

*Flowers  
Cost of  
production*

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THE COST OF FORCING TULIPS AND NARCISSI DURING THE 1953-54 SEASON

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THE COST OF FORCING TULIPS AND NARCISSI DURING THE 1953-54 SEASON.

K. A. INGERSENT, M.S.

Department of Agricultural Economics  
University of Nottingham School of Agriculture  
Sutton Bonington, Loughborough.

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## PREFACE

This report embodies the second year's results of an investigation into the costs of forcing tulips and narcissi.

Although the number of growers taking part in the investigation was slightly greater than in the first year, the group is still far too small to be truly representative of bulb forcing in the East Midlands, or any wider area. Extreme caution must therefore be exercised in drawing any general conclusions from the experience of these growers. Nevertheless, it is hoped that there is enough common ground amongst the co-operating growers to make comparisons of the results obtained by the individuals composing the group useful and that each individual may gain something from the experience of the others.

In conclusion, we wish to acknowledge the very generous co-operation of the participating growers, some of whom have now been supplying information for two years.

K. A. I.

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# THE COST OF FORCING TULIPS AND NARCISSI DURING THE 1953-54 SEASON

## INTRODUCTION

Nine growers took part in this investigation during the season under review. Three of these supplied details of forcing tulips and narcissi, four of tulips only, and two of narcissi only. There are, therefore, seven records of tulips and five records of narcissi.

The nine holdings to which these costings relate are scattered over a wide area comprising Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and Rutland.

### Size of the Enterprise

The size of the bulb-forcing enterprise may be measured in terms of the weight or number of bulbs forced. The following table shows the number of tulips and weight of daffodils forced and costed on the holdings included in the investigation.

Nursery Code Number	Quantity of bulbs forced	
	Tulips	Narcissi
	000's	cwts.
1	116	-
2	49	188
3	222	170
4	40	28
5	-	16
6	20	-
7	113	-
8	-	70
9	330	-

### Relative Importance of Bulb-Forcing in the Business

Nurseries 1, 2, 3, 7, and 9 are specialists in bulb-forcing which ranks as a main enterprise in the business. Nurseries 4 and 6 are mixed holdings growing a wide variety of glasshouse and outdoor crops, and forced bulbs are grown as a catch crop between successive crops of cucumbers or tomatoes. Nursery 5 is a mixed holding where a small quantity of narcissi are forced in any space which may be available in houses partially occupied by other crops. Nursery 8 is a holding where forcing is subsidiary to the main business of bulb-growing and outdoor bulb-flower production.

VARIETIES AND BULB SIZES

Many different varieties of narcissi and tulips were forced by this small group of nine growers. Over 50 different tulip varieties and 13 different narcissus varieties are included in the costings.

A full list of the varieties costed on each nursery is shown below, together with details of the number of bulbs planted. Bulbs prepared for early forcing by pre-cooling are denoted in the list by a letter P placed after the varietal name.

Particulars of the source and grade of bulbs forced on each holding are shown in the following table

SOURCES AND GRADES OF BULBS

Nursery Code No.	T U L I P S			N A R C I S S I		
	Size	No. of imported bulbs	No. of English-grown bulbs	Size	Weight of imported bulbs	Weight of English-grown bulbs
	cm.				cwts.	cwts.
1	12	103,050	-	-	-	-
	11	13,050	-			
2	12	30,750	-	As lifted D.N. 1's and 2's	130	58
	11	18,500	-			
3	12	69,100	-	D.N. 1's 2's and 3's	-	170
	11	153,050	-			
4	11	40,000	-	As lifted	-	28
5	-	-	-	D.N. 1's	16	-
6	12	12,000	8,000	-	-	-
7	12	22,130	-	-	-	-
	11	91,350	-			
8	-	-	-	As lifted	-	70
9	11	315,000	-	-	-	-
	10	15,000	-			

BULB VARIETIES AND NUMBERS ON COSTED NURSERIES

<u>Nursery 1</u>	
<u>Tulips</u>	<u>No.</u>
Delice	17,500
Hildegarde	14,050
Alberio	9,000
Prunus	9,000
Delice (P)	8,000
Mothersday	8,000
Fridjof Nansen	8,000
Hildegarde (P)	6,000
Her Grace	5,000
Philip Snowden	4,500
Edith Eddy	4,000
Red Pitt	4,000
Copeland's Rival	3,000
Purple Copeland	2,250
Elmus	2,000
Insurpassable	2,000
Pieter de Hoogh	2,000
Sonja	2,000
Fridjof Nansen (P)	1,950
Van den Erden	1,500
Bartigon	1,250
Allbright	1,000
Cellini	100

<u>Nursery 2</u>	
<u>Tulips</u>	<u>No.</u>
Philip Snowden	9,500
Copeland's Rival	7,000
Early Queen	5,000
Special Pink	5,000
Ursa Minor	5,000
Albino	2,000
John Gay	2,000
Piccadilly	2,000
Red Pitt	2,000
Themis	2,000
Krelage's Triumph	1,750
Marjorie Bowen	1,000
Ossi Oswaldi	1,000
Utopia	1,000
Blue Parrot	500
Golden Measure	500
Mrs. John Scheepers	500
Pieter de Hoogh	250
Princess Margaret Rose	250

