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Farmers' Corner- A Knowledge Hub

Torch ginger (*Etilingera elatior*) - a new addition to flower basket

Torch ginger (Etilingera elatior) belonging to the family Zingiberaceae is a popular cut flower known for its versatility and durability. The extravagant and showy inflorescence with bright colour of the species makes it highly suitable to be used as cut flower. The clumps are vigorous, with the emission of



vegetative and floral stems in the periphery and in the center of the clump. It shows robust growth, when planted in moist and shady condition. The inflorescences show colors that vary from red and pink to white, which grow directly from the rhizome. In the Island, three accessions namely red (Accession 1), pink with red tinge (Accession 2) and baby pink (Accession 3) and all the three performed well in partial shade condition. The species is commercially propagated by clumps and planted at a spacing of 1.5 to 2.0 m. Flowering is initiated one year after planting. Number of flowers per clump per year ranges from 25- 55 and maximum was observed in accession 3 (Baby pink) followed by accession 1 (Red). Flowering is not seasonal however, during summer flower production is less. The shelf life of harvested flowers ranges from 3 to 5 days and remains for about 10 days while intact with plant. The stalk length ranges from 50 to 70 cm and suitable for packing to export market. The flowers are to be harvested at fully opened stage.

Benefit: *The tropical humid climate of Island is highly congenial for growing this cut flower by both amateurs and entrepreneurs. Commercial cultivation of this species can also be exploited owing to the growing tourism industry in the Island.*

Contact person with Name, Designation e-mail and phone no: *Dr. V. Baskaran, Principal Scientist, Email: vbaski01@gmail.com, Phone: 9933292110.*