

The business magazine
for worldwide floriculture

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APRIL 2015

IPM ESSEN

Highlights from
the world's premier
trade show for life
style horticulture

UNITED STATES

The most unlikely
but wonderful thing
happened at the
WFE show

Eye-catching orchids

*Supplement
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Floraculture International encourages the pursuit of joint activities in areas of mutual interest with national and international societies, companies and organisations. Agreements have been reached between Floraculture International and leading growers and trade associations in 32 countries. This unique partnership includes a complimentary copy for each member of the registered associations. Floraculture International is proud to announce the cooperation with the following associations.

For more FCI partners see page 34.





Highlights from the world's premier trade fair for life style horticulture

For ornamental horticulture there's no bigger date in the calendar than the IPM exhibition in Essen, Germany. Held every year in January, the world's biggest horticultural fair has been showcasing innovations and highlighting trends since its inception. This year the focus was on spectacular plant novelties, smart merchandising concepts, modern, sustainable production practice and blurring the lines between home and garden. Here are our highlights.

by **Ron van der Ploeg**

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ABZ Seeds & Hem Genetics continue long tradition of open spring trials

Strawberry specialists ABZ Seeds and Hem Genetics, internationally recognized for genetically dwarf bedding plants, will be holding open house to visitors from 28 to 30 April this year.

by **John Sutton**

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Breeders' exemption and exhaustion

In a series of exclusive interviews for FCI, CIOPORA Secretary General Dr Edgar Krieger elaborates on the breeders' vision of future IP protection for plants incorporated in the CIOPORA Position Papers on Minimum Distance, Scope of the Right, Exhaustion and Breeders' Exemption. In this issue we will explore the topic of Exhaustion and Breeders' Exemption.

by **our own correspondent**

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The most unlikely but wonderful thing happened at the WFE show

The California and South American growers were in the same exhibition together in what appeared to be perfect harmony. To me this was the most important take away from the latest World Floral Expo show, which was held at the Los Angeles Convention Centre from March 11-13.

by **William Armellini**

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OrchidGuide 2015

FloraCulture International

Commercial orchids in focus: OrchidGuide

The goal of OrchidGuide is to develop a global directory of orchid-related businesses, which provides information on all aspects of commercial orchid production worldwide. OrchidGuide helps you to find the latest orchid novelties, breakthrough technologies and ideas for business growth.

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**Heddy Alwyn
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From the editor

by Ron van der Ploeg

It's April, and, while some parts of the northern hemisphere are shaking off an unusually long winter, it is getting to the time of year of the spring trials. April 11 through 16 mark the official opening of the new plant trial season with the California Spring Trials (CAST) being held at various locations throughout the Golden State. The annual week-long event is a launching ground for the latest breeding breakthroughs in bedding plants, houseplants, perennials and cut flowers.

There are two major changes this year. Some of the exhibitors that were at Windmill Nursery in Buellton last year have split up, so there's a new stop at Floricultura in Salinas. Also, Dümmer's stop in Santa Paula has moved to BarrelHouse Brewing Company in Paso Robles. Green Fuse Botanicals will still be in Santa Paula.

For the stops at GroLink and Speedling that have multiple companies displaying, there have been a few companies that have dropped out, while others have been added, so please refer to the Spring Trials Planner at www.ballpublishing.com for all the details. If you are unable to attend this year, don't forget to follow the Bobbleheads (Chris Beytes and Ellen Wells from sister publication Grower Talk) every day by reading their Acres of Buzz e-newsletter and tuning in to the Grower Talks YouTube channel. Both media sources combine straightforward news coverage with humorous stories.

In the Netherlands, strawberry specialist ABZ Seeds and Hem Genetics, internationally recognised for genetically dwarf bedding plants, deserves praise for upholding the long tradition of open spring trials. Both companies will open their doors from April 28 to 30 to give industry professionals a behind-the-scenes look at their breeding work. ABZ Seeds and Hem Genetics are young businesses, founded in the late twentieth century. ABZ is highly specialised, focusing exclusively on the breeding, development and marketing of seed-raised strawberries. Hem Genetics now works not only with a wide range of seed-raised bedding plants, but additionally with vegetatively propagated varieties. Page 26.

Offered a sneak peak of the most beautiful bedding plants to come in the new season, were the attendees of the 33rd edition of the world's premier horticultural trade show IPM Essen. This year the focus was on spectacular plant novelties, smart merchandising concepts, modern, sustainable production practice and blurring the lines between home and garden. Pages 8 to 14 feature our highlights.

Occupying pride of place at this year's IPM were orchids of all shapes, sizes and colours of the rainbow. The aim of this month's OrchidGuide is to develop a global directory of orchid-related businesses that provides information on all aspects of commercial orchid production worldwide. The OrchidGuide helps you to find the latest orchid novelties, breakthrough technologies and ideas for business growth. In this guide we feature an in-depth interview with 2013 Klaas Schoone Memorial Award winner Mr. Yung-Yu Lin of Brother Orchid Taiwan. Our correspondent Marc van Sittert caught up with the orchid industry veteran and gleaned a glimpse of a highly competitive and pressurized sector of a global market where challenges are mounting yet there appears to still be room for the pursuit of new markets, unending innovation...and beauty. Page 15.



Ron van der Ploeg, editor
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For ornamental horticulture there's no bigger date in the calendar than the IPM exhibition in Essen, Germany. Held every year in January, the world's biggest horticultural fair has been showcasing innovations and highlighting trends since its inception. This year the focus was on spectacular plant novelties, smart merchandising concepts, modern, sustainable production practice and blurring the lines between home and garden. Here are our highlights.

by Ron van der Ploeg

Highlights from the world's premier trade fair for life style horticulture

A market need resulted in the birth of the ornamental horticulture and gardening industry's trade show in 1983 with just 100 booths in one hall. Thirty three years on and the IPM Essen is still a prime example of how to create an environment that is an energetic blend of business and business friendships with particular focus on plant novelties, breakthrough technologies and ideas for business growth.

The IPM show grew each year and it expanded its reach to all corners of the world, as this year it attracted 56,500 visitors from 100 countries and over 1,600 exhibitors from 49 countries.

"We are looking back at one of the most successful events in the history of IPM Essen. Never before have so many exhibitors introduced their innovations here and never before did so many visitors come from outside Germany. Those are top-



class results," enthused CEO Messe Essen GmbH Oliver P. Kuhrt. He added, "At the beginning of the year, important stimuli originated

from IPM ESSEN. No other fair manages to bring the protagonists in the sector together in such an exact-fitting and efficient way." III

Eric de Vos praised for his dedication and commitment as he retires

Eric de Vos had his retirement party at the IPM Essen on Tuesday January 27. The VLAM (Flanders' Agricultural Marketing Board) treated him to a spectacular party including speeches and toasts.

De Vos' impressively dedicated career in the horticultural industry began in 1980 when he was appointed assistant conservator at Kalmthout Botanical Garden, near Antwerp. Two years later, Eric joined Nazareth's environmental affairs department as a civil servant.

In 1989, Eric started working at NDALTP, an organisation that changed its name to VLAM in 1994.

Eric served VLAM in several management roles. From 1994-2015, he was involved in marketing and promotions for Flemish life style horticulture products. He richly deserves credit for his passionate year-round promotion of flowers & education and for the ongoing support of VLAM and the floral industry as a whole. III



INDEGA Awards

Open to all exhibitors at the show, the INDEGA (the association representing the interests of German horticulture) Award recognises the most technologically significant new product of the year and its inventor. Knecht/Menno Chemie and DH Licht were the biggest winners as they each took home the highest accolade.

Showing great technological advance, versatility, sustainability and commercial promise was the Phyto Foamer from Knecht/Menno Chemie Vertrieb from Germany. Phyto Foamer is a new state-of-the-art method to control the spread of greenhouse bacteria, fungi and viruses. The product mixes water with air and Menno Florades or Menno Ter Forte (bacteria, fungi, weed seeds, algae and moss) to produce a shaving-cream like foam for removal of stubborn deposits.



Used in a stationary application, the Phyto Foamer is designed to be integrated into a mobile bench system. Benches are sprayed on top and at the edges, the foam disintegrates, the applied disinfectant is discharged via the table drain, collected and reused with corresponding additional dosing. The amounts of disinfectant and time can be reduced substantially

using the new procedure. The system is currently being trialled by pot plant supplier and plug producer Gartenbau Gastager in Siezenheim, Austria. The second big winner was DH Licht, scooping the INDEGA Award for its MGR E and MGR K lamps. Both plant lighting solutions stand out because of their separate lamp and ballast

housings. The ballast housing can be placed in front of the lamp (as is customary) using an integrated rail system but directly on the lamp, too. The new CHD Agro 400 lighting agent can be utilised not only universally for plant production but also for illumination in garden centres. III

Industry giants versus niche operators

Among the industry giants were niche operators who risked getting lost in the vastness of the exhibition, though for some the exercise paid huge dividends. Take for example Jungle Jack's, a US company that develops and grows some of the finest plumerias available anywhere in the world and it has been attracting more and more attention. Jungle Jack plumerias are now being grown and sold everywhere in Europe to the Middle East, Asia, Australia/New Zealand and North and South America.

Looking absolutely stunning, highly fragrant and coming in a variety of exotic colours, Plumeria is a relatively unknown plant in Europe, except from for example the island of Sicily and its capital

city, Palermo, where the plumeria flower (also dubbed frangipani or pomelia) was adopted as the city's official flower a long time ago. The Plumeria collection in Palermo's botanical garden is one of the

most important in the country as it houses a range of ancient varieties. Commercial Plumeria production, albeit small-scaled, is widely spread over the island. Entering its fourth generation of owners, the family-owned Oro Verde nursery, surrounded by nature and overlooking the strait of Messina, grows finished Plumeria plants, sells them in Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Belgium and sources its cuttings from Jungle Jack's. In a joint stand with Jungle Jack's, Oro Verde welcomed many existing and potential customers from around the world. Commenting on this year's IPM John said, "Although Jungle Jack's is a

relative newcomer to Essen, it has already proven to be a highly successful venue for us. Aside from generating significant exposure to European-based prospects, IPM has enabled us to meet other prospects from all over the world. Also, and perhaps more important than anything else given the global dispersion of our customer base, many of our existing customers come to Essen almost every year, giving us the opportunity to see them in person. That kind of face-to-face contact is really priceless. From a strictly personal perspective, it's an amazing show, there is so much to see, so many creative ideas. This year did not disappoint in the least." III



Face to face meetings

No matter how technologically advanced our world becomes, there is nothing quite like a face-to-face meeting with industry professionals. Numerous industry associations held their high level board meetings at the IPM show.

