

2023

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HORTICULTURAL PRODUCERS



AIPH

The world's
champion for the
power of plants

AIPH approved International
Horticultural Trade Show



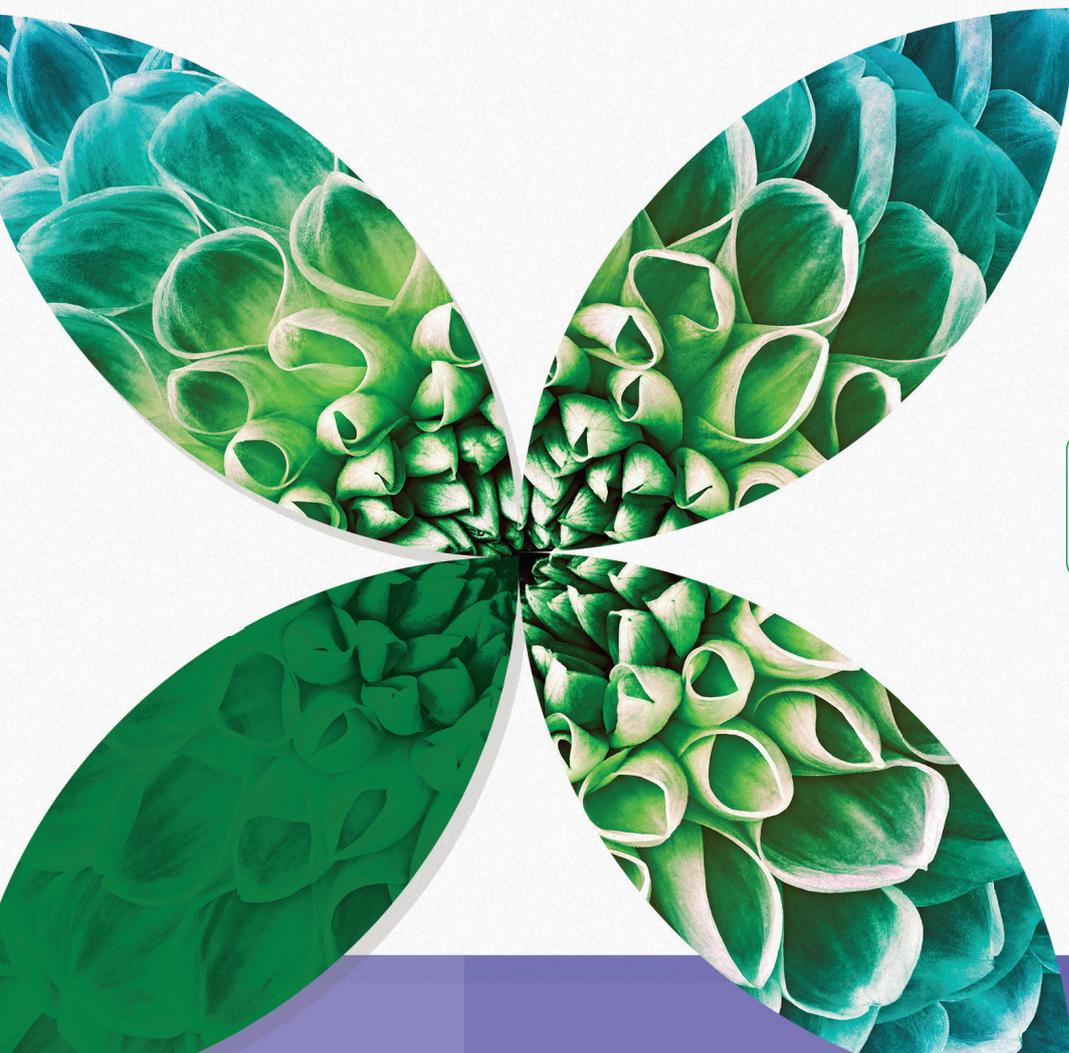


GLOBALG.A.P.

24. - 27. JANUARY IN ESSEN, GERMANY

JOIN US AT IPM ESSEN 2023!

