Make money from Gladiolus cut flowers

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Introduction

Gladiolus flower is a high value flower that can be grown by smallholder farmers to diversify their income sources. It grows under rain-fed conditions and only requires irrigation during very dry weather. The resource requirements for this flower are affordable compared to green house flowers.

Growing of gladiolus

Planting materials

- Gladiolus flowers are propagated from corms and cormels.
- Select healthy corms and cormels and plant at the rate of 50 per sq metre.

Spacing

Plant at 20cm between rows and 10cm between plants.

Manure and fertilizer

- Apply well decomposed manure at the rate of 10kg/m² and add NPK fertilizer at 50gm per square metre.
- Top dress with 17:17:17 N:P:K or CAN fertilizers after every 2 weeks at the rate of 50gm m².
- Foliar feed should be applied one month after planting and every fortnight thereafter.

Support

A support system is required to support the tender flower stems to maintain stem straightness which may consist of a wooden or wire support.

Crop protection

Control insects at 4th week after planting; then 2 weeks intervals before flower setting.

Diseases

Fusarium wilt, bulb rot and rust diseases affect gladiolus. Use recommended fungicides such as brigade, benovap or copper kocide etc.

Insect pests

Thrips, aphids, mites and cutworms attack gladiolus for which recommended insecticides should be used.

Harvest

- Harvest by cutting flower spikes after the two base leaves when the bottom floret starts showing colour.
- Place in a bucket of water in a cool place

Packing

- To avoid bending of gladiolus pack and transport in upright position.

Lifting

- After 2 weeks from harvesting lift the corms and cormels separately. Treat them with fungicide and chill for 6 weeks at 2-4°C.