The Floriculture Sustainability Initiative (FSI), for example, held its second General Assembly at the IPM Essen. FSI brings key industry players together to focus on the developments of mainstream sustainability in the floriculture sector. Their aim is that 90% of the flowers and pot plants will be sustainably produced and traded by the members by 2020. Looking back at 2014, the FSI board highlighted the first 10 projects conducted by FSI members that will hopefully lead to more insights and better awareness of sustainability issues. According to FSI executive officer Jeroen Oudheusden, there is “no doubt that combining the efforts of our members and implementing the learnings from FSI member projects to the measuring methodology will lead to improved sustain-



able practices in the flower business.” The German association of the flower wholesale and import trade (BGI), hosted a 50th anniversary party at IPM Essen, bringing together flower and plant growers, floral wholesalers, BGI staff and friends. When BGI was founded in Düsseldorf 50 years ago, the sector had been relatively well-established in a Germany earmarked by the ‘economic miracle’; however it was still

maturing. In a relatively short time, Germany evolved into one of the world’s most important consumer markets for lifestyle horticulture products and it still is today. In 50 years, Germany’s ornamental horticulture has gone through many changes along the way, while overcoming major hurdles. The declining domestic production in the early years and the growing number of imported cut flowers and pot plants were the BGI’s biggest headache at

its debut. The association was founded with the mission to “lead wholesalers away from floral imports and convince them of the quality and the good product range of domestic products.” But the latent protectionism of a fledgling BGI was soon replaced by a much more open approach and on its 50th anniversary the association is networking internationally and represented in important global committees, among which is Union Fleurs. III

Ernest Wertheim captivates audience at Orlandelli booth

Having the ability to captivate his audience in a humble, yet compelling manner in a lecture, 94-old landscape architect Ernest Wertheim gave his audience some fascinating insights into the world of garden centre design.

The San Francisco resident was present for three days at Orlandelli’s booth and offered a great talk that was of strong interest to garden retailers, floral wholesalers and growers. Wertheim spoke about the biggest, but also the smallest garden centres he designed throughout the United States, Canada, Europe and South Africa, highlighting their layout, special feature areas and the problems he dealt with during construction and the solutions adopted to make some of them the most important existing to date. III





A ground-breaking new greenhouse covering

As well as enjoying the most beautiful pot plants and cut flowers on offer, visitors could also view technology goods. The 2SaveEnergy greenhouse covering offers growers a new, practical and economical solution for energy-efficient production. This all-purpose greenhouse covering contains an outer layer of diffuse glass with a double anti-reflective coating and an under layer of extremely durable, highly transparent F-CLEAN film between which there is a ventilation cavity. Smart choices and ingenious technology make this the first greenhouse covering that combines a high insulation value and light transmission at an affordable price.

The 2SaveEnergy® concept has been developed by a consortium of expert suppliers in collaboration with Wageningen Glastuinbouw University and Research Centre. The combination of diffuse glass with double-sided AR-coating and a durable, highly transparent plastic film has similar insulation properties as multi-coated double glazing but in a format that is lighter and easier to use. Above all, it allows the same amount of light through as a standard single-pane covering, that is unable to scatter light. The high insulation value of the covering is largely thanks to the cavity between the glass

and the F CLEAN® film. This special, highly transparent film is very durable and maintains its anti-condensation properties for at least ten years. The film, which features strips integrated on both sides, is pulled from a large roll over the entire length of the surface under the rods on the covering in one single step. The profiles are equipped with special guidance slits that keep the film tight and in place, directly under the rods on the covering. This forms a cavity of around 5cm. 2SaveEnergy® benefits from continuous roof ventilation made of multi-coated, diffuse double AR glass.

An exceptional feature of 2SaveEnergy® is the active greenhouse air cavity ventilation, which means that the covering is kept free of ice and snow in the winter. To ensure optimum ventilation, the ducts have openings to the cavity and small ventilators can be connected to them. Air is blown back into the warehouse by way of grooves in the rafters that open with the slightest opening in the ventilation window. A flexible rubber strip holds the ventilation window ajar to close it off from outside air. Wageningen Glastuinbouw University and Research Centre has investigated and calculated numerous aspects of this revolutionary greenhouse covering. This research found that it was possible to achieve hemispherical trans-

mission of 80.7% and vertical transmission of more than 90.6% for a glass/film combination, which is comparable with a standard covering. According to the calculations, a year-round tomato crop under Dutch conditions would require a gas consumption of 19m³/m², 7m³ less than the 26m³ that can be achieved in a standard greenhouse for New Style Cultivation with two adjustable screens, a fixed film in the start-up phase and dehumidification with fresh air intake. The system is suitable for all Venlo greenhouses. By autumn 2015, it will be clear how the greenhouse performs from an energy and crop perspective and where any improvements can be made. Once perfected, 2SaveEnergy® will be ready to conquer the world. III

Valoya lights enable urban gardening in disused air-raid shelter

The Helsinki based Valoya was a show stand out with creative and innovative lighting solutions. The company spotted the opportunity for some clever marketing now that the story of urban gardening hits the headlines day by day.



Last month, a London-based producer of leafy greens selected Valoya's LED lights for the initial phase of its multilayer, underground production facility 'Growing Underground'. The company will start production of leafy greens, such as lettuce, cress, herbs

and a variety of micro-greens 33 meters under South London. The production space is located in a disused air-raid shelter in Clapham North. The plants are grown hydroponically in a system of shelves stacked on top of each other utilizing

LED light instead of natural light. Growing Underground required the light to be energy efficient and to drive the natural features and taste of their produce. After extensive testing, Growing Underground selected Valoya's LEDs as they proved to provide best overall performance across a variety of plants. Pictured are (33m under the streets of London) Richard Ballard of Growing Underground and Lars Aikala of Valoya discussing the test installation in 2013. Growing Underground pride themselves on being a carbon neutral company – their hydroponics

system uses 70% less water than traditional open-field farming and, because all the nutrients are kept within the closed-loop system, there is no risk of contributing to agricultural run-off. Valoya is a provider of energy efficient LED grow lights for professional use. Valoya LED-lights have been developed using Valoya's proprietary LED technology and extensive plant photobiology research. Valoya's customer base includes numerous greenhouses and research institutions all over the world.. III

Mystery Lady provides beautiful colour palette

FCI was drawn to the colour palette and subtle full forms of Mystery Lady Asters from Denmark-based Råhøj nursery.

Husband and wife team Bent and Malene Juhl Jensen founded their company in Malling, near Aarhus in 1992. They grow finished Trifolium and Sedum plants and sell their Vietnam-grown Aster and Trifolium cuttings through the well-known GASA Young Plants A/S cooperative.

The foundation of contemporary Aster novi-belgii breeding was laid in 1994, at a time when asters started having an image problem (BTW novi-belgii a rather strange name as no such place as New Belgium has ever existed! The story goes that the first aster seeds were classified by German botanist Paul Hermann at the University of Leiden in Holland and that these were collected in the area now occupied by modern New York, and so they are also known as the New York asters). Burnishing the flower's image

exactly ten years later was the Mystery Lady series that caused quite a stir as this new generation of asters included never before seen double flowered varieties in warm autumn colours, suitable for both pot plant and cut flower production.

Occupying pride of place at this year's IPM show was Aster 'Nicole', named after one of Hollywood's most famous actresses Nicole Kidman. In commercial pot plant production, 'Nicole' can be grown using only one cutting per (13cm) pot. Two pinches will result in beautifully compact and full plants that are loaded with blooms. The first pinch should be as low as possible leaving 3 to 5 internodes. The keeping quality of Nicole is excellent at retail and the high flower count is sure to stimulate impulse sales.

Over the years, Råhøj has also earned a strong reputation for

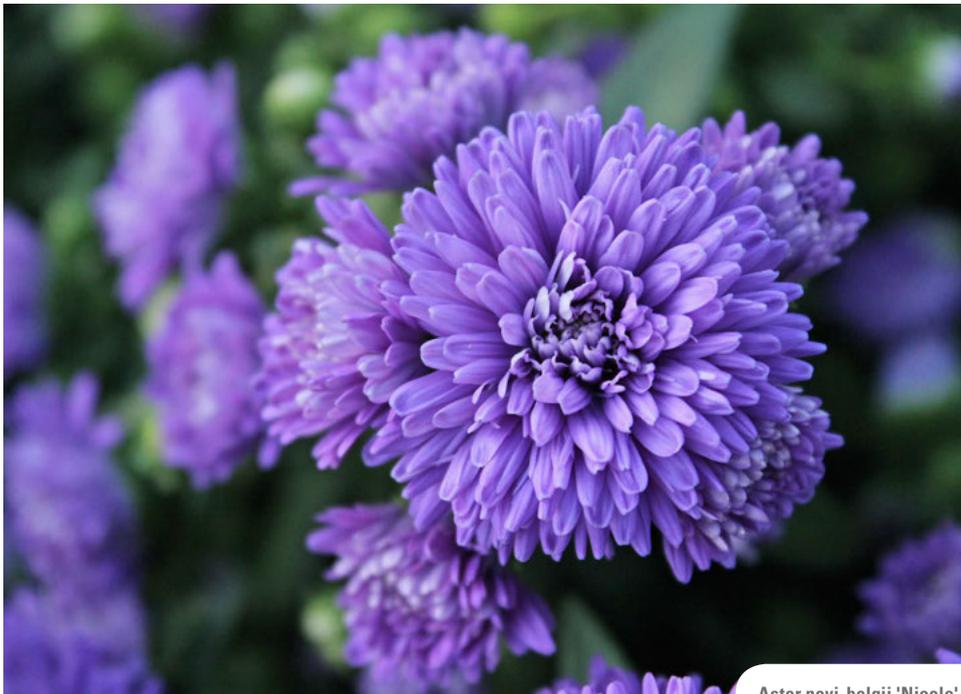


Trifolium breeding and had their finest hour in 2009, 2012 and 2014 when they scooped the coveted Floradania Innovation Award for Trifolium repens 'Ebony', Trifolium 'Josephine' and Trifolium repens 'Estelle' respectively, all clovers that stand out for their unusual leaf colours

and patterns, great consumer appeal and excellent keeping qualities.

Making its debut at this year's IPM show were Trifolium repens 'Leonore' with green leaves with red markings in the centre and white flowers. Also premiering at IPM was Trifolium repens 'Dark Debbie' that makes for a handsome edging or ground-cover plant. Foliage is three or four-leaved (only if you're lucky of course) and dark purple-black with a green margin. White flowers appear from May to September.

To date, the company's Trifolium portfolio includes 8 varieties, 6 of them owned by the nursery. Note: From 2015, the RHS will classify Aster novi-belgii as a Symphyotrichum. III



Aster novi-belgii 'Nicole'.



Trifolium repens 'Dark Debbie'.

