

## **Soil Versus Inert Media**

On two occasions a comparison was made of flowers from two different benches located in the same greenhouse. One bench contained soil, and the other contained gravel as the growing media. No difference in keeping life of the flowers occurred. Also, additional data was obtained from four treatment plots of the water conservation project at Colorado State University. All flowers from two soil plots and two gravel plots were compared with no difference in keeping life.

A field test was conducted on flowers from two growers in the Denver area who had both soil and gravel media. Twenty-five flowers were sampled from the growers on 10 occasions throughout a six-

month period. A definite trend in increased keeping life from the soil benches was evident in the field study as indicated in Table 2. However, the differences are nonsignificant due to variability between sampling dates.

Table 2. Effect of growing media on keeping life (two growers).

Grower	Mean life in days	
	Soil	Gravel
A	9.4	8.2
B	7.2	6.6

Growing media in a strict sense is not considered a major variability factor in keeping potential. The factor likely contributing most to variability is how the media is handled culturally and the interaction with the variable greenhouse environment. If a good production environment is provided, differences between production media are not likely to effect the keeping life of the flowers.