Effect of Benzylaminopurine, Gibberellic Acid, Silver Nitrate and Silver Thiosulphate, on postharvest longevity of cut leaves of *Dracaena*

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ABSTRACT

Leaf yellowing associated with early senescence is a major problem associated with cut decorative leaves and flowers of many tropical plant species. Effect of postharvest application of benzylaminopurine (BAP), gibberellic acid (GA₃), silver-thiosulphate (STS) and silver nitrate (AgNO₃) on vase life of cut leaves of three *Dracaena* species *Dracaena marginata* ‘bi colour’, *Dracaena sanderiana* ‘white’ and *Dracaena deremensis* were investigated. Deionized water (DIW) was used as the control. All the BAP treatments (25, 50 and 100 µM) applied either as 10 minutes immersion or as 24 h pulse improved the vase life of all three species examined. Application of STS (2 mM) and AgNO₃ (10 mM Ag ions) did not increase the vase life of *D. marginata* ‘bi colour’ and *D. sanderiana* ‘white’ significantly while GA₃ (50, 100 and 250 µM) either as a pulse or immersion, significantly reduced the postharvest life of *D. deremensis* compared to untreated leaves. Results suggest that the application of 25 µM BAP as a pulse treatment for 24 h can be recommended to prolong the postharvest life through delayed leaf senescence and thus enhance the marketability of cut leaves of *Dracaena marginata* ‘bi colour’, *Dracaena sanderiana* ‘white’ and *Dracaena deremensis*.

Key words: postharvest life, *Dracaena marginata* ‘bi colour’, *Dracaena sanderiana* ‘white’, *Dracaena deremensis*, marketability