Show Your Colours Award

This year's Show Your Colours Awards (jointly organised by BIZZ Holland and Messe Essen) proved to be very popular and with 10 entries the judges were spoilt for choice.

Crowned best in show was Rhododendron Bloombux® ('Microhirs3'), introduced by Joh. Stolwijk & Söhne, Boskoop (Netherlands) and Diderk Heinje Pflanzenhandelsges. mbH & Co KG., Jeddeloh (Germany). Their storytelling techniques give the Bloombux brand credibility and personality, while the versatility of these shrubs allows gardeners to grow them in different ways. An alternative to traditional box hedging (easily prone to box blight or *Cylindrocladium buxicola*),

Rhododendron Bloombux provides structure and interest right throughout the year. It flowers in early summer but will also thrive in partial shade. One can clip it tightly for years and years and it retains a neat, perfect formality. Give it a trim straight after the early summer flowers have faded. These soft pink flowers come in clusters and are highly attractive to bees and butterflies. An INKARHO type, it will tolerate soils with a neutral pH and can also be grown in a pot. III



Truly international

The IPM show is truly international, hosting not just exhibitors from Europe, but also from North and South America, Asia and Australia.



Prominently present this year was France with two main French pavilions in Hall 2 and Hall 10. Many first-time exhibitors were showcasing new product ranges and varieties, alongside some more familiar participants such as cyclamen breeder Morel Diffusion and Hortensia specialist Sicamus production. Other French exhibitors at IPM Essen 2015 included: Chrysanthèmes Bernard, Graines Bernard, Chauvin Hortensia, Florentaise, Hortensias France Production, Plant Sud, Sapho, Sauve-Guittet Group Oroflor, Ernest Turc Productions, Turcieflor by Pierre Turc, Valhor, Vegepolys, Chatelain, Pepinières et Roseraies Georges Delbard, Pepinières D'Engandou, Guillot Bourne, Roseraie Guillot, Javoy Plantes, Pepinières de Kerisnel and Orme de Montferrat. 2015 saw the largest ever UK participation from the two main British pavilions in Hall 10 and Hall 3. The expanding pavilion in the technology hall 3 featured a number of novel products and services including professional

grower substrates from Bulrush Horticulture. Using its famous tagline 'Frost? Heat? Yes we resist!', a strong contingent of fifteen Hungarian plant growers (of which three rose growers) showcased a wide range of particularly hardy nursery stock products. Following the fall of communism, the Hungarian ornamental horticulture and gardening industry has gone through many changes. To date, the country hosts over 500 plant nurseries which operate in both regional and urban areas across western Hungary (Vas county), north western Hungary (Győr-Moson-Sopron county), south western Hungary (Somogy county and Zala County) and central Hungary (Pest county including the capital Budapest. 40% of the growers operate in west Hungary equalling 47% of the production area. 17% of the growers operate within the major population centre of Pest county where they grow plants on 10,8% of the total production area in use for ornamental horticulture. III

An avalanche of awards

Deservedly winning the 2015 IPM Novelty Award, *Alstroemeria* 'Paradiso' is a creation from *Könst Alstroemeria* and is now vying for its second accolade as it is nominated for the Dutch *Alstroemeria* Award. 'Paradiso' is a gorgeous, new spray *Alstroemeria* featuring a unique cream- mint green colour and a multitude of blooms.

Promenaea Sunlight was among the big winners at this year's IPM Innovation Awards. It was awarded Best in Show in the Flowering Indoor Plants category. Endemic



Promenaea Sunlight

to central and southern Brazil and closely related to *Zygopetalums*, most of the 15 *Promenaea* species occur as epiphytes in moist forests, but *Hassinger* and *Klusmann* have now created a compact indoor plant with a prominent pseudobulb. Its most spectacular feature, however, are the masses of golden yellow and slightly fragrant flowers that can last anywhere from 6 to 8 weeks. Japan-based breeder *Suntory*, working together with its European licensor *Moerheim*, launched their new *Bidens Beedance*. One of the latest additions to the *Suntory* Collection Europe, *Bidens Beedance* won the 2015 IPM Innovation Award in the category Best Bedding and Balcony Plants. According to the panel of judges, the large, two-tone yellow and red flowers are truly unique. This stunning *Bidens* produces masses of flowers that rise above ferny foliage. *Beedance* has a tight well-branching habit, making it an ideal addition to containers, patio pots and borders. Available for consumers in the



Bidens Beedance

spring of 2016, *Beedance* will be sold together with an attractive pot, tag or other POP materials that makes it easy to recognise. According to *Moerheim*, one of the biggest selling points is that *Beedance* is attractive to bees and butterflies. Everyone likes to see a butterfly when staying outside, but not many of us are overly fond of bees and wasps. The question is how consumer appealing the brand name *Beedance* is. |||



Alstroemeria Paradiso

Degradable durability

No product review would be complete without a nod to *Jiffy*: the masters of propagation *Jiffy-7* pellets, biodegradable *Jiffy*-pots, *Preforma Glue Plugs*, *coir Grow-bags* and *Grow-blocks* and a wide range of tailor-made substrate mixes in bales, bags or loose.

Remaining true to their 'Degradable Durability' principle, the company used the IPM show to launch its new *Jiffypot R2*, a brand new home compostable pot. According to *Jiffy* director of marketing *Roelof Drost*, the pot offers excellent performance in (automated) production, handling and retail. He adds that *R2* has kept most of the original *Jiffypot* characteristics, using peat and wood pulp as the main ingredients. What is different from the original pot, which entered the horticultural scene in the 1950s, is an added characteristic, keeping the pot dry, even though it is exposed to water and humid substrate. *Drost* says the dryness of the container persists for a while depending on the ambient humidity, irrigation, substrate and temperature, however, *R2* maintains its rigid form and clean surface long enough to produce herbs, bedding plants or any other plant to be sold to the retail market in a 100% biodegradable container with no fungal growth on its walls. The *Jiffypot R2* is available in more than 30 different sizes and designs. |||



OrchidGuide

2015

FloraCulture
international



IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW

Award winner Mr Yung-Yu Lin
on global orchid industry

ARIS VISION SYSTEMS

Orchid chain information
from breeding to flowering

SION ORCHIDS

Offering cultivation advice and
marketing support

HASSINGER ORCHIDEEN

New orchid varieties are here

ORCHID PROPAGATION

'Phalaenopsis has hit the wall'

HORTICOOP

The world's best orchid substrate

When the first Klaas Schoone Memorial Award was presented in 2013 in memory of Klaas Schoone, a popular, prominent and untiring contributor to orchid propagation during his life, it went to a rising presence in the Asian market place - Mr. Yung-Yu Lin of Brother Orchid in Taiwan. Floraculture International caught up with Mr. Lin and gleaned a glimpse of a highly competitive and pressurized sector of a global market where challenges are mounting yet there appears still room for the pursuit of new markets, unending innovation...and beauty.

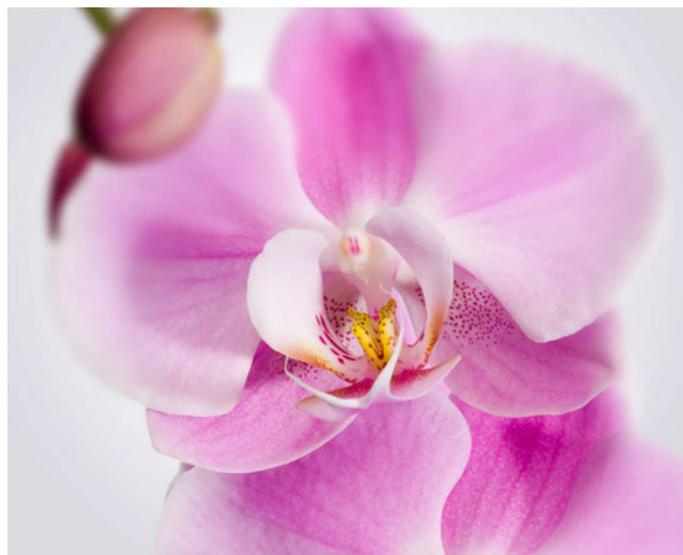
by Marc van Sittert

Klaas Schoone Memorial Award winner has not yet peaked by far

The Taiwanese government Economic and Agriculture departments have a fairly detailed and very accurate depiction of the orchid trade both emanating from and arriving in Taiwan. A complex picture emerges when perusing the data these departments provide as they include the growth or shrinkage of various countries as export destinations, changes in popularity between orchid types and also the growth of various crops as seen against previous years, measured in percentage points. All in all, very impressive data from which can be cherry picked snippets of useful information such as the growth of Phalaenopsis against all other orchids, the preferences of individual importing countries and sudden growth spurts in any given commodity that growers can attempt to capitalise on.

Taiwan's domestic orchid production

The orchid industry globally has seen a coalescence of a multitude of individual players' inputs and governmental facilitation of the industry's viability in a host of subtle and overt ways in many countries



of the world, as well as plain business sense, in order to make it what it is today. All of these inputs have shaped this sector of the global ornamental plant market over the last twenty years or so, making it both a visibly beautiful yet also highly pressurized trade. Reporting on a country's domestic orchid production in terms of figures is always tricky as different sources provide different figures.

When asked for an opinion as to the number of growers and their relevant statistics, Mr. Lin felt it a fairly easy fact to glean from detailed, available statistics. "That's easier I think for me to quantify as our association is very strong here in Taiwan and gives a pretty accurate depiction of the true number. Of course people come and go in an industry year to year but nonetheless I would safely say around 1000-1200 growers, based on the number of Taiwan Orchid Growers Association (TOGA) members.

Individual grower's statistics are harder to ascertain in a dynamic environment where the nature and quantity of crops may well be shuffled from season to season. When asked to comment on the total production area dedicated to orchid production in Taiwan and whether one could also divide these up by cut orchids, young plant production and potted orchid production, this proved to be as tricky a question as it is in many other countries involved in the trade. "That I wouldn't be able to say", said Mr. Lin. He added, "While we have extensive facts and figures on certain aspects of our trade including volumes traded per commodity and values thereof, the exact area dedicated to each aspect of the orchid trade I think changes constantly and, even where static, new players come on board and others leave between data collections and make that difficult to determine as a 'right now' statistic."



Brother Orchid set up in Taiwan.



2013 Klaas Schoone Memorial Award winner, Mr Yung-Yu Lin.

Tainan is the country's orchid hub

Taiwan has a fairly diverse climate over its landmass, with dry savannah overtones and a subtropical climate existing in seemingly close proximity. Looking at the geographic concentration of orchid farming in the country (the main production area) Mr. Lin confirmed what is already broadly understood about Taiwan. "Tainan is sort of the hub of the orchid industry in Taiwan. Its climate is about as humid and warm as Taiwan becomes and that suits orchid cultivation."

