

## **Effect of Flower Farming on Environment and Health with Special Emphasis on Oromia, Ethiopia**

Girma Gebresenbet<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Energy and Technology, Uppsala, Sweden

girma.gebresenbet@et.slu.se

Agriculture is one of the most hazardous occupations world wide, where fatal accident rate in agriculture is double the average for all other industrial sectors. The chemicals used in agriculture compromise health of agricultural workers, biodiversity and environment as a whole.

Flowers are emerging as a stable and a very marketable international crop, earning up to five times per acre what fruit crops bring in. While floriculture work has opened labour opportunities, it also threatens workers' health and safety, and degrades the environment.

The flower industry growers must resort to fertilizers to increase yields and improve quality, and to pesticides and fungicides to control spider mites, caterpillars, and other pests which invade the flower crop. However, these chemicals have negative effects health, and on the environment, especially soil and ground water.

The paper briefly reviews and elaborates the effect of flower farming on environment and health, and discusses cases in Latin America, Africa and pilot case study made in Oromia, Ethiopia. The chemicals used currently for flower production in the aforementioned continents caused significant effect on health of workers, their children and people living in the vicinity of flower farming.

Flower farming is concentrated and expanding in the very fertile and central part of Federal State of Oromia in Ethiopia. The Ethiopian government encourages investors, offering them a five-year tax holiday and duty-free import of machinery. Therefore the economic incentives for both foreign and local investors are the five free tax and cheap or free land for flower farming.

It was noticed that the flower farming in Oromia is not inline with international work environment and do not fulfil the environmental requirements. Concluding remarks and recommendations were made to promote sustainable work environment and noted the requirement of ratification and implementation of international code of conduct on how to handle and use of chemicals in flower farming.