots they are designated with different names. However in common parlance they are called 'bulbs' or 'bulbous plants'.

One of the most advantages of the bulbous plants is that more percentage of standard quality flowers can be raised easily than the other crop of flowers. Hence the popularity among the market growers. They with the minimum of growing cost harvest maximum of the standard crop. Secondly, the propagation, though mainly vegetative, is easy and cheap. On account of this the shortage of planting materials is hardly met with in the planting season. Because the bulbous plants in general are very

fecund in producing offsets which is inconceivably high. So one find plenty of planting materials at hand for any commercial venture.

The culture of bulbous plants is comparatively easy and less expensive, as such the new growers of flowers are wisely advised to start with the bulbous plants. It will be a fun to them when on planting before emerging leaves the flower spikes come up and flower in no time in case of many bulbs. When the children are taught gardening they should be given bulbs or early flowering seasonal and flowers to start with.

With a view to earning fabulous foreign money a country may take to growing standard bulbs or flowers from bulbous plants or both extensively as well as intensively. Holland is the pioneer and still at the top of the trade. From exporting flower bulbs and flowers from bulbous plants its foreign money rises to an incredibly great amount.

The flower-growing centers grow near the cities to meet the huge demand of cut flowers in the cities. The growing trade finds the shortage of land for this purpose.

But there is plenty of land in the interior of the country which can be exploited as ancillary to the main growing centers near the cities. The supply of the standard quality bulbs from the interior of the country can augment the production by saving time for growing them in the flower-growing centers. This source of imputes in the form of quality planting materials can undoubtedly be a boon to the cut flower production industry. The tuberose bulbs of good quality can be grown in quantities in the plains of India for export. Those which prefer the temperate climate can be grown in the vast terrain of the Himalayas. For export trade tuberose bulbs are grown in Italy, Holland, America and the Cape of good hope. The bulbs grown in British Isles are found inferior to the imported bulbs for commercial flower production. So England has been importing quality tuberose bulbs from the Cape of good Hope. Varied agro-climatic conditions and land resources give India a distinct edge over the developing countries in developing its bulb-growing industry to capture the global market for the sizeable foreign exchange. The bulbs of gladiolus and tuberose, dahlias and some other lilies can be grown in this country extensively. Excepting dahlia others can be a valuable imputes of cut-flower industry. The bulbs of newly bred dahlia of outstanding qualities has a great demand among the flower lovers of all developing countries. The free-trade policies in the global markets will usher such ventures. During 1998-99 export of floricultural products from India was of Rs. 9990.25 crores, to which the contribution of bulbous materials

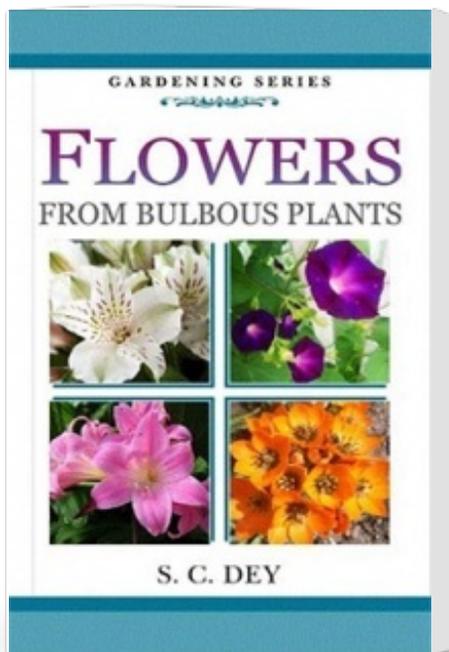
amounted to Rs. 28.23 crores. Bulbous flowers have become an integral part of commercial floriculture. A few bulbous flowers have found place among the top ten cut flowers in the global trade of floriculture.

To make the work comprehensive as many as ten chapters besides appendices have been laid out. To enforce the text as many as 47 figures and 31 photographs have been included. I am thankful to those who kindly helped me with photographs for illustration. As it is the first work of its kind in English in this country the flower growers looking for such works will be benefited.

S. C. Dey

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