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With the introduction of liberalisation policy of the Government of India emphasis has been given for the development of export oriented commodities. The agro-climatic conditions of the country are quite suitable for the cultivars of various types of horticultural crops. It is therefore, importance that crops like Gladiolus and Carnation are cultivated with the modern technology so as to stand in the sophisticated export markets.

Floriculture crops have their own importance from ancient times and they are used for decoration, worships as well as for the improvement of environment. There is an increasing demand for floricultural production in the world. Cut flowers and live plants are important items of import and export in present day international trade. The consumption of flowers and plants per capita is the highest in Switzerland followed by Holland and the Federal Republic of Germany. In their European markets, the demand for cut flowers is highest during winter months (Agrawal and Prasad, 1994; Bose and Roy, 1990).

In recent years gladiolus cultivation has picked up very well both in the hills and plains. It has its value in both internal and export markets (Chadha, 1993; Teaotia, 1995). The international trade of floricultural products for more than 80 per cent of the total trade. The Netherlands and Colombia had exported 60 and 20 per cent of total cut flowers import of USA, respectively (Singh, 1996). In India, gladiolus is the second most popular commercial flower crop after rose. Economically it occupies the first place because of different colours, sizes and long keeping quality of flower spikes markets. This crop is very popular for domestic as well as in international markets (Singh et al., 1993; Panwar, 1996).
Gladiolus is a bulbous plant and belongs to the family Iridaceae. The modern cultivars are mostly hybrids. A majority of the species from which the modern cultivars were developed by hybridization, originated in South Africa and contributed a large number of varieties. It is also grown in pots, beds and as herbaceous borders in all the countries including India (Basu and Bose, 1970; Gupta, 1983; Jakhar, 1983; Swarup, 1993). White flowering gladiolus when in full bloom, looks very delightful in moon light night. The snow white colour of the flowers stands out against the background of dark green foliage (Gupta, 1994).

The chemical composition of gladiolus differs in variety to variety. The gladiolus corms are reported to be the best source of carbohydrate, protein etc. contents. The main carbohydrates content of the gladiolus corm is in the form of starch which is about 70 per cent and this is found associated with appreciable quantity of protein which is about 12.0 per cent successful production of corm depends upon many factors. Recent researches, gave various variable information regarding above factors (Swarup and Singh, 1984; Singh 1996a).

Varietal variations have considerable importance in gladiolus. In fact varieties play a major role in the successful commercial production of gladiolus. It may be noted that only new developing hybrid varieties have a great importance. Development of new varieties will certainly have future scope in commercial and industrial lines. In very recently Swarup (1993) and Shukla et al. (1995) gave emphasis for making improvement in promising varieties of gladiolus.

Besides above, genetical aspects are also necessary to fill up the lacunae in the knowledge breeding. New plant of breeding methods, tissues culture techniques etc. help to the improvement of crops. Hybridization programme helps the development of new varieties having better blooms and
colours. It becomes necessary to select proper population of the plant material. However, selection of the proper parent, depends upon the genetic variability. Heritability measures the value of selection for a particular character while heritability value itself accounts for the magnitude of absolute variability along with genetic advance (Dadlani and Swarup, 1989; Anuradha and Naryana, 1990; Agrawal et al., 1995).

Further, correlation coefficient is another important genetic aspect which in fact measures up to what extent the variable and non-variable characters are associated to each other. In addition to above, correlation coefficient further permits the evaluation of relative influence of various characters on yield. Correlation study between different quantitative characters is important to select a better plant type. The association analysis is again necessary in the knowledge of all these aspects regarding a particular crop. Therefore, present project has been adopted with a view to give required knowledge to the gardens and flower lovers and together information for further research work to make improvement on gladiolus crop.

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