

ORIENT YOUR SHOP TO CUT-LILY CARE

> The spectacular flowers of lilies make them one of the most popular cut-flower species available. But their beauty relies on proper care to avoid bud drop, leaf yellowing and premature senescence. These problems greatly reduce the visual quality of the flower stems, detracting from the overall value of an arrangement and deterring customers from purchasing.

Don't Be Mellow about Yellow

Leaf yellowing, caused by a post-harvest hormonal imbalance in the leaves, generally starts on the lower leaves and quickly works upward. These symptoms can be present upon arrival to the florist, but usually manifest within three to five days after you sell them. Fortunately, leaf-yellowing prevention is easy with specialized solutions designed for use at the grower, wholesaler, retailer and consumer level: Chrysal BVB and Chrysal SVB from Pokon-Chrysal and Floralife's PAL. Growers should treat lilies at harvest to prevent leaf-yellowing early on — check with your suppliers to make sure they do. Regardless, treating lilies at both the wholesale or retail level is worthwhile. Keep flowers in these solutions at least four hours to overnight to effectively prevent leaf yellowing.

In our tests, treating Oriental and Asiatic hybrid lilies with these solutions at the retail level significantly reduced or totally eliminated leaf yellowing.

Fight with Food

Florists can also do their part to promote lily-bud opening and prolong shelf-life of lily blooms and foliage alike by using a specialized bulb food solution. When we placed cut lilies in Chrysal Clear Bulb Flower Food, leaf yellowing was virtually eliminated and flowers lasted three to four days longer than with just water or a broad-spectrum flower food. Other products retailers and consumers can use: Chrysal Clear Lilium and Alstroemeria Food and Floralife Bulb Flower Food.

Eliminate Ethylene

Ethylene exposure can induce leaf yellowing on some lily varieties, and can cause buds and flower petals to



BRIGHT BULB The Oriental lily 'Star Gazer' on the right was pre-treated, keeping its leaves green and flowers living longer compared to untreated flowers on the left.

drop. Treating lily flowers with STS or EthylBloc™ at the farm or during transit will protect them. So make sure your supplier does so. And the no-smoking, no-hanging-out-with-fruit rules apply here too. Keep lilies away from combustible engines, cigarette smoke and ripening fruits and vegetables.

Keep Your Buds Closed

Lilies should arrive to your shop without any flowers open and should be sold when at least one bud is showing color or just starting to open. If many flowers are open upon arrival, this indicates that flowers were held at warm temperatures during transport or are old. The more flowers open when sold, the less the vase life for the consumer.

Unpack and Cool Down

As with any cut flower, the less time in storage the better. If flowers must be stored, keep it short (less than four days) and do so at low temperatures. Research has shown that the longer the storage time, the more susceptible lilies are to ethylene damage and leaf yellowing. It is imperative to display flowers in florist coolers until purchased. We found lilies displayed at room temperatures had a rapid decline in weight, took up less vase solution and had a significant reduction in vase life. Displaying lilies at 35F increased vase life up to 7.4 days, compared to

those displayed at room temperature. A display of four days or less at temperatures below 42F will maximize vase life.

The industry has easy and effective solutions to overcome lilies' major post-harvest problems. Your lily leaves will stay green, buds will continue to open, flowers will last longer — and your customers will be more satisfied if you orient your business toward quality assurance. 🌿

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MAKE LILIES LAST

- Request flowers pre-treated with ethylene protection and leaf-yellowing control
- Un-box and process immediately
- Use solutions to prevent leaf yellowing
- Store at 33-35F for no more than four days
- Sell to consumers with buds just starting to open
- Display in coolers at 33-35F
- Use specialized bulb food and give it to customers