As regards specific figures that the TOGA members produce, Mr. Lin said that the 2014 total sales (turnover) of Taiwan's orchid industry,

across all sectors of the gross orchid production, is substantial - USD183 billion.

I asked Mr. Lin how many people were directly employed on a full time basis in the orchid business. "That is again one of the difficult questions to answer, even on the basis of how many personnel an orchid farm typically employs, as some employ two or three while some growers have over a hundred employees."

Phalaenopsis is the current champion

The global orchid industry being an export-oriented sector of the world's economy, it was interesting to hear the details of Taiwan's national orchid sector exports for

the 2013-2014 year, as regards who is buying from Taiwan. "That is information that is easily obtainable and the implications discernible... The countries, in order of dollar value, would be the United States of America, then Japan, Holland, Vietnam, Australia and the United Kingdom (Britain), Canada, Hong Kong, Denmark and finally Singapore. There are of course lesser trades with numerous countries, but these are the principals." As regards the top crops and the potential for any newcomers in the 2014 top crops list, it seems a current global favourite is still holding its own in Taiwan. "Definitely Phalaenopsis - it's the current champion."

TOGA plays important role

In line with many highly competitive countries in this sector of the ornamental plant trade, Taiwan seems very organised in terms of its association and there are no hobbyist overtones as in some other less "orchid-centric" countries, where growers tend to fraternise a little among themselves, if at all, and organised orchid interest is very much for the non-commercial fancier. The percentage of total orchid flower exports that is represented by the Taiwan orchid association is overwhelming. "Our association, as I said," Mr Lin confirmed, "is very strong. I would say between eighty to almost ninety percent of exported orchids of any nature is shipped by association members." The association's role, it seems, has also strengthened over the last little while. "The association forms a critical link between key stakeholders. It is a bridge between the government and the orchid industry. Currently, the position which the association holds and the way it acts as a go-between is more important than ever before."

Growers experiment with scale

When asked about potentially discernible, dominant changes experienced by orchid nurseries over the





Mr Lin enjoyed his finest hour when in 2013 he accepted the Klaas Schoone Memorial Award, the highest accolade in the global orchid industry.

past two decades or so, Mr Lin said, “Tainan is pretty much the center of the orchid trade in Taiwan and the potential mechanization and infrastructure that goes into setting up is pretty similar for any grower and there are no real innovations to speak of there among new or old players. I think growers experiment with scale and also are conscious of the cost per unit produced, supply chain management, sustainable production and so on - just like any other business. As for specialisation, I think that’s already happening where some growers are young plant propagators and some players are breeders and some like to mass produce finished product in true wholesale grower tradition, but it’s always dynamic.” Interestingly, the domestic market bears the hallmarks of many domestic markets seen through the lens of the global orchid trade. “The domestic market was good until last year. Prices have dropped this year. The main problem is overproduction and market saturation here at home. Export is always challenging and while we obviously have existing clients we are always looking to grow exports.”

Transport is a key cost

While Mr. Lin has clearly stood out as a breeder and propagator of note on the world stage, Brother Orchid faces many of the same day to day challenges as innumerable other ornamental growers throughout the world. “I feel like our greenhouse facilities have no long term planning behind them. This and other factors make me feel like we are not competitive enough if I imagine the global industry with its many players...” Transport - the inescapable bane of a far-flung and diverse ornamental trade that either sells to distant clients directly or to hubs in various places of the world to access the international marketplace - is a key cost to ornamental producers and orchid growers are no exception. Mr. Lin seems to have a fairly stable relationship in this critical arena. “We usually use air cargo and, right now, we are limited to utilizing Singapore Airlines’ facilities and offerings. They are not the cheapest option but I’ve found them reliable and so I guess we pay the price for peace of mind. When we have a large order to ship that represents greater value or profit for the cargo company, we also negotiate

with the forwarding agents to try to get a better price.”

Wages are increasing

Brother Orchid seems remarkably similar to many orchid houses the world over on one front - inescapable labour - and, upon questioning Mr. Lin regarding the high labour requirement of orchid growing, the development of the wages over the past two decades and what percentage of a Taiwanese orchid farm’s sales turnover is represented by wages, he appeared clearly cognisant of that ubiquitous aspect of the trade. “It was easy to find labourers five years ago but it is becoming more and more difficult to find local labour; Taiwanese people who want the job. Now, most labourers are foreigners and, often, foreign brides. Culture and language differences sometimes cause problems and it becomes just another added issue to be dealt with in an attempt to run a smooth production. In 1988, the basic wage was TWD8130.00 a month. In 2007, the basic wage was TWD17280.00. Now, it is TWD19273.00... I think the Taiwanese orchid industry will

face a very difficult time when the wage mark hits TWD30000,00 because wages are increasing against a backdrop of greater global pressure and market saturation and shrinking profitability.”

Overproduction is going to be a problem

As someone who is clearly making his mark on his industry, I felt it pertinent to glean an opinion or a glimpse into the immediate future according to Mr. Lin - at least the Taiwanese orchid trade’s anticipated productivity and hopes for the short term. “At Brother Orchid we’ll keep our heads down and optimise things at home so that we are fit to compete globally. I think if Cattleya, Dendrobium, Oncidium and Epidendrum orchids can develop more colours and become more floriferous with more spikes and also those spikes become shorter and compete visually with Phalaenopsis in 6cm, 9cm and 12cm pots, then these orchids can rise to become popular in the coming year.”

When asked about the upcoming five years for the industry and what or where his focus would be, Mr. Lin displayed the reason why he won the Klaas Schoone Award as a modern day embodiment of the spirit Klaas Schoone himself carried into the trade. It was very matter-of-fact and unwavering in its clarity and honesty regarding future prospects. “I am developing more colours - brighter, clearer and just different colours - on Phalaenopsis orchids that we grow in 6cm, 9cm and 12cm pots. Overproduction is going to be a problem - market saturation means tighter margins.” If anyone can invigorate Phalaenopsis as a product and keep it at the top, Mr. Lin is the man to do it. It is clear he has a steely determination to offset the challenges faced by the industry by maintaining yield per unit, doing this by breeding and growing beautiful new things for the world to enjoy. If the global orchid trade is to benefit from new varieties and offerings and enhanced versions of both old and new, it is safe to say Mr. Lin’s Brother Orchid Nursery has not yet peaked by far. III

Aris Vision Systems Orchid chain information from breeding to flowering

With the introduction of several new camera systems for orchid growers, Aris has updated and improved their existing systems with new technology and innovations. They provide solutions through the orchid chain from breeding to flowering.

New imaging techniques

Starting with the new potting camera, the system uses advanced strobed LED lighting that provides uniform measurement of plant size and volume. Using a new imaging technique even dark leaves are easy to measure, all automatically. The spacing camera and positioning system can also profit from the new imaging system. Then, the first system to count the number of leaf pairs is in active development and will be introduced this year. The number of leaf pairs is considered to be a better predictor for the final plant quality than the size of the leaves only. Sorting on the number of leaves is also interesting for breeders of orchids in plugs.

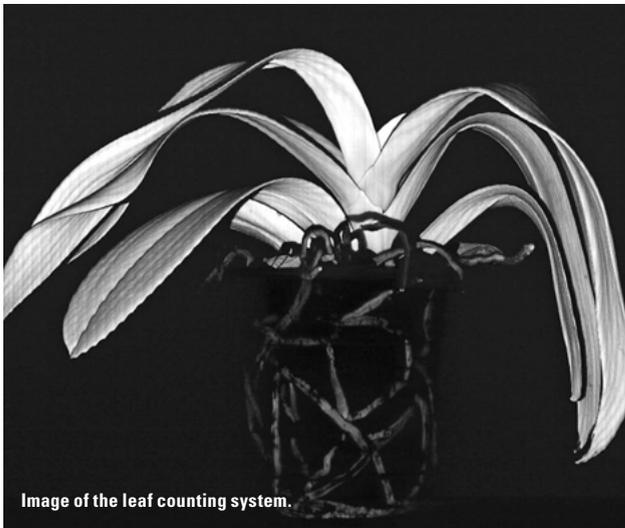
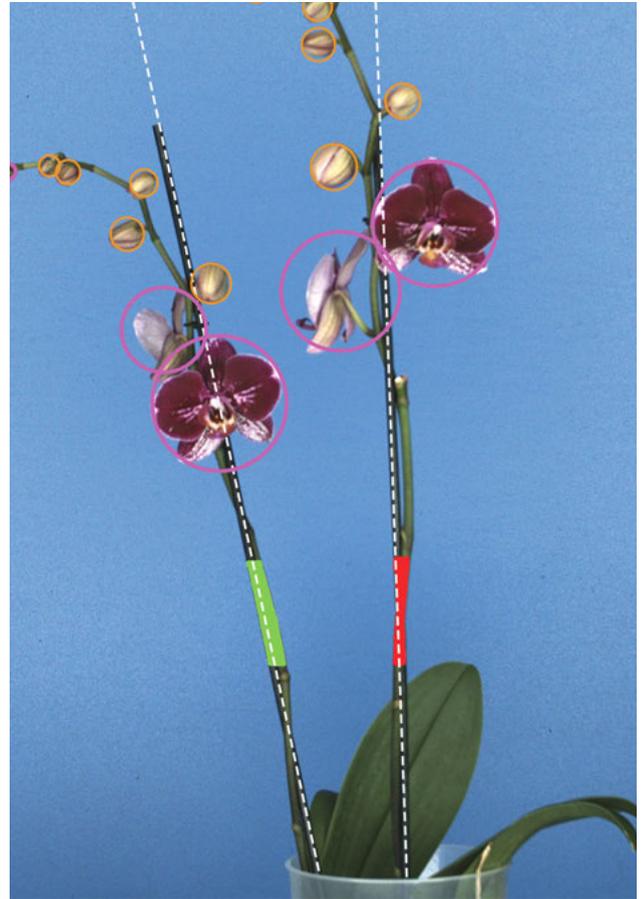


Image of the leaf counting system.

Top of the range

Top of the range is the new high throughput Phalaenopsis 3.0 system for staked plants and flowering plants. It uses 3D information from a rotating plant that passes a single high resolution camera. Compared to the earlier versions this system counts the branches, the buds and the flowers with high accuracy. Options include classifying the flowers on color and pattern into a dozen main classes.

For the staked plants measuring the ripeness is very important and this system is more accurate than before. This also meets the requirements of today's plants that have more branches and flowers than in the early days when Aris introduced their first camera systems.



Thanks to strobed LED panels the images have constant illumination and do not require adjustments over time. The LED panels have a long lifetime and consume only a fraction of the energy of old lamps. It contributes to eco-friendly and sustainable systems.

Tremendous management information

All these systems deliver tremendous management information for the growers and breeders. Individual plant measurements are stored in a database that may be accessed by other systems. Integrated in logistic systems as from Flier Systems or Bosman van Zaal, plants can be individually tracked and traced through the phenotyping and production chain.

