

HICURE® ASSURES IMPROVED FLOWER QUALITY AND YIELDS – NEW PRODUCT LAUNCHED BY SYNGENTA

Over the years, Kenya's leading position as an exporter of cut flowers to the European Union cannot be gainsaid. More investments in the floriculture sub-sector in Kenya are evident from the expansions in greenhouse production areas across the flower growing regions coupled with new direct market opportunities in the recent past. With the changing dynamics in the global markets, growers have to continuously adapt and respond to the consumer trends in order to remain competitive. According to the Economic Survey 2013, the cut flower sector earned the country Sh65 billion in 2012, up from Sh58.8 billion in 2011.

Hicure was launched in July after two years of testing in Kenya. The new product is ecologically produced solely from amino acids and peptides of natural origin. Because of its natural origin, Hicure is not harmful to the environment and is safe to the crop, greenhouse workers and the spray applicators. Treated crops do not need a withholding period and can be harvested immediately after treatment.

Hicure is easily taken up by leaves and roots and once inside the plant tissues is utilized to synthesize plant proteins essential for vegetative growth and flowers' formation. Now, thanks to Syngenta, Cut flower growers are able to attain longer stem lengths, bigger bud sizes, and a longer post-harvest shelf life by consistently using Hicure as part of their crop programs.

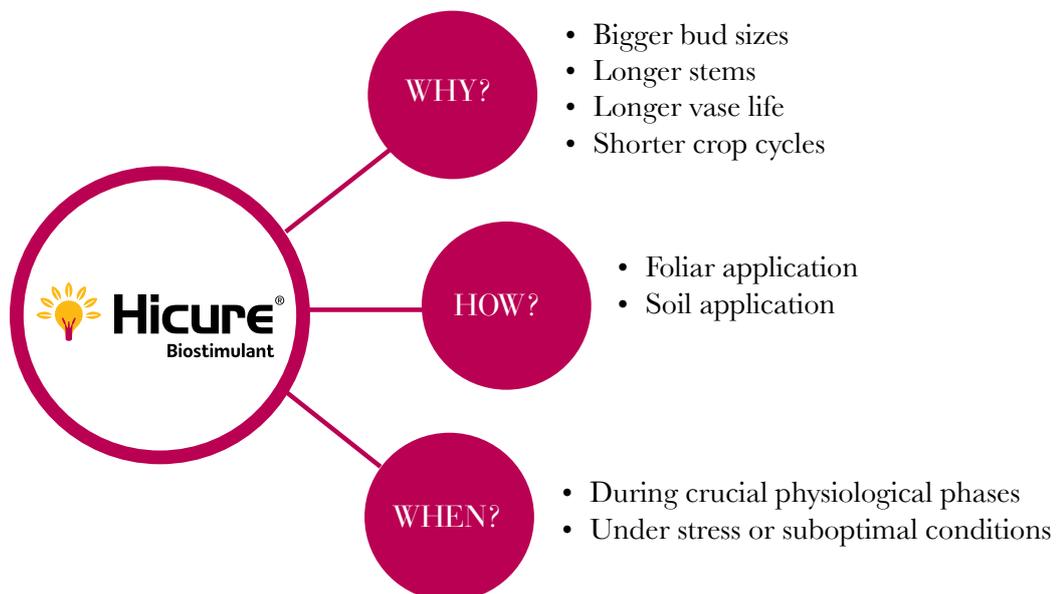
"Cut flowers in Kenya are grown under diverse agro-climatic conditions. Growers often experience lower yields and poor quality especially during stressful or sub-optimal growing conditions occasioned by high disease pressure, nutritional deficiencies, salinity, water deficiencies or excesses, phyto-toxicity caused by erroneous use of pesticides and other environmental stresses such as cold or heat, drought, frost, hail etc.," says Victor Juma, Syngenta's Business Manager for Lawn & Garden in East Africa. Against this backdrop, Hicure was tested to understand and quantify the effects it could have in improving flower yield and quality." The results were overwhelming including: more than 15% increase in marketable flowers, shortened flush periods of between 5 – 10 days and a prolonged post-harvest shelf life by three-to-six days on average.

Several leading growers who tested the product had good testimonials about their experiences with Hicure. Mr. Kenneth Mbae, who is the production manager at Agriflora (K) Ltd, had this to say, "We have a rose variety which is generally a short stem-length variety. We were interested in getting a solution that could improve its length. After a rigorous 15 weeks of testing across the farm, Hicure exceeded our expectations. I observed a positive impact on the crop. When we compared the treated plots with our regular standard product, the ones treated with Hicure showed significantly longer stem lengths. Additionally, the head sizes on the Hicure-treated roses were larger. As a grower, a bigger head size is a huge benefit because the flower fetches better prices with a larger head. Lastly, we saw improved shelf life in the treated roses."

"While Hicure is not a pesticide, it complements crop nutrition and crop protection products in an integrated program by enhancing the productivity of the crop during stressful environmental conditions," continues Victor. "It can even be used with beneficial insects."

"The launch of Hicure aligns with Syngenta's strategy of thinking like a grower," Jan Mostert, Head of Controls Flowers, Home & Garden, EAME, shares. "As a solution provider to the cut-flower industry we aim at offering integrated solutions as required by the value chain players and not just plant protection products. Our task is to address real grower needs for better quality and improved production. From an even bigger-picture perspective, Hicure offers an opportunity for Syngenta to address major challenges in the cut flower value chain and help growers obtain better returns on their investments"

Without a doubt, the cut flower industry stands to benefit from the proven performance of Hicure®, a unique and environmentally friendly plant bio-stimulant. By integrating Hicure in the crop production programs either as a foliar spray or through soil application, growers are able to achieve better plant health, longer stem lengths, bigger bud sizes, improved vase life and shorter crop cycles. This leads to enhanced efficiency in production and greater profits for growers.



Key stakeholders in the flower sector attended the Hicure Launch



EVERY FLOWER TELLS A STORY



Hicure[®]
Biostimulant

syngenta.