Visit our booth (Hall 6, Stand 6F30) and join our news update **(25.01., Raum K, Congress Center Ost, 11 a.m.)** at the world's leading floriculture trade fair to discuss IFA v6, GRASP v2, the Impact-driven Approach, and more!



Find more information at:
www.globalgap.org



WWW.GLOBALGAP.ORG





AIPH Secretary General,
Tim Briercliffe

The International Association of Horticultural Producers (AIPH) is the global association for ornamental horticulture. We welcome Full Members in the form of industry associations and Affiliate Members from other organisations and businesses that support our objectives. Since 1948 we have been working in the interests of growers, and today we are doing more than ever.

This special edition publication aims to introduce you to AIPH and encourage you to join us on our journey to developing our industry. There is no better international platform than this for bringing the sector together and tackling the challenges we face. We also focus on identifying future opportunities and giving everything a global context.

By joining AIPH, you can benefit from this unique network and all the knowledge and information we share. We publish annual industry statistics and run initiatives to stimulate the use of plants in cities. We approve and support horticultural exhibitions, and we continue to champion the power of plants wherever we can.

We run the annual International Grower of the Year Awards and publish the well-known FloraCulture International (FCI) magazine. Whether you join AIPH or not, you are welcome to subscribe, free of charge, to FCI and even use it to promote your own organisation.

If you turn this magazine upside down, you will see we have provided you with an FCI Special Edition taster showcasing the depth of articles and interviews we bring to you as a valuable resource published by AIPH to support the industry.

We are pleased to have granted AIPH approval to IPM Essen 2023, and please do come and learn more from our team and me on our stand, GA25A. I look forward to meeting with you and hearing more about ornamental horticulture in your part of the world.



Current Full Members

Our full members represent national grower associations for plants and flowers from all regions worldwide.

Region 1

- Denmark
- Finland
- Ireland
- Sweden
- United Kingdom



Region 2

- Belgium
- Germany
- Italy
- The Netherlands
- Switzerland



Region 3

- Czech Republic
- Greece
- Hungary
- Poland



Region 4

- Canada
- Mexico
- USA



Region 5

- Brazil
- Colombia
- Costa Rica



Region 6

- Pakistan
- Qatar
- Türkiye



Region 7

- P.R. China
- Chinese Taipei
- Japan
- Republic of Korea



Region 8

- Australia
- Indonesia
- Thailand



Region 9

- South Africa



Benefits of Full Membership:

- ✿ Access to a network of associations representing ornamental horticulture from all over the world.
- ✿ Sharing of information and best practices between similar organisations at meetings and online.
- ✿ Access to the latest developments in the trade.
- ✿ Involvement in initiatives promoting flowers, plants, and the green landscape worldwide, such as the Green City.
- ✿ Increasing the benefits from plant breeders' rights and working together to protect the industry.
- ✿ Joint lobbying of international organisations on subjects including pesticides, plant health, invasive plants, and other environmental issues.
- ✿ Access to the latest statistical data on worldwide production and trade in ornamental plants and flowers.
- ✿ Opportunity to enter candidates for the annual AIPH International Grower of the Year competition.
- ✿ Opportunity to seek approval for hosting international horticultural exhibitions.



Scan QR code for
AIPH full member
application



Scan QR code for AIPH Spring Meeting 2022

Snapshots of members

AIPH members meet for a Spring Meeting and an Autumn Congress

AIPH members met in the United Arab Emirates and the Netherlands, in 2022. At each event, the following happen.

- ✿ **General Meeting** – Where AIPH activity reports are heard, industry initiatives are proposed and strategies are voted upon.
- ✿ **Expo Conference** – The host cities for AIPH-approved Horticultural Expos provide progress reports. This is a great place to meet major event suppliers and government decision-makers.

✿ **Industry Summits** - industry leaders are invited to speak on topical themes. It is open to everyone working in ornamental horticultural, from growers, breeders, exporters and suppliers to the industry.