The Aris Vision systems for the orchid chain are just an example of our product range. Visit our website for other chain wide vision based solutions for ornamentals, vegetables and meat.

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Sion Orchids

Not only cultivation advice but marketing support, too

Brands like BMW, Apple and EasyJet make clear-cut choices in the target groups they serve. So shouldn't segmentation also be the obvious choice in the world of ornamental horticulture? Growers, however, have never been involved in making clear choices with respect to their marketing policy. Sion wants not only to supply top-quality cuttings but also to inspire businesses to start aiming towards a single market segment. During the FlowerTrials® from 8 through to 13 June, this Phalaenopsis breeding and propagating company will demonstrate how this is done.

The cultivation of Phalaenopsis has become so professionalised that a haphazard approach doesn't automatically lead to success anymore. Growers who start concentrating on a certain market segment will see their earnings increase. Serving more than one target group is no longer an option - if only for logistical reasons. A decision to start producing for florists, for example, will demand a lot in the way of flexibility from a company. Orders are diverse, small in quantity and distributed over various times of the day: typical of the business of day trading. In contrast to this market segment are the customers who demand large volumes such as retail channels or discount markets. These often sell Phalaenopsis during a special offer. The grower then has to deal with the need for quick processing, sufficient space in the processing area at the nursery, and exceptionally tight schedules. Garden centres - a fourth channel - require a different approach yet again.

Choosing the variety in response to the target group

The choice of variety has to respond very closely to the needs of the target group. This means choosing varieties (often new products) displaying exclusive flower colours and more stems per plant for the high-end market, and opting for the standard production varieties for those target groups devoted to the 'P' for price. Naturally, many other options exist between these two extremes. It is these choices that the consultants at Sion would like to help growers make.

Assortment categorised into 'plazas'

The FlowerTrials® have become an annual benchmark for orchid growers. This time, Sion will be presenting its entire assortment during the show, but in a new



way. For the first time, the company will divide its varieties into 'plazas', each one representing a certain market segment: florist, garden centre, supermarket and discount. Not only will the varieties at each plaza respond to their market segment, Sion will also display suitable applications as part of its presentation. One of the important developments in Phalaenopsis cultivation, for example, is the rapid increase in the use of metal wire to train the plants into striking shapes.

The new set-up using plazas, in combination with Sion's inspiring presentation options, is sure to make this year's FlowerTrials® more interesting than ever for export companies, wholesalers and retail chains.



The FlowerTrials® will be held from Monday through to Saturday (8 to 13 June) at Sion's premises.

Opening times: Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., and on Saturday from 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon.

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sion

The next step in orchids

Hassinger Orchideen New orchid varieties are here (to stay)

German orchid breeder and young plant supplier Hassinger Orchideen is proud to announce its new range of specialty orchids. The timing of the product launch couldn't any better now that the market is flooded with Phalaenopsis at all points of the price spectrum. It is by no means the company's intention to substitute the Phalaenopsis, but the moment seems ripe to introduce novel orchids. Their growth potential is huge.

Germany's federal association of horticulture, ZVG along with trade show organiser Messe Essen share Hassinger's and NEON's vision and presented the Promenea Sunlight with the 2015 IPM Innovation Award in the category Flowering Indoor Plants. It was not the first time that Hassinger was crowned best in (IPM) show as in 2010, it scooped the highest prize for Bellavallia®. Both Promenea and Bellavallia mark the blooming start of the next generation of specimen orchids. Having hard-to-pronounce names – a sign that they really represent something new -Dendrochilium hybrids and the grassy growing Gomesa radicans are set to seduce consumers all over Europe.

Hassinger specialises in year round production of Cambria young plants. Most of the varieties are suited for growing in smaller sized pots. Cambrias will jazz



up any living space and offers a blooming alternative for the tried and tested Phalaenopsis. Hassinger prides itself on having full quality control over its 'Made in Germany' growing process. Wiesbaden is the cradle of many spectacular new orchid varieties and a place of inspiration for innovative business solutions galore. For more information on our new line of small specimen orchid please contact us. Hassinger will also participate in this year's Flower Trials, which will be held from June 9-12. For more information please visit www.flowertrials.com

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Wholly dedicated to flasks of tissue cultured orchid species for long term clients, King Plants sits on the western seaboard of South Africa in the picturesque small town of Darling. Started many years ago by Richard King, a PhD (Plant Physiology) from Natal University, the laboratory is now wall to wall orchids on agar at most times of the year.

by Marc van Sittert

For more information
King Plants
(+27)22 492 2630
kingr@intekom.co.za

Richard King: 'Phalaenopsis has hit the wall'

After graduating, Richard cut his teeth at Floratiss B.V.'s South African establishment where he stayed for many years. Richard moved to Darling nearly twenty years ago now and set up a micro-propagation laboratory in what was an old schoolhouse in 1996. While initially focused on succulents and other plant types, his obvious skill in the trade eventually met well with local and foreign orchid establishments and now orchids have somewhat taken over his propagation efforts. Talking to someone like Richard is a fascinating experience - his knowledge of the local market is so capably informed by his exposure to and understanding of the global orchid trade.

Entrenched relationship with clients

When Floraculture international approached Richard for comment on the South African orchid market, it became apparent that he is operating in a different echelon to one that might supply local enthusiasts. "I have walked with local and foreign clients over the long term", he explains. He added, "And that is really my business model. I become a part of a client's operation. I don't go for a few flasks here or there as the demands made by a single wholesale grower's seasonal requirements are vast. I really favour a long-term, entrenched relationship with selected clients as that is where we can really produce. Selling a few flasks here or there to retail enthusiasts is not really my thing."

There's a glut

Richard has some interesting observations on the local trade and, when Phalaenopsis is mentioned, he is quite matter of fact about it. "Phalaenopsis has hit the wall", he said. He continued, "There are Thai and other farms that are fairly low tech and pot up ten to twenty million plants at a time. They produce millions of plants on spec. I don't do that. I have no 'sale list' and no unwanted sitting stock. I grow to order for individual clients. But these farms feed product globally by setting up a distributor in a country. These are often family members who will hawk whatever the supply, home country has to sell. But it's glutted now. The whole thing has hit the wall. I've seen it

at orchid shows myself. Van loads of orchids are merely given away, often in the name of marketing yes, but the reality is that they can't sell them. There's a glut."

'It's not all production slavery'

Richard concentrates on a highly ethical and exclusive relationship with clients and, coupled with his expertise, this means that he becomes a real asset to those who entrust him with their initial propagation. He boasts a small (but packed) nursery outside the laboratory that is literally carpeted with orchids and bromeliads, which he uses for breeding stock to supplement his laboratory products. Richard offers a fascinating glimpse of the almost secretive world of orchid breeding that is seldom so manifest in the broader plant trade. Very reserved and careful about what he will divulge and the manner in which he keeps his clients' identities and projects under wraps, Richard makes me feel like I am interviewing a government agent at times, not a nurseryman! It's all good, though and, frankly, admirable that he both understands and perpetuates that confidentiality so prized by his clients. "I am a flask producer. A tissue lab. My small nursery outside is only around 1200 meters square. Yes it's carpeted corner to corner with orchids but my pride is in shipping clean, quality young plants to growers who will pot them up. That's really my forte. And those orders are exclusive and strictly reserved for the client. I am not going to breach confidentiality in



Richard King in a section of his nursery.



Cattleya intermedia x *Cattleya loddigesii* in King's nursery.

any way. I do get to see the results of course - many of my clients are local and I get to see the end product and, for example, there is a large, well known wine estate in Stellenbosch that plants up Disa orchids that make a breathtaking show and so I do get the benefit of the beauty orchids bring at times - it's not all production slavery! I say that but, right now, we're initiating so much material for clients I have the lab working in shifts!"

A storehouse of orchid knowledge

Richard is also a storehouse of knowledge of the locales of various players in the South African orchid game. The game appears widespread and varied - from complete hobbyist to growers with various angles on monetizing orchids. They populate the West Coast, inland in Bloemfontein (central South Africa), the Kwazulu-Natal region that hosts

many enthusiasts with its warm, humid climate and many small and medium concerns up towards the northeastern areas of Mpumalanga where it is also warmer year round than the inland regions.

"I have dealings with a great many orchid industry players in South Africa and orchids charm and fascinate me like nothing else! The building I operate in has a rich history and is an amazing place to work from and, what with being prompted by good South African wine, I love making real the musings I experience as I look at orchids - wondering whether the flower could be made bigger, or more flowers, or clearer colours... It's endless. There are delicate species and tough, hardy growers like *Cymbidium*. I am developing a fascination for *Bromeliad* spp., but orchids are my daily life right now!" Richard's commitment to the confidentiality and personalised control he offers his clients is testified to by the fact that he has no website and doesn't usually cast a net in search of business. Supplying a highly specialised service to selected clients who both understand and demand the strict controls and blemishless product

Richard produces seems to agree with him as he hasn't lacked appreciative clients over the years. As for the future, Richard understands that his role is key to the industry's survival, propagating as he does the improvements and ideas and beauty made real from all corners of the globe. Flower stem to leaf ratio, flower spikes per plant, lucid and hitherto unseen colour tones and a myriad of effects and variations in between, all methodically run through the sterile efficiency of King Plants' lab, will ensure Richard King's contribution to world horticulture will probably be often unsung yet will, no doubt, last long after we have all gone on. III



Arangis verdickii roots in flask.

RAI is worldwide representing breeders of ornamental plants in the field of plant breeders rights and plant patents. RAI advises breeders how to protect their varieties, takes care of filing applications, develops license agreements, collects royalties and performs controls.

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Horticoop The world's best orchid substrate

Horticoop, the royal warranted supplier for orchid growers in Europe, maintains a vigorous policy of innovation and investment. The 'royal' Dutch company has been the market leader for many years and last year strengthened its position by opening the first dedicated processing plant for orchid substrates in the world. This state-of-the-art plant is entirely geared to produce orchid substrates of the highest quality.

The new location features a practically 100% closed and automated production process, whereby all raw materials are stored in-house for processing into substrates. Customers can therefore rely on the best substrate with a consistently high quality, tailored to their specific requirements in terms of moisture content, pH and nutrients.

Consistently high quality

The indoor storage and processing of raw materials provides many benefits. Weather conditions – such as rain – will not longer affect production. Water can be added during the mixing process so that customers will receive substrates with the exact moisture content they require. Another major benefit for clients is the fact that the measuring of raw materials is now fully automated in the production process, making these stages even more accurate and resulting in a substrate of unrivalled consistency and quality.

