

Dry Flower: A Promising Floriculture Industry

Jyothi R, Raghavendra Yaligar, Kavitha Ullikashi, Radha J, Revathi R M, Narappa G

ICAR-Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Koppal

Corresponding Author: jyokiran29@gmail.com



Value addition to floriculture material is a most promising area. In this dry flower are known for their everlasting nature. This dry flower industries experiencing substantial growth in recent years, which is driven through increase in the demand in both national and international market. There are promising opportunities for dry flower industry in India. Dry flowers once considered as a traditional decoration method, now it is comeback as a trendy, versatile and sustainable value-added product. In India this industry is valued for Rs.100 crores annually, with this economic growth it is also providing employment opportunities to more than 15000 people. In India dry flower industry growing in an annual rate of 8-10%. India is exporting 500 different varieties of flower to nearly 20 countries. USA and UAE are the major countries importing India dry flower products. This dry flower industry brought to India by British. It is almost five-decade old industry. Most concentrated area of dry flower preparation is in states of Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Andra Pradesh and Karnataka. When we see some of the advantages of dry flowers are, long lasting, available throughout the year, ecofriendly, bio degradable, job opportunities, most 80% flowers species can be dried.

Major advantages of dry flower industry are unlike fresh flowers dry flowers offers longevity and sustainability. Their look is very appealing and are ecofriendly in nature. Dry flowers offer versatility and aesthetic appeal because these flowers can be used in more creative ways in different events. The most important thing of dry flower is they are very cost-effective, one-time purchase lasts significantly

longer. Unlike fresh flower dry flowers are available throughout the year and are not subjected to seasonality. With these advantages dry flowers are used in wedding and event industry, home décor, Handcraft products, dried flower subscription.

Drying Techniques

Various methods are employed to drying flowers and foliage. The method adopted for drying depends on the character of the plant, whether the plant is succulent or not succulent, hardy or delicate in nature.

a) Air drying

Air drying flowers is one of the easiest methods of flower and foliage preservation and gives a crisp look that lasts for years. Air drying is commonly referred as the “hang and dry” method. It is the oldest and easiest drying technique. The stems of flowers and their foliage are tied and hung upside down. The rooms should be warm, dark and dry with good air circulation. It is one of the longest drying methods. Usually, it takes three to four weeks for the flowers to dry completely.

b) Water drying

Water drying is a method of preserving in which the flower along with stem devoid of leaves are placed in five centimetres of water. This is then, placed in a warm place, out of direct sunlight. The water is absorbed and evaporates as the flower dries. Flowers which are suitable for water drying are hydrangeas, heathers, hybrid delphiniums, acacia, gypsophila, bells of Ireland, proteas.



c) Press drying

One of the most popular methods for drying flowers is to put them under pressure, to remove the moisture out, leaving the color of the flowers and structure unaffected. The easiest method is placing them in heavy books or between newspaper and allow for drying. Pressed flowers are especially suitable for flower pictures, as well as decoration on note paper, place cards etc.

d) Drying by embedding in desiccants

A desiccant is simply a substance with a high affinity for water which can be used as a drying agent. This is most commonly used method and many consider it the best all-around method. Several materials are used as drying agents. Most well-known is silica gel and borax but clean dry sand can also be used. Usually, an airtight container is used the container must be kept closed during the drying process. After 4-14 days, depending on the thickness of the flower, the flower will be dry.

e) Glycerine drying

In this method moisture in a flower or foliage is replaced with glycerine and water. The flower is preserved and not dried. They last indefinitely and can be dusted or even wiped with a damp cloth without risk owing to the leathery texture of leaves. Glycerine drying involves the following process. The bark of the stem is removed and the cut end is smashed using a hammer. This portion of the stem is immersed in the glycerine and water solution. The leaf turns brown with glossy appearance after a month.

f) Microwave oven drying

Microwave drying is quick and relatively simple. It takes only a few minutes and provides dried flowers that look fresher and more colourful than obtained by other methods. Flowers with thick petals are not suitable for drying in microwave. Since flowers vary in moisture content, texture and density, care should be taken to use the same sized flowers from one species at a time. Suitable flowers such as lilies, roses, violets, zinnias, and dahlias work well with this process.

g) Freeze drying

Freeze drying also known as lyophilization. It is the process of lowering the temperature of an object and then



using a vacuum to extract all the moisture from the item. Freeze dried flowers go through a process in which water is removed as vapor directly from ice, without passing through the liquid state. All other drying methods use evaporation. In other words, water is removed as vapor from liquid water with heated air. This slow preservation process allows the freeze-dried flowers to retain their original form, while the colours become enriched.

h) Skeleton Leaves

Skeleton leaves are semi-transparent leaves, also called fossil leaves. They are prepared by soaking the fresh leaves in bleached water and then by hand rubbing the soft green flesh from the network of veins. The leaves can be then dyed to variant colours to give them a beautiful and pleasing appearance. These delicate, gorgeous skeleton leaves are a perfect accent for all craft projects. They make a beautiful and elegant statement when they adorn your wedding invitations. They work surprisingly well on gift tags, greeting cards, scrapbooks, collages, papermaking, stencilling, and stamping. They are perfect for decorating bridal bouquet, wedding reception table, candles, and wedding favors.

The dry flower industry driven by increasing consumer demand for its sustainability and long-lasting nature. Further they offer versatility, cost-effectiveness and also aesthetic appeal. The future of this timeless craft appears to be as a vibrant and sustainable industry.