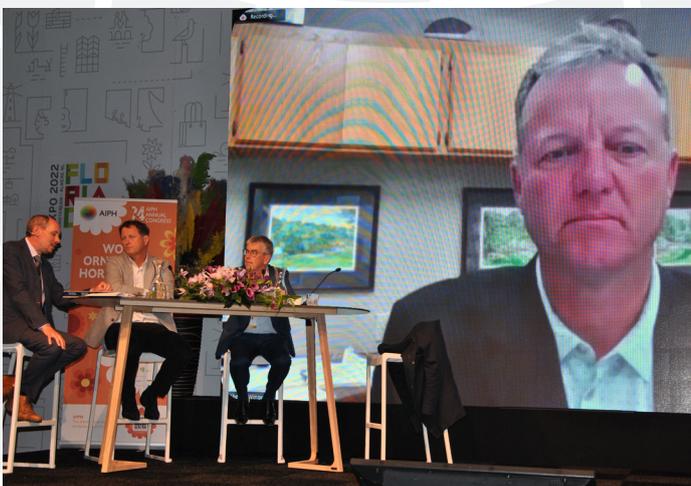
✿ **Professional Visits** - In September, members had behind-the-scene tours of nurseries in the following businesses: Tesselaar Alstroemeria, Kwekerij Bernhard, Boomkwekerij J.P. Van Straalen, and Edens Plants & Creations.



Dinner in the Desert: Members network in relaxed environments.



(Left) Mr Sayam Sirimongkol, Udon Thani’s Governor and (right) H.E. Dr Chalermchai Sree-on, Minister of Agriculture and Cooperative, after receiving AIPH approval for Expo 2026 Udon Thani.



Secretary General of AIPH, Tim Briercliffe; CEO of Dutch Flower Group, Jan van Dam; CEO of Royal FloraHolland, Steven van Schilfgaarde; and online, Co-CEO of Metrolina Greenhouses, Abe van Wingerden.

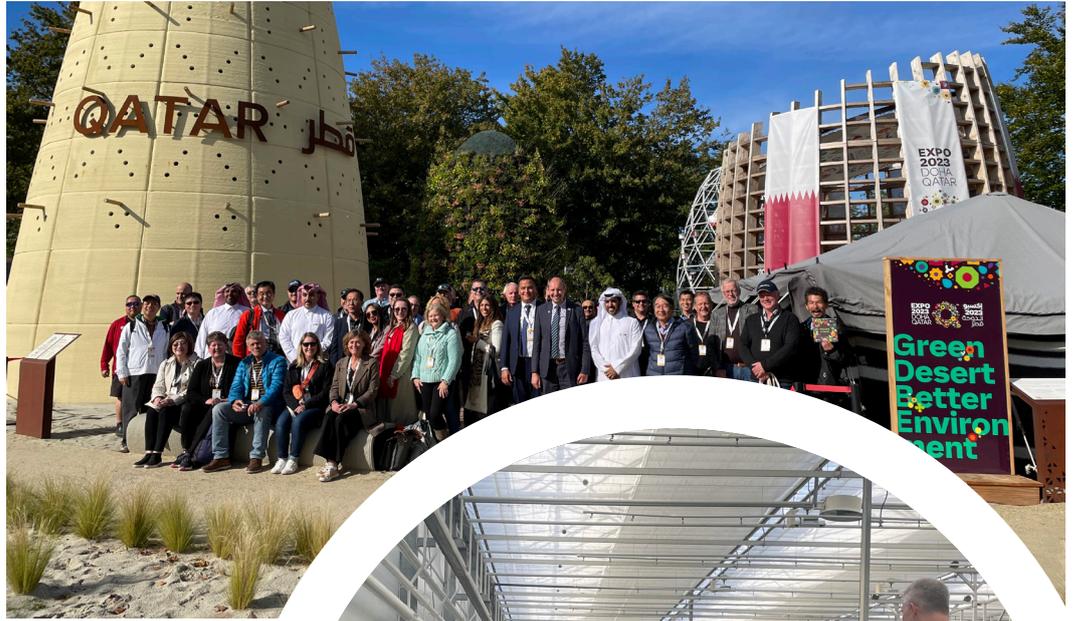


(Left) Director of Outreach in the United Nations Department of Global Communications, Mr Maher Nasser and (right) AIPH Green City Chair, Mr Bill Hardy.

at AIPH meetings in 2022



Guest speaker Mr Plant Geek



AIPH members tour



Listening to progress reports at the Expo Conference.