Poised for the future

Horticoop is known for its total commitment to securing only the best quality materials for its orchid substrates, as well as for the reliability of its deliveries. To this end, the business has introduced significant innovations in the production process over the past few years. In launching their new plant, Horticoop takes another step in ensuring quality and consistency for its substrate products.

Horticoop offers growers of both vegetables and ornamentals at home and abroad a comprehensive package of products and services, ranging from potting soil and horticultural requisites to service and technology. Horticoop has 400 employees in 36 locations internationally for sales, production and/or warehousing. Our main technical sales partner abroad is Hort Americas, located in Texas, USA and serving all of North America and Mexico. For more information please visit www.hortamericas.com



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International Events

April 2015

Open until May 17th. Netherlands
Keukenhof, the world famous spring garden at Lisse, the Netherlands.
www.keukenhof.nl

31 March to 2 April. Ukraine
The organisers of Flowers & HortTech Ukraine, Nova Exhibitions and CoD Exhibitions Ltd., are pleased to inform that the 9th edition of Flowers & HortTech Ukraine will take place from 31 March – 2 April 2015 in Kiev. The exhibition will, as always, be organised under the patronage of the Flower Council of Ukraine.
info@nova-exhibitions.com
Contact person: Mr. Kuno Jacobs

8-12. United Kingdom
17th European Orchid Show and Conference London 2015.
The show will fill the RHS Horticultural Halls in Vincent Square, London with large displays from professional growers, orchid societies and botanical gardens from around Europe. Traders from around the world will be offering their newest hybrids and unusual orchid species.
www.rhs.org.uk

11 to 16. United States
2015 California Spring Trials.

13 to 15. Sweden
Nordic Flower Expo, Malmö/Mässan, Malmö, Sweden. Nordics leading trade fair for flowers and plants targeting trade visitors from Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland and the Baltic region.
www.nordicflowerexpo.com

15-16. Netherlands
FloraHolland Spring Fair
www.floraholland.com

17 to 19. United Kingdom
RHS Flower Show Cardiff
www.rhs.org.uk

19 to 24. Italy
6th International Symposium on Production and Establishment of Micropropagated Plants.
www.regflor.it/ISHS2015/

20-24. Spain
3rd International Symposium on Organic Matter Management and compost use in horticulture Endorsed by the International Society for Horticultural Sciences (ISHS) and the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC), the 3rd edition of this symposium is aimed at bringing together scientists from around the world working on areas of organic matter treatment and compost use in horticulture.
jalburquerque@cebas.csic.es
www.verticesur.es/congresos/CFH2015/

22 to 24. China
Hortiflorexpo at Shanghai's New International Expo Centre (SNIEC).
www.hortiflorexpo.com

23 April. Netherlands
To mark the 50th anniversary of the American-Dutch Flower Bulb Research Program a 'Past-Present-Future'- themed conference will be held at the coach house of Keukenhof Castle.
secretariaat@anthos.org
www.flowerbulbs.cornell.edu

24 April - 10 May. South Korea
International Horticulture Goyang Korea 2015
sales@flower.or.kr
bom@flower.or.kr
www.flower.or.kr

30 April-11 May. Italy
FloraFirenze: Cut flower, indoor plant and nursery stock growers and showmen from Italy will be participating in the inaugural edition of FloraFirenze at in the Cascine park in Florence, the Cultural Capital of Europe. The event will take place 8.30 -18.30 from 1-11 May 2015 and is expected to be an horticultural extravaganza, a purpose built flower show, featuring plants, flowers and amazing garden designs.
www.florafirenze.it

May 2015

7 to 10. United Kingdom
Malvern Spring Festival.
www.rhs.org.uk

19 to 23. United Kingdom
RHS Chelsea Flower Show.
www.rhs.org.uk

21-23. Azerbaijan
Agrihort, 9th Azerbaijan International Agriculture Exhibition in Baku.
Agrihort@ceo.az
www.agrihort.az

28 May to 1 June. Ireland
Bloom 2015 is Ireland's most important flower & garden show which will take place in the Phoenix Park in Dublin.
www.bloominthepark.com

31 May- 3 June. Sweden
ISHS 18th International Symposium on Horticultural Economics and Management at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences in Alnarp.
www.slu.se/ishseconomicman2015

June 2015

7 to 11. Italy
III International Symposium on Postharvest Pathology, Using Sciences to Increase Food Availability. Venue: Villa Romanazzi, Bari, Italy.
www.postharvestbari2015.it

8-11. Spain
VIII International Symposium on Irrigation of Horticultural Crops in Lleida, Spain.
jordi.marsal@irta.es
www.ishs.org/symposium/438

3 to 5. Kenya
Iftex, International Flower Trade Expo at the Oshwal convention centre in Nairobi.
www.iftex.org

7 to 8. United States
SAF Retail Growth Solutions at Hartford, Conn. Conference hotel: Hartford Marriott Farmington. This 36-hour mini-conference for retail florists covers several business topics such as design profitability, customer service and more, and features a Tech Showcase.
www.safnow.org/events

9 June. Netherlands
Greentech's inaugural, by invitation only conference invites participants to respond to the question, "What's next for green horticulture?" Expected to attend are 250 key stake holders from the horticultural sector. Building on the success of GreenTech exhibition, the mini conference will host a great line up of speakers.
www.greentech.nl

9 to 11. United States
The National Lawn & Garden Show is not the trade show you're used to.
nlinfo@nlgshow.com
P (888) 316-0226; (719) 488-0226
F (719) 488-8168
www.NLGShow.com

9 to 11. United States
International Floriculture Expo at the McCormick Place, Chicago.
info@floriexpo.com
www.floriexpo.com

9 to 12. The Netherlands
Flower Trials
www.flowertrials.com

9 to 11. The Netherlands
Marking its 40th edition this year, the TOC Europe Conference and Exhibition returns to the leading maritime hub of Rotterdam on 9-11 June 2015 to assess the fundamental changes now sweeping global container transport and logistics as a result of the shipping industry's headlong charge towards mega vessels and alliances.
www.toc-events.com

11 to 13. Germany

World Cup for Florists at the Arena Berlin, Eichenstrasse 4 12435 Berlin. This year's theme is 'Freedom'.
worldcup2015@fleurop.de
www.worldcup-berlin2015.com

17 to 19. Brazil

22nd Hortitec show at the Holambra/SP convention centre.
www.hortitec.com.br

17 to 21. The Netherlands

ROOOZ, celebrating the rose's past present and future. Miniature rose festival in the Historical Garden Aalsmeer.

23 to 24. United Kingdom

The National Plant Show at Stoneleigh Park, Coventry, Warwickshire, CV82LZ, UK.
T + 44 118 9303132
F + 44 118 9323453
enquiries@nationalplantshow.co.uk
www.nationalplantshow.co.uk

24 and 25. Netherlands

Expo TCO, the leading trade show for the avenue tree sector.
www.treecentreopheusden.nl/expo

24 to 29. Colombia

6th Iberiada, international gathering of floral design schools at the Hotel Intercontinental in Cali, Colombia.
www.alyrofloralevents.com

28 June to 1 July. Belgium

25th International Eucarpia Symposium at the premises of the ILVO institute for agricultural and fisheries research in Melle, near Ghent.
www.eucarpiaornamentals2015.be

30 June to 5 July. United Kingdom

RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show.
www.rhs.org.uk

July 2015

19 to 23. Portugal

GreenSys 2015, international symposium on new technologies and management for greenhouses in Evora, Portugal.
greensys2015@uevora.pt
www.greensys2015.uevora.pt

11 to 14. United States

Cultivate 2015 at the Greater Columbus Convention Center, Columbus, Ohio. Formerly known as OFA Short Course, Cultivate'15 will continue to offer premier educational and networking experiences, and more than 7 acres of trade show exhibits including technology, new products and services, and new plant varieties. hello@americanhort.org
P (614) 487-1117
www.cultivate14.org

Strawberry specialists ABZ Seeds and Hem Genetics, internationally recognized for genetically dwarf bedding plants, will be holding open house from 28 to 30 April this year. These Dutch companies are located just 10km apart, near the town of Enkhuizen and about an hour by car or train from Amsterdam. They will be continuing a long tradition of open spring trials of bedding plants in the Netherlands, dating back to the 1970's. Through the years over a dozen companies have taken part.

by John Sutton

ABZ Seeds & Hem Genetics continue long tradition of open spring trials

Both ABZ Seeds and Hem Genetics are young businesses, founded late in the twentieth century. ABZ is highly specialised, focused entirely on the breeding, development and marketing of seed-raised strawberries. Hem Genetics now works not only with a wide range of seed-raised bedding plants, but additionally with vegetatively propagated varieties.

Natural genetic dwarfness

Hem Genetics, a sister company of the long-established seed company Hem Zaden, has taken part in the European Spring Trials each year since 2002. From the start it began to offer series in nearly all of the most important summer-flowering bedding plants raised from seed – for example antirrhinum, dianthus, impatiens, pansy, petunia, *Salvia splendens* and zonal pelargonium. The *viola* series Corina has been an important recent addition. High quality standards have been achieved in this wide ranging programme of breeding, spearheaded by Rudy Westenberg, now com-



Fragaria x ananassa Toscana shot to horticultural fame as the winner of the 2012 FleuroStar award.

mercial director of the company. Natural genetic dwarfness in some of the most important of summer-flowering bedding plants is a truly distinctive achievement of Hem Genetics. Two groundbreaking petunia series in this category were among the first varieties to be launched on the market by the young company. The Mambo series is a multiflora, while Limbo is a grandiflora. Genetic dwarfness meant that production could be undertaken using normal techniques without any use of plant growth regulators (PGR). This cut growers' costs in both materials and labour, while producing the compact, stretch-resistant plants that the market needed. Limbo Violet is one of three Hem Genetics' varieties that have won All America Selections awards.

Chica marigolds

The Mambo and Limbo series were rapidly joined in the Hem variety range by two others that shared this key feature of a naturally compact growing habit. The bedding salvia 'Reddy' was introduced in 2005, and the zonal pelargonium series Nano in 2008. There is now a full range of colours in all four series, which together form the Hem Genetics unique 'Low Grow Approved' range, marketed with a distinctive logo. Visitors to both the Californian and the European spring trials this year will see Hem Genetics' new French marigold series Chica, in gold, orange and yellow. For growth habit, flower quality and garden performance, this is claimed to have the edge over the competition. Hem Genetics will also be showing



Left to right ABZ breeder and co-owner Gé Bentvelsen and Hem Genetics commercial director Rudy Westenberg.



The bedding salvia 'Reddy' was introduced in 2005.



Tagetes Chica Orange.

nine new colours in Xtrada, its recently introduced pansy series. This has extra-large flowers, a feature important in warmer countries where higher temperatures tend to reduce the size. And there will be fifteen new colours in three of the company's series in other plants, in addition to a number of new mixtures.

