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## Farmers' Corner- A Knowledge Hub

# Maranda (Calatheacrotalifera): a new introduction to cut flower trade

*Calatheacrotalifera is one of the important ornamental plants belonging to family Marantaceae and is a herbaceous perennial highly adapted to tropical humid agro-climatic condition. This rhizomatic plant species can produce a very attractive inflorescence and have been used in landscaping especially for screening and indoor plants. The exotic appearance of C. crotalifera inflorescence commonly known as Rattle snake is more popular in cut flower industry. The inflorescence has attractive bracts (modified leaf) that can be found in four different colours as red, white, green or yellow with a few conspicuous flowers will peek out from the bract as they matured. The plant height ranges from 2.5 to 3.0 m with plant spread ranging from 140 to 160 cm. The commercial propagation of this species is through rhizomes and division of clumps. This species prefer moist humid climate and partially shady situations for their growth and flowering. Hence, the crop is suited to grow as intercrop in plantation based cropping system. The species performs well in a spacing of 1.5 -2.0 m between plants and 2 m between rows. The average number of flowers recorded per plant per year is 75.7. The duration of flowering is about 210 days which shows year round production of cut flowers. The vase life of the inflorescence can vary considerably from 10 to 15 days. The shelf life of the flowers in the plant is 21.3 days. The crop can be grown commercially with minimum inputs and less managemental care.*

***Benefit:** Calatheacrotaliferais an excellent choice for cut flower, landscape horticulture and gardening amateurs due to the attractive inflorescence.*

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