AIPH members learnt about the geothermal heating at Kwekerij Bernhard which provides energy for the production of its roses, orchids and patio plants.



AIPH members at the Singapore Pavilion in Expo 2020 Dubai.



Scan QR code for AIPH Annual Congress 2022



**MYPLANT
& GARDEN**

International Green Expo

FIERA MILANO, RHO

**22- 23 - 24
FEBRUARY
2023**

**INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR
HORTICULTURE · GARDEN · LANDSCAPE**

Tel. (+39) 02 6889080
info@myplantgarden.com
www.myplantgarden.com

Current Affiliate Members

Our Affiliate members are organisations with an interest and involvement in the ornamental horticulture industry.

- Raheemi Afghan Ltd
- Australian Garden Council
- Bureau Multinational Expositions
- Big Dome
- Container Centralen A/S
- Valhor
- GLOBALG.A.P.
- CIOPORA
- IPM Essen
- Lehei GmbH
- National Horticulture Board, India
- GEO SPA – Flormart International
- MyPlant & Garden
- I Love Myanmar
- Anthura
- Chrysal International BV
- Dümme Orange
- Floritec B.V.
- HPP
- IGMPR
- MPS Sustainable Quality
- Rabobank
- RAI Amsterdam / GreenTech
- Visser Horti Systems
- Wageningen UR Greenhouse Horticulture
- Far East Oriental Trading Company
- LVG Plants
- Heliospectra AB
- Gardensa Peyzaj A.Ş.
- Green Cities Consultancy Ltd
- PERA Event Solutions
- SYS Consulting Services
- Turkish Flower Group
- Direct Access Consultancy
- LOWE Worldwide Rental Specialists



Benefits of Affiliate Membership:

- Access to ornamental plant growers worldwide, offering insight into international developments in the production and trade of ornamental plants.
- Contact with industry associations and trade bodies in 19 major producing countries and regions creates a global network of knowledgeable and influential parties.
- Invitations to AIPH meetings and discussions on global horticultural industry issues, where you can voice your views on developing regulations and policies and be heard.
- Opportunities to promote your business/organisation through AIPH meetings, events, and media that will put you directly in front of your target audience.
- Opportunities to attend VIP tours of AIPH-approved international horticultural exhibitions that will inspire and enlighten you on current horticultural trends.
- Discounts on attendance at AIPH events and publications enable you to utilise valuable resources and information.



Scan QR code for AIPH
Affiliate member application



Novelty Protection

As the world's champion for the power of plants, one of ALPH's missions is to protect and promote the interests of the ornamental horticulture industry. Through our Novelty Protection Group, we host a Sparring Partner Group (SPG). ALPH Members are constantly informed about the latest developments, the juridical consequences, and possible solutions. Thanks to these exchanges, discussions, and better understanding and awareness of the importance of Plant Breeder Rights and the other fields of intellectual property rights, we can support a sound working PBR system at both the national and international levels and contribute to future solutions and a new balance.

AIPH recently hosted a webinar with guest presentations from Mr Marien Valstar, Senior Policy Officer, Seeds and Plant Propagation Material, Ministry of Agriculture, and Dr Edgar Krieger, Secretary General of CIOPORA



Scan QR code to watch recordings from the Novelty Protection webinar.

Plant Health



AIPH successfully proposed a session in the first International Plant Health Conference (IHPC), held in London from 21st to 23rd September 2022. Linking the International Year of Plant Health 2020 with the AIPH Plant Health Survey 2021, the session at IHPC progresses the AIPH plant health agenda arising from the recommendations of the industry survey.

The session addresses the subject of a systems approach to plant health and explores shared responsibility to enhance the safe and efficient trade of amenity and ornamental plant material. Through a curated panel discussion led by AIPH Secretary General Tim Briercliffe and engagement with an international audience, it aimed to establish international cooperation between growers and plant health regulatory authorities to develop systems that facilitate effective trade across international borders.