Seed-raised strawberries

At the ABZ Seeds trials this spring, there will be three new seed-raised strawberry varieties for visitors to see. Freedom from virus diseases, high standards of plant uniformity and short production cycles are all advantages of raising strawberries from seed rather than propagating vegetatively.

Breeder Gé Bentvelsen, who is co-owner of ABZ Seeds, originally

Viola Xtrada blue with blotch.



set out to breed F1 hybrid varieties especially suitable for hanging baskets and other containers where the trailing habit of the plants can be seen to full advantage. His aim was and remains to combine well displayed, attractive flowers produced continuously over a long season with handsome fruit that are good to eat.

He has bred a string of successes, with Élan the first to gain widespread recognition. This was introduced in 1998. In addition to white, the flower colour range runs from pale pink, through to rose and red.

Varieties such as Loran, Roman and Tarpan had already become widely recognized in the bedding plant industry when Toscana shot to horticultural fame as the winner of the 2012 FleuroStar award. Whilst being a highly attractive plant in its own right, with large, deep pink flowers and handsome fruit, it was the first variety of a plant giving edible produce to win the award.

Crowning glory

Of this year's three introductions on show during the spring trials, 'Montana' has extra-large white flowers, followed by conical medium to large fruit. Because of its contrasting flower colour, it is being recommended for combined culture with 'Toscana'.

Flower colour is the big plus point for another 2015 introduction, 'Ruby Ann'. With its ruby-red flowers, Gé Bentvelsen describes it

as the new flagship of his hanging basket series.

The third newcomer to the ABZ range is Delizz[®], a convenience customer concept, says Gé. Here the emphasis is very much on growing excellent fruit at home in an easy way. Plants produce few runners, but abundant mid-sized berries on upright trusses over the duration of the summer. Yields of up to one kilogram per plant have been achieved.

Delizz[®] is being marketed to growers as a presentation deal, each plug plant with a purple pot and printed pot cover. A range of varieties for fruit production is already on offer, including Élan, Milan and Durban. These have successfully appealed to small-scale commercial growers with very local trade. Gé Bentvelsen's new variety Delizz[®] is the 2015 crowning glory of his efforts in the urban gardening sector. |||



In a series of exclusive interviews for FloraCulture International, the Secretary General of CIOPORA, Dr Edgar Krieger elaborates on the breeders' vision of IP protection for the future incorporated in the CIOPORA Position Papers on Minimum Distance, Scope of the Right, Exhaustion and Breeders' Exemption.

Breeders' exemption and exhaustion – a quest for fair balance

CIOPORA members believe that securing the continuity of innovation is one of the best investments in a highly competitive horticultural sector. The adoption of the CIOPORA Position Papers on IP by unanimous vote at the AGM in The Hague in April 2014 demonstrated that the breeders of ornamentals and fruits need more effective protection for their varieties.

FCI: Dr Krieger, as the organisation of innovative plant breeders, CIOPORA often advocates the strengthening of the Plant Variety Protection (PVR) regime. But what is your position on breeders' exemption and the use of protected varieties for further breeding?

Dr Edgar Krieger: "All components of the CIOPORA's Position Papers are targeted at guaranteeing the continuity of innovation. A successful system is not purely restrictive in its nature. It must provide a clearly defined set of rules for innovators and the users of their products, where the innovation activity is seen as the major driving factor

of business development. Therefore, CIOPORA members strongly support a breeders' exemption that contains the use of commercialized plant material of a protected variety for further breeding simply because without unrestricted access to existing genetic material advances in breeding would be hampered."

Does it mean that CIOPORA's position on breeders' exemption aligns with the current wording of the 1991 Act of the UPOV Convention?

"Not exactly. If you read the current wording of the breeders' exemption in Article 15 (1) (iii) of the 1991 Act of UPOV, you will see that it is quite complex and in parts redundant. It consists of two components: the free use of the protected material for further breeding, and the commercialisation of the newly bred varieties, unless these new varieties are essentially derived varieties (EDV), varieties not clearly distinguishable from the protected variety or varieties that require the repeated use of the protected variety for their production. In order to achieve this, a reference is made in Article 15 (1) (iii) to Article 14 (5) of the 1991 Act. However, this is redundant, since Article 14 (5) states that the three types of varieties mentioned above fall within the scope of the breeders' right and cannot be commercialized without authorization of the title holder anyway. In its Position Paper on the breeders' exemption, CIOPORA suggests that, to avoid any errors and redundancies, the wording of the Act 1991 of UPOV should be fine-tuned."

What wording of the breeders' exemption does CIOPORA envision?

"In fact, our take on breeders'

exemption is quite simple.

CIOPORA members unanimously agreed that a "straightened" version of this provision should read: "The breeders' right shall not extend to acts done for the purpose of breeding other varieties." This is a clear and simple wording comparable to the research exemption and to the wording of the breeders' exemption in some European Patent laws and the Unitary Patent."

Thus, CIOPORA does not want to change the content of the breeders' exemption, but just make it easier to understand.

"Yes, with one small side aspect: CIOPORA members believe that it should be clarified that only plant material put on the market by the breeder himself or with his explicit consent can be used for further breeding. This would exclude the possibility of usage of illegally obtained plant material or plant material provided for DUS testing for further breeding. To sum up, the main challenge in the area surrounding the breeders' exemption is not the simplification of its wording, but the clarification of the EDV concept and the broadening of the Minimum Distance. That means that, while breeders should continuously be able to use any kind of plant material for further breeding, a better control over the results of these breeding activities is necessary."

Finally, I would like to address the fourth topic of the CIOPORA Position Papers – Exhaustion. Could you please briefly shine a light on CIOPORA's stand?

"Exhaustion is a complex matter. In short, it means that a title holder cannot exert his IP right

by our own correspondent

The January, February and March 2014 issues of FloraCulture International feature more IP-related interviews with Edgar Krieger.



Dr Edgar Krieger.

CIOPORA is the International Association of Breeders of Vegetatively Reproduced Ornamental and Fruit Varieties. Breeders of such crops hold approximately 2/3 of all PVR titles in the world. For over 50 years, CIOPORA has been representing them in all matters of Intellectual Property Protection. The full text of the adopted CIOPORA Position Papers on IP is available at: <http://www.ciopora.org/publications/ciopora-papers-on-ip/>



"Without unrestricted access to existing genetic material advances in breeding would be hampered". Pictures taken by CIOPORA during the IPM 2015

over material any more once he has brought it onto the market. The UPOV exhaustion is different to the exhaustion rules in other IP systems. On the one hand, the exhaustion provision in the UPOV 1991 Act is very broad. It covers not only the plant material marketed by the title-holder or with his consent, but also any material derived from said material. On the other hand, it explicitly excludes specific acts from the exhaustion, namely the further propagation of the variety in question and the export of specified material to countries that do not provide for protection of the genus or species concerned."

CIOPORA is of the opinion that the exhaustion provision in the UPOV Act should be modernized and adapted to the current circumstances. How could this be done?

"It is obvious and aligns to the

exhaustion rules in other IP systems, that the PBR in a territory in principle shall be exhausted for material that has been marketed by the title holder or with his consent in the territory where the PRB is effective. Taking into consideration the heterogeneous character of the PVP protection in the world and the capacity of propagation material to reproduce itself true-to-type, it is reasonable to limit the exhaustion of the PBR for the export of the propagating material into a country that does not protect varieties of the plant genus or species to which the variety belongs."

As far as material is concerned that has been produced from the material marketed by the title-holder or with his consent, the PBR should be exhausted only for said produced material, if and to such extent its production has been licensed, and provided that the produced material is not subsequently used for other propagation or multiplication. That implies that in the first instance it is a matter of the parties concerned (title-holder and licensee) to draft the scope of the license and to precisely describe the acts covered by the license. Finally, it should be clarified that exhaustion of any PBR shall be strictly limited to the very territory where the PBR is in effect. CIOPORA is opposed to any form of international exhaustion.

It seems that the CIOPORA Position Papers provide a complete road-map for a potential regulation development in the area of Plant Variety Protection. What are the next steps on CIOPORA's agenda?

"Indeed, the main purpose of the Position Papers on IP is to establish a unified stand of the association on several cornerstone concepts of the current PVP regime, which reflects both interests of innovative plant breeders and provides benefits to all parts of the production chain. The core idea behind the Papers is to envision a well-balanced and clearly defined legal framework.

Currently, we are discussing the papers on general PBR matters and EDV, which will be presented for vote to the members during the upcoming Annual General Week in Hamburg, Germany on April 27-30, 2015. Patents in the plant world are also on the agenda. Meanwhile, CIOPORA serves as an active participant and often as an initiator of discourse about the current PVP regime. Our criticism of it is nothing but a constructive one, and we shall maintain our continuous dialogue with UPOV and national governments in order to put our expertise on IP to use for the entire horticultural sector." III

LET'S TALK ABOUT IP
GUESTS ARE WELCOME!

CIOPORA
Annual General Meeting 2015

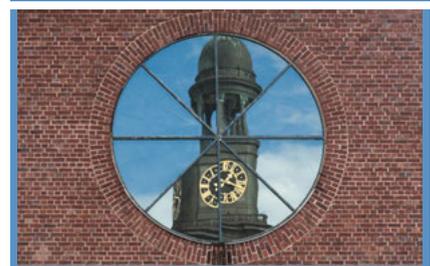
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WWW.HEMGENETICS.COM

by Jaap N. Kras

United States 2015 Farwest Show hosts the 2015 International Trials Conference

The prestigious 2015 International Trials Conference will be held this year in conjunction with the 2015 Farwest Show in Portland, Oregon. The cutting-edge conference focuses on the latest research and techniques for trialing annual, perennial, and woody plants.

Set for Monday through Thursday, August 24-27, 2015, the conference will lead up to the trade show, which opens Thursday, August 27. The trials conference, attended by plant professionals and industry leaders from around the world, convenes biannually to share ideas on evaluation strategies, develop trialing standards, and explore the plant characteristics demanded by plant buyers and growers. Its ongoing mission is to encourage the creation of universal evaluation criteria and collaboration among plant trial locations, resulting in more meaningful trial data. The four-day agenda includes a welcome reception for networking and dialogue at the Lan Su Chinese Garden, a second day devoted to learning sessions and panels at the host hotel, a third day touring area trial sites and premier nurseries, and a final day of educational sessions held in conjunction with Farwest education seminars. Evenings will be filled with dining in small groups including conference speakers.

"The International Trials Conference has become the epicenter for ideas and innovation for plant trialing worldwide," said Allan Niemi, director of events and education at the Oregon Association of Nurseries, producers of the Farwest Show. "It's a natural fit with Farwest. Their work impacts our audience, from nursery to greenhouse to retail, in so many important ways. We're thrilled to have them in Portland this year to lead off the show."

The conference is open to all industry professionals who have interest in plant trialing. Registration is required and started on March 1, 2015. III

Going public

Last month, DNA Group chairman Biense Visser announced that he considers bringing the company to the stock market. Going public offers the company the opportunity to acquire extra money for further expansions and growth. And, of course, the present company owners see a return on their investment by being offered access to the public stock market too and the possibility to sell their shares for a favourable price.

Ornamental horticulture is a highly fragmented industry with perishable goods and many family-run companies. A consolidation process is designed to achieve economies of scale and raise additional funds for further expansion. Now that the stock market looks attractive, I bet that after the DNA Group more Dutch companies want to go public.

To build a strong market position is not easy. Consolidation will only add value if you distinguish yourself and products, in such a way that in the profit margins are higher. This will provide the consolidated big businesses with a head start over competitors. Business consolidation can also minimize costs, either costs for breeding or production costs.

Creating brand awareness at consumer level is for the foreseeable future an illusion. Therefore, a big, consolidated company should focus on building a strong company name at B2B level, while cooperating with professional partners in the supply chain from breeder to florist. A bright future lies ahead for closed vertical business clusters including professional partners that jointly market exclusive products under a highly recognisable brand name. Consolidated companies can probably also raise the money for a professional marketing policy.

In the end, production and consumption of flowers and plants will always be a relatively local business.

Going public can have advantages, but when looking back we also see warning signs. The first public company in our industry I remember was Melridge, in the early 1990s. This was a lily company in Oregon that went public with the aim to collect sufficient money on the NASDAQ market to buy all lily breeders and lily bulb producers. They even wanted to try their luck in floral wholesale. I am not 100% percent sure about the date but somewhere around 1996, USA-based Floral Products Inc. entering the stock market (ROSI on the NASDAQ market, for those who remember). They bought flower farms and wholesale businesses for nearly \$50 million in the USA and South America. The year 2002 marked the arrival of the Italian Ciccolella company. This flower producer activated a sleeping fund on the Milan stock exchange to take over famous Dutch wholesale houses such as Zurel and the Leliveld Group including Top Flora, Disva, Sierex, Sardoflor etc. It expanded rapidly, reached stellar growth and realised high turnovers. Last week, it was announced in the Italian press that Ciccolella had gone bankrupt...

Ten years ago, Karuturi from India went public in the Gulf states, acquiring the Sher nurseries on the shores of Lake Naivasha, Kenya. In total, they invested in 300ha greenhouses for roses in Kenya, Ethiopia and India and huge plots of land for outdoor vegetable growing. "We want to be the lowest low cost producer for the high value markets," Karuturi promised at that time. But in Kenya they later went bankrupt.

What lessons can be learned from this? When investors focus on how to make quick fortunes on the stock markets and value this over the goal to make profits in the company, this does not provide a strong, structural base for continuity in the industry.

Jaap N. Kras
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United States

The California and South American growers were in the same exhibition together in what appeared to be perfect harmony. To me this was the most important take away from the latest World Floral Expo show, which was held at the Los Angeles Convention Centre from March 11-13.



The most unlikely but wonderful thing happened at the WFE show

To put this into context, I remind the readers that while growers from both hemispheres have exhibited at the same shows before, never have I seen so many in the same space. Ever since the Latins began exporting flowers to the US there has been a war raging that has been counter-productive to say the least. The WFE shows have typically focused more on South American and European related companies so participation from domestic growers was minimal at best. The decision to hold this year's event in LA seems to have turned the tide and, with the support of the California

by William Armellini*

Cut Flower Commission (CCFC) and the new entity CalFlowers, there were many domestic growers with stands.

The long battle has left some scars

The long legal, territorial and emotional battle has left some scars but on the positive side, the battle has sorted out the products offered by what grows best where. The California growers cannot and will not ever be able to grow the large-headed, longer stemmed roses that grow so well in the high altitudes of the lands on the equator. Nor will the Latin growers be able to grow as beautiful dahlias, larkspur or gladiolas as those on the pacific coast of the US.

The "buy local" movement has helped shape this floral supply landscape and I say, "If you can buy what your customers demand locally. Do it, whenever and wherever possible."

But do not let your domestic pride limit your business opportunities. In the end consumers want to buy all types of flowers and if the floral world cannot meet those needs, they can easily buy chocolate or any number of products that are competing for our business.

Colombians and Ecuadorians were well represented

Back to the show. Many visitors and exhibitors noted the presence of Ecuadorean growers not normally seen at this show. The US market, once ignored by some, has now become quite attractive as Russia and Europe cope with a strong dollar. At the same time, the Colombian exporters are celebrating a weak peso that has given them some breathing room.

This show, like most, was not jam packed with bodies in the aisles however, I would say that most exhibitors were pleased with the quality of those buyers that were present and declared the show a success. The size of this show, while not grand, was manageable and allowed a visitor to effectively navigate the hall and conduct business.

The Colombians and Ecuadorans were well represented with consolidated stands that were effective by allowing many growers to be represented. There were also growers and suppliers from Africa, Italy and Australia.

Walk of shame

An early morning tour of the LA flower market was quite an eye-opener and effectively demonstrated



by William Armellini

Cut flower thoughts

The biggest trend is consolidation at many levels of the business. Weak or ill-funded growers are selling out to large farms and those farms keep growing larger. More often than not are the bouquet makers the buyers.

In Miami, when an importer goes bust, they rarely get purchased and just go away. There is little value in an importer unless they own farms or valuable assets. So I do not see so much consolidation at this level, just attrition.

Wholesalers have been consolidating in record numbers with last year's merger of Kennicott Brothers Company with Nordlie Inc. as evidence. (last month the company announced two more mergers). This trend will continue for many reasons. One of the main reasons is that many wholesalers have no succession plan or at least none that are viable, so they look to be bought out. Much of this relates to the fact that attracting new blood to the industry remains critical and adds to the succession issue.

Consolidation can be good or bad for the retailers depending mainly on how the chips fall when there is a merger. When companies merge the first casualties are stores where there is overlapping territory. This could mean that the wholesaler down the street is now the wholesaler across town.

Retailers will over time find themselves served by distribution centres farther and farther away. I do not see a return to the classic 'Bucket Trucks' but more of the 'you order online by midnight tonight and you get a delivery tomorrow'. This model has been developing over the years in the North East.

Consolidation hopefully means that better service is coming your way because the new entity is bigger and has better buying power. But don't count on it.

Of course one cannot look the future in the eye and ignore the power of the 'direct buy'. It is just too easy these days to order from a grower in South America or California and have flowers delivered to your door. This does not work for everyone and it does not guarantee cheaper, better or fresher flowers, but the odds are pretty good you would be pleased if you are able to manage the advanced ordering. But there is one thing that buyers that choose to buy direct must never forget; once the grower delivers the flowers to the airline or cargo agent they own them.

As the distance between grower and consumer narrows, those able to manage this successfully are the winners.



how challenging the market in this big city can be. Bob Mellano did a great job of showing off Mellano wholesale's well-oiled operation and explaining the long history of the market. The history lesson took us all the way back to World War II and the sad time when the Japanese Americans were also considered the enemy. The tour was informative and educational but for me, the scene just outside the market doors was the most shocking.

Since my last visit to the market many years ago, a whole new series of flower markets have sprung in every direction. It reminded me of a flea market except the fleas in this case were flowers, tons of flowers including lots of expensive South American roses available at very, dare I say, really cheap prices. Bob calls this plethora of more than two hundred vendors "the walk of shame". One can only imagine how the pricing works when roses are being sold for barely the cost of importation.

Los Angeles or San Diego

The show organizers HPP keep pushing the boundaries and testing the waters to provide value to the floral community. According to them the show attracted one thousand visitors up over 150% from the last event held last year in Chicago. There were more exhibitors and more floor space to accommodate them as well. Finally HPP noted that they have been approved by USDA, which allows exhibitors to apply for a rebate.

According to Dick van Raamsdonk of HPP the 2016 WFE show will be held either in LA once again or perhaps in San Diego, which is my personal preference. Hope to see you there. III

William Armellini is editor and CEO of www.flowersandcents.com

William Armellini. Editor Flowersandcents.com
williee@flowersandcents.com



Partners of FloraCulture International

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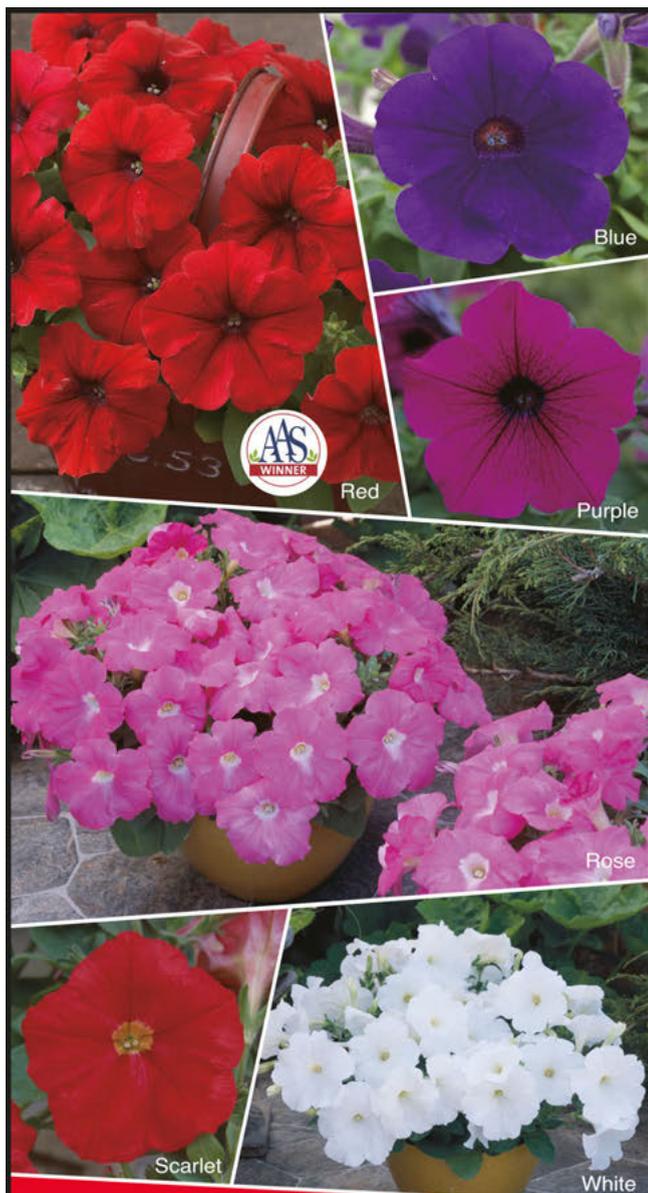


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