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## Decorative Cut Foliage Fillers and their Suitability

M. Kumaresan

### Introduction

A prospective farming sector, particularly for developing nations, floriculture is a rapidly escalating, profitable area of the agricultural industry. It is expanding globally at a moderate pace. Floral producers must act quickly due to the frequently shifting trends and ongoing need for new, inventive goods in both the local and international floral markets. Cut flower arrangements are supported primarily by foliage filler crops. Cut foliage is a type of vegetation that is frequently used as decoration, either by itself or in combination with flowers in bouquets. Typically, evergreen plants with variegated, silvery, or green leaves are utilized, though berry-producing species are increasingly growing in popularity. Due to their year-round availability and long vase life, asparagus and ferns are frequently utilized in floral arrangements. Farms, big and small, might see a boost in revenue from cut flower production. The commercial cultivation of many kinds of cut foliage boosts the incomes of farmers.

### Importance of cut foliage industry in India

The cut foliage sector is a vital component of the green industry, which is closely related to the cut flower sector. The foliage business has grown rapidly in many countries and is vital to the continu-

ed existence of the cut flower industry today. There is a huge market for a wide variety of cut foliage, especially in Europe, the United States, and Japan. Cut foliage is a viable substitute for flowers, especially in a time of need. Cut foliage commerce is considered an area of extreme concentration in the field of agro-exports with the goal of reviving the sluggish economy. India has a wide range of agroclimatic conditions that are ideal for cultivating a broad range of foliage plants. Such includes a plenty of sunshine all year round, a high degree of diversity in native plants, a variety of soil types, minimal labor and investment costs. There is relative nearness to the new emerging markets like Japan, Australia and the Middle East. In addition, India's climate is ideal for high-quality production throughout the months of November through March, when the rest of Europe is hindered by its inability to cultivate tropical foliage plants.

### Foliage fillers for commercial cultivation

#### Asparagus

- ✓ *Asparagus densiflorus* syn. *A. sprenger* is a family of Asparagaceae and origine of South Africa.
- ✓ Common names are Asparagus Fern, Foxtail Fern, Sprenger's Asparagus, Emerald Feather and Asparagus grass.

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- ✓ It is an evergreen long-lived perennial plant growing from the understory as lianas, bushes or climbing plants.



- ✓ It produces small white or pink flowers. Fruit is red or orange and inedible fruit.

### Dracaena

- ✓ *Dracaena* sp. belongs to Asparagaceae family and native to Africa.
- ✓ Dracaenas comprise one of the most important and diverse families sold as foliage plants
- ✓ Available in many different varieties, leaves can be oval or lance shaped and from 10 to 70 cm long.
- ✓ The leaves vary in color from emerald to grey green, sometimes with white or yellow stripes or yellow or cream spots.
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### Cordyline

- ✓ *Cordyline* is a genus of about 15 species of woody monocotyledonous flowering plants in family Asparagaceae, sub-family Lomandroideae.
- ✓ *Cordyline* is native to the western Pacific Ocean region, from New Zealand, eastern Australia, southeastern Asia and Polynesia, with one species



found in western South America.

- ✓ Used for fillers or in focus for all styles; suitable especially for modern design. Use leaves selectively as plant is slow growing.

### Aglaonema

- ✓ Aglaonema commercially known as 'Silver Queen' or 'Chinese evergreen' and family of Araceae.
- ✓ It is native to the Tropical and subtropical Asia
- ✓ Green leaves with yellow markings or light green markings.
- ✓ Production of Aglaonema has increased in recent years from less than 1% of foliage plant production in the 1960's to more than 6% at present.



### Spathiphyllum

- ✓ *Spathiphyllum* sp is belongs to the family of Araceae and native to Tropical America and South eastern Asia.
- ✓ Certain species of *Spathiphyllum* are commonly known as Spath or peace lilies.
- ✓ They are evergreen herbaceous perennial plants with large leaves 12-65 cm long and 3-25 cm broad.
- ✓ The flowers are produced in a spadix, surrounded by a 10-30 cm long, white, yellowish, or greenish spathe.
- ✓ The NASA Clean Air Study found that *Spathiphyllum* cleans indoor air of certain enviro-



nmental contaminants, including benzene and formaldehyde.

### Baby Eucalyptus

- ✓ *Eucalyptus pulverulenta* Australia Myrtaceae

Baby eucalyptus is also known as Silver-leaved Mountain gum.



- ✓ A small open spreading tree, it has powdery blue foliage which happily regrows (coppices) after cutting, once established.
- ✓ Eucalyptus originates from Australia and consists of over 500 different species many of which grow well in the South of Ireland.
- ✓ There is demand for Eucalypts with attractive grey, blue-grey and green foliage all year round and particularly during peak autumn, winter and spring months.

### English Ivy

- ✓ English Ivy (*Hedera helix*) Araliaceae Australia

is an attractive foliage plant produced in various sized standard containers and hanging baskets.



- ✓ English ivy is also used indoors in dish gardens, on trellises, as a ground cover.

### Podophyllum or Arrowhead plant

- ✓ *Syngonium podophyllum* is belongs to the family of Araceae and native to Central America and South America.



- ✓ The Arrowhead is

constantly unfurling new foliage, in varieties ranging from dark green with strong white variegation to hues of lime and even pink.

- ✓ Varieties have variegated leaves to one degree or another, and like many aroids, the plant's leaf structure changes as it matures.

### Box Wood

- ✓ *Buxus sempervirens* L. (Buxaceae), popularly known as boxwood, is a native species from the Mediterranean, East and China regions and belongs to buxaceae



- ✓ It is a woody shrub, 2 to 5 m high, with narrow-oval, coriaceous bright leaves.