<u>Nursery 2 (Continued)</u>	
<u>Narcissi</u>	<u>Tonnage</u>
Rembrandt	2.25
Carlton	2.00
Golden Harvest	2.00
Flower Record	1.00
Flower Carpet	0.80
Edwin G. Buxton	0.50
La Riante	0.25
Scarlet Leader	0.25
Van Sion	0.25
Adventure	0.10

<u>Nursery 3</u>	
<u>Tulips</u>	<u>No.</u>
Rose Copeland	116,850
Rose Copeland (P)	49,100
Red Copeland	21,200
Edith Eddy	15,000
Red Copeland (P)	10,000
William Copeland (P)	10,000

<u>Narcissi</u>	<u>Tonnage</u>
Carlton	2.90
Cheerfulness	2.80
Helios	2.80

<u>Nursery 4</u>	
<u>Tulips</u>	<u>No.</u>
Rose Copeland	20,000
Carrarra	10,000
Krelage's Triumph	10,000

<u>Narcissi</u>	<u>Tonnage</u>
Carlton	1.40

<u>Nursery 5</u>	
<u>Narcissi</u>	<u>Tonnage</u>
Carlton	0.40
Golden Harvest	0.40

<u>Nursery 6</u>	
<u>Tulips</u>	<u>No.</u>
Krelage's Triumph	12,000
Pink Gem	3,000
Van den Erden	3,000
White Sail	2,000

BULB VARIETIES AND NUMBERS ON COSTED NURSERIES (CONT'D.)

<u>Nursery 7</u>		<u>Nursery 8</u>	
<u>Tulips</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Narcissi</u>	<u>Tonnage</u>
Edith Eddy	10,000	Early Glory	3.50
Prunus	8,000		
White Sail (P)	8,000		
Edith Eddy (P)	7,500		
Early Queen (P)	7,000		
Early Queen Orange (P)	6,500		
Copeland's Rival	6,000		
Rose Copeland (P)	6,000		
Van den Erden (P)	6,000		
Van den Erden	6,000		
Peach Blossom	5,480		
Utopia	5,000		
William Pitt	5,000		
Alberio (P)	4,000		
Mozart	4,000		
Rose Copeland	4,000		
Shackleton	4,000		
White Virgin	4,000		
Crown Imperial (P)	3,000		
Allbright	2,000		
Golden Harvest	2,000		
		<u>Nursery 9</u>	
		<u>Tulips</u>	<u>No.</u>
		Rose Copeland	80,000
		Krelage's Triumph	65,000
		Hildegarde (P)	55,000
		Krelage's Triumph (P)	25,000
		John Gay	20,000
		Early Queen	15,000
		Golden Harvest	15,000
		King of Yellows (P)	15,000
		Imperator (P)	10,000
		Reformer	10,000
		Early Queen (P)	5,000
		Elmus	5,000
		King of Yellows	5,000
		Peach Blossom	5,000

GROWING PRACTICES

The growers differed to some extent in methods of growing and preparing the flowers for market. A number of the more important differences may be enumerated briefly as follows:-

Type of forcing box

Three of the specialist growers (Nurseries 1, 2 and 3) used a relatively large and expensive box of the type obtained by cutting down bulb-cases (the containers in which Dutch bulbs are packed for export). One grower (Nursery 8) forced narcissi in potato chitting trays. The remaining growers used a smaller and cheaper type of box, by far the most common being the Dutch tomato tray.

Covering material

Most of the growers covered the boxes on the standing out ground with ashes or sand or soil over-topped with straw. But two growers (Nurseries 1 and 7) placed a layer of peat between the boxes and the final covering of soil.



Although peat is a relatively expensive covering material, the expense may be justified if it substantially reduces the amount of shoot damage (especially likely to occur during frosty weather) when the boxes are lifted for carrying in.

#### Bunching and packing

Two growers (Nurseries 1 and 6) marketed all their tulips in bunches of six, and one grower (Nursery 2) marketed some in sixes and some in dozens. The remaining tulip forcers marketed entirely in dozens.

One grower (Nursery 5) marketed narcissi entirely in sixes, and one grower (Nursery 2) some in sixes and some in dozens. One grower (Nursery 3) marketed narcissi entirely in nines. The remaining two narcissus forcers marketed entirely in dozens.

Growers varied a good deal in the type of paper they used for lining the flower boxes - the choice varying from a cheap tissue to a relatively expensive waxed lettuce paper. But only one grower (Nursery 6) mentioned using different coloured papers to contrast with the shade of the flowers, and only one grower (Nursery 7) wrapped individual bunches (tulips). Furthermore, only one grower (Nursery 1) marked individual bunches with a brand label.

#### Forcing on benches or on the ground

Five of the tulip crops and two of the narcissus crops were forced on benches. One tulip crop (Nursery 4) was forced on the ground and one (Nursery 6) on the raised beds of an old-fashioned vinery type of house. Three narcissus crops (Nurseries 3, 4 and 8) were forced on the ground.

#### Carrying in

Most of the growers used hand-barrows for moving the bulbs from the standing out ground to the forcing house. But two of the larger scale forcers were able to move much larger quantities at each journey by using a tractor and low-set trailer (Nursery 3) or a flat lorry (Nursery 9).

#### MARKETING

Differences between growers in the matter of marketing policy have two main aspects:-

- (i) Type of market utilised.
- (ii) Date of marketing.