Plants for cropping, amenity and ornamental purposes have been moved around the world by people for centuries. However, it is now recognised that the most common pathway for exotic plant pests to be introduced to a new area is by the movement of live plants. International travel and trade have tripled in volume in the last decade, and this has increased the potential to quickly spread exotic plant pests and diseases around the world, which can cause great damage to native plants, introduced plants, commercial agriculture and horticulture, and the wider environment.

With the volume of trade growing and the capacity of regulatory plant inspections reported by many sources to be insufficient, greater regulation may not be the route to increase effectiveness. The AIPH survey of current voluntary programmes that take a systems approach to plant health indicates that the industry's proactive, voluntary standards can effectively augment regulatory systems.

These voluntary plant health industry support programmes aim to enable healthy production systems, cost-effective and reliable movement of low-risk plant material within global supply chains, and traceability in the event of a biosecurity threat through the development and implementation of procedures and practices that are integrated into a business's day-to-day operations. Over three-quarters of the respondents to the AIPH Plant Health Survey 2021 indicated an interest in the

development of an international voluntary plant health and biosecurity standard, the success of which demands that the requirements are designed with the involvement of horticultural professionals and are widely adopted by the global industry.

Together with the Plant Health Alliance, AIPH developed this session to probe the space for collaboration. The desired outcomes from this session included establishing multi-national collaboration to undertake an in-depth benchmarking exercise of voluntary plant health standards with a view to developing a series of steps that enable all countries to establish a coherent plant health agenda.

AIPH further intends to generate collaborative dialogue with IPPC to encourage stakeholders to identify where independent measures, be they regulatory or voluntary, can be combined and thereby provide a foundation to start building effective systems approaches in places of production and across supply chains.



Scan QR code to
download the *Plant
Health Survey report.*



Plant Health
AIPH INTERNATIONAL PLANT HEALTH SURVEY 2021



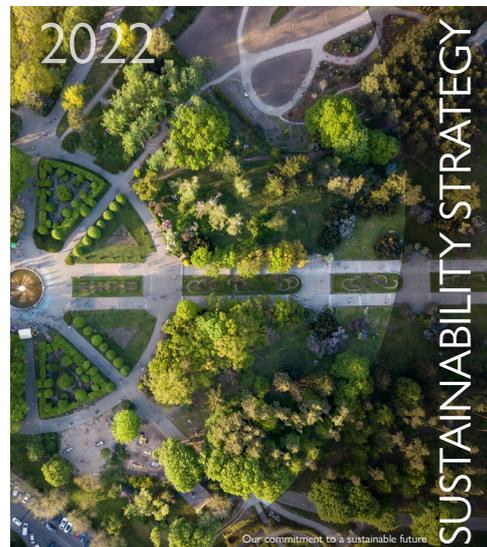
Sustainability objectives

AIPH produced a sustainability strategy, followed shortly by a survey of the industry to determine the extent to which countries and regions align with AIPH's Sustainability objectives.

The AIPH survey provided the first glimpse into how the global industry performs through a sustainability lens. It highlighted areas where the industry is active though not yet recognised.

Concluding comments from respondents to the survey suggest that the ornamental horticulture industry is recognising that the importance of sustainability is increasing, and the industry is likely to be required to provide evidence of its sustainable actions and strategies.

Enhancing the industry's visibility as a compliant and sustainable industry is important in securing its future. With this in mind, it is important to consider how this survey's results can align the ornamental horticulture industry with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. These are the reference point for many cities and organisations against which they commit and measure their sustainability. The UN SDGs that relate to the work of AIPH arise from the strength of our international member network, the AIPH



AIPH Sustainability Strategy



The world's champion for the power of plants

International Expos, and particularly our activities in the Green City programme.

The responses to the survey suggest areas where more attention is needed. There is a concern in the industry that addressing sustainability could be better rewarded, either in brand recognition as a preferred supplier or in financial incentives from consumers or grants to cover the increased investment that some sustainability initiatives require. Many growers believe that their commitment to sustainability is a personal as well as a business responsibility.

It is clear from the final comments provided by survey respondents that there is wide variation in the sophistication of sustainability action across the globe. Sustainability continues to grow in importance across all industries, with EU regulations leading the global imperative for sustainability with the introduction of regulatory reporting for all businesses above a specified size and economic threshold.

