

Poster

**MORPHOLOGICAL CHARACTERIZATION OF GERBERA JAMESONII
ACCESSIONS**

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ABSTRACT

Gerbera jamesonii is one of the major commercial floricultural crops in Sri Lanka. The demand for novelties is always in the market. As the high cost in purchasing and susceptibility to pest and diseases of imported varieties, it is essential to develop suitable indigenous varieties. This study has intended to characterize gerbera accessions available in Regional Agriculture Research & Development Centre (RARDC), Bandarawela morphologically as one of the initial steps in identification and selection of accessions and assess the variability of gerbera accessions based on morphological traits. Seven morphological characters including four qualitative and three quantitative were studied and analyzed using cluster analysis method to identify the dissimilarity of accessions. Cluster analysis and MANOVA using qualitative and quantitative traits could generate significantly different six groups at a normalized distance of 1.06. Closest accessions were 22 and 39 whereas most distant accession was 37. As the present study reveals that the difference in characters among accessions give an idea about the genetic divergence. This can be used as a simple and quick method for selecting parents and designing crosses. There was significant differences among groups of 39 gerbera accessions for characters studied and these variations can be used in crosses for hybridization programmes in improvement of gerbera cultivars to develop novelties.