

New Nerium (*Nerium oleander*) varieties

Pavan Kumar P.*

College of Horticulture (UHS, Bagalkot), Bengaluru, Karnataka, India

Nerium (*Nerium oleander* L.) is an evergreen ornamental flowering shrub, belongs to the family Apocynaceae. Commonly recognized as the dogbane family, it includes about 424 genera distributed in tropical and subtropical regions (Endress and Bruyns, 2000). Nerium is distributed in the Mediterranean region and subtropical Asia, is indigenous to India. The estimated area of Nerium cultivation is over 2,300 ha, highest area being in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Kerala. It is a major traditional loose flower crop grown extensively for religious offerings, garland making etc. A systematic crop improvement programme was started to breed the novel varieties and hybrids of Nerium, during 2026. The University of Horticultural Sciences, Bagalkot, Karnataka, has released three Nerium varieties, Krishna Prabha Dishanth, Krishna Prabha Ratna and Krishna Prabha Ushashri for commercial cultivation. They are:



Krishna Prabha Dishanth: It is a clonal selection from germplasm maintained at the University of Horticultural Sciences, Bagalkot, Karnataka. The flowers are pink with single whorls with a bud length of 2.90 cm and flower diameter of 4.30-4.50 cm. Its flowers are plucked 90-95 days after transplanting, producing 4.34 kg flowers/plant/year and peak flowering being from June to October.

*Corresponding author : pavankumar.p@uhsbagalkot.edu.in



Krishna Prabha Ratna: Its colour is red with single whorls. The bud length is 2.83 cm with flower diameter of 4.10-4.20 cm. It yields 3.08 kg flowers/plant/year, 85-90 days after transplanting, peak flowering season being from June to September.



Krishna Prabha Ushashri: Its flower colour is white with single whorls. The bud length is 2.76 cm with flower diameter of 4.30-4.50 cm. The flowers are ready for picking 95-100 days after transplanting, the yield being 3.86 kg flowers/plant/year.