To facilitate the growth of a visibly sustainable global industry AIPH proposes that an annual sustainability survey is developed and conducted to track progress against the five topics of the AIPH Sustainability Policy. To do this, AIPH relies on the active support of its members to help drive the sustainability strategy.



Scan QR code to download the Sustainability Survey report.



Flower Auction Market Group

AIPH established its Flower Auction Market Group in Taichung, Chinese Taipei, in 2017. Since then, this group has met physically in Brazil and the Netherlands and online to discuss relevant topics.



On 14 June, the first physical meeting of the Flower Auction market group happened since the pandemic, took place.

Plantion Auction of the Netherlands hosted the group in Ede with the visits around their facilities and a presentation of innovations, followed by the update of all present Auctions.

The Flowers Auction Group includes enterprising and visionary operatives who foresee the need for an international network of independent flower auction markets. It is facilitated by AIPH through specialised annual meetings, the global collection and registration of data and surveys of flower auction markets.

Meetings have covered a wide range of subjects, including IT, digitisation and the future of the auction clock, direct and pre-auction sales, logistics and operational efficiency, sustainability, marketing and regulations, among other things.

The group has included representatives from flower auction markets in the Netherlands, China, Chinese Taipei, Canada, Brazil, Japan and Belgium.

The group welcomes Flower Auctions from all parts of the world to join and learn from the best practices, experiences and talk about the challenges the group members are facing.



Scan QR code to learn more about the Flower Auction Market Group.



Trade shows and events

Trade shows are the bread and butter of the horticultural industry, and during 2022 it marked a grand reopening of trade shows and events, albeit with still lower attendance levels at these events.

Now the global vaccination campaign is underway, and governments' social distancing rules and quarantine measures are relaxing. AIPH is ready to receive a dose of positivity, inspiration, togetherness, and business confidence at the physical trade shows planned for 2023 and beyond.



Scan QR code to learn more about AIPH's approved international horticultural Expos.

AIPH-APPROVED INTERNATIONAL HORTICULTURAL TRADE SHOWS

D International Horticultural Trade Show

- ✿ IPM Essen, Germany
24-27 January 2023
- ✿ Plantarium | GROEN-Direkt Spring Fair, Netherlands
7-8 February 2023
- ✿ Myplant & Garden, Italy
22-24 February 2023
- ✿ GreenTech, Netherlands
13-15 June, 2023
- ✿ Flowera İzmir, Türkiye
October 2023

The Greenest shows on earth

The last two years have witnessed Expos in Yangzhou, China; Hatay, Türkiye and the A1 Floriade in Almere, the Netherlands. There has also been the successful C category Euroflora in Genoa, Italy.

In 2023 we will see Expos in Kahramanmaraş, Türkiye; Suncheon, Republic of Korea and Doha, Qatar, where we will see the first AIPH Expo in a desert country.

It remains a focus of AIPH to continually raise quality, horticultural and operational standards within the Expos. This ambition has been helped by new sustainability guidance and a wealth of support from AIPH Preferred Partners, covering most aspects of an Expo.

AIPH continues strengthening the Regulations and enforcing compliance through an online monitoring system. This allows us to track each Expo's progress against individual milestones stipulated in the AIPH Expo Regulations.



Scan QR code to learn more about the benefits of hosting an International Horticultural Expo.

