

SUMMARY

Current ornamental potencial of flor de izote (*Yucca elephantipes* Regel) in central Veracruz

Yucca elephantipes (Agavaceae) inflorescence is to known as “palmito”, and in central Veracruz receives the common name of “flor de izote”. Both, at national and regional level the flowers are used in different ways; however, the main use is as an edible flower in regional dishes; other uses are in live fences. One interesting point is that the inflorescences are harvested in natural habitats, local people does not cultivate this species. There are no studies showing the ornamental potential of this species; for this reason, it is important to show it to local people as an alternative option for growing crops in field. In this study we evaluated the ornamental potential of “flor de izote” inflorescences in three stages: 1) Estimation of natural and artificial distribution of this species in the Municipality of Zentla, Veracruz; spatial distribution was evaluated, in addition, we measure stem diameter, number of branches, number of seedlings, height and distance between plants; 2) Perception of visual preferences and attractiveness of flowers in elaborated floral arrangements, people without experience, was surveyed about the general appearance, combination of colors, smell, flower position, and arrangement of foliage; 3) Evaluation of the life time in the arrangement, we evaluated how many days the flowers remain fresh, smell and presence of stem rot. Results showed that the spatial distribution of individuals is in clusters in natural populations. We found that local people prefer use the inflorescences as companion flower in arrangements, the lifetime of the flowers is less than eight days after flower is cut. We conclude that the “flor de izote” has ornamental potential in central Veracruz, Mexico. It is recommended to perform tests to determine whether the vase life can be prolonged.

Key words: Izote, floral arrangement, lifetime, ornamental