FORTHCOMING EXPOS

A1 World Horticultural Expos

✿ Expo 2023 Doha, Qatar

2 October 2023–28 March 2024

Theme: Green Desert, Better Environment

✿ World Horticultural Exhibition 2027

Yokohama, Japan

March–September 2027

Theme: Scenery of the Future for Happiness

B International Horticultural Exhibitions

✿ Expo 2023 Kahramanmaraş, Türkiye

23 April–31 October 2023

Theme: Nature-Friendly City and Sensitivity

✿ Suncheon Bay International Garden Expo

2023, South Korea

1 April–30 September 2023

Theme: The Garden of the Earth

✿ International Horticultural Exhibition

Chengdu 2024, China

26 April–28 October 2024

Theme: City in parks and life in poetries

✿ Expo İzmir 2026, Türkiye

1 May–31 October 2026

Theme: Living in Harmony

✿ Udon-Thani International Horticultural

Expo 2026, Thailand

1 November 2026 to 14 March 2027

Theme: Diversity of Life: People, Water and Plants

✿ Malatya International Horticultural Expo

2028, Türkiye

October 2028 to April 2029

Theme: to be confirmed

C International Horticultural Show

✿ Florales Internationales 2024, France



GREEN DESERT

From October 2nd 2023
to March 28th 2024

The world will come together in Doha for the first horticultural exhibition in a region with a desert climate, encouraging horticultural innovation focusing on the climate, water and the soil sustainability. The best minds are coming to Qatar to share ideas, visions and solutions inspired by the theme “Green Desert, Better Environment”, focused on 4 big drivers of growth and change.

BETTER ENVIRONMENT



AIPH Green City Programme

AIPH's mission is to reignite and uphold an appreciation of plants that we believe is a basic human instinct. As an organisation, we strive for a world in which humanity, technology, and nature exist in a healthy and stable equilibrium. By achieving this we aim to build a balanced and prosperous future for all, sustaining the planet for this generation and the next.

AIPH leads global thinking on the successful integration of nature into the built environment. In our Green City programme, we promote the essential role of plants in creating vibrant urban areas in which people and businesses can thrive. Through world activities, research and marketing, and shared resources, we seek to inspire people, organisations, city councils and government administrations with the aim of nurturing a strategic shift in city form and function.

At AIPH, we have learned that the success of our various initiatives lies in the power of collaboration. As the AIPH Green City network continues to grow, so does the network of partners. This is particularly true for the AIPH World Green City Awards. AIPH is proud to have had Expo 2021 Hatay and Biblio as category sponsors for the inaugural AIPH World Green City Awards. AIPH is grateful to the [network of supporting and media partners](#) for their ongoing collaboration.

🌱 Showcasing the power of plants in cities

One of the greatest highlights of 2022 was the successful completion of the world's first AIPH World Green City Awards. The inaugural edition of this unique, first-of-its-kind, flagship initiative showcased clearly that cities are taking action to implement nature-based thinking which demonstrate the power of plants and nature. With entries from leading cities around the world, the AIPH World Green City Awards provides a global stage to showcase the significant role that cities play in conserving, protecting, enhancing, and restoring urban ecosystems. Each entry puts forward an innovative and inspiring approach to achieving the city's greening vision in response to key urban challenges. The Awards slogan: Everyone wins- cities, people, planet, recognises that all entries deliver multiple benefits.

The two-stage judging process captivated a diverse global community of experts and influential, world-renowned representatives whose expectations were far surpassed in terms of the quality of the entries received. Firstly, a [Technical Panel](#), boasting representatives with an advanced knowledge of green city principles, plants, and nature-based solutions were tasked with assessing and scoring each city-led urban greening initiative based on its technical capability to achieve its stated objectives.

The highest three scoring entries in each of the [six categories](#) were [selected as finalists](#). These 18 finalists were announced in June 2022, and then placed before the [prestigious Jury](#) for the second round of judging. The Jury was tasked with voting for the winners based on the capacity of the finalists for influence, replicability, and scope to inspire change in answer to the following question:

"Which entry do you feel may have the biggest transformational impact?"

Following an independent voting process and facilitated consultation between Jury members, a winner in each of the six categories was decided, as well as the Grand Winner from the six category winners.

On 14th October 2022, AIPH proudly announced the [6 Category Winners and the Grand Winner](#) at a [dedicated Awards ceremony](#) which took place at a special gala dinner at the [IUCN Leaders Forum](#) in the Self-Governing Province of Jeju, Republic of Korea. The most prestigious award of the inaugural 2022 edition, the Grand Winner, was presented to the city of Hyderabad, India for their entry titled ["Green Garland to the State of Telangana"](#)



AIPH

The world's champion
for the power of plants

**WORLD
GREEN CITY
AWARDS
2024**

The AIPH World Green City Awards is held every two years, and the 2024 edition is soon to open for entries. Recognition and replication of inspiring action leads to transformative change. As the global green city movement continues to grow, AIPH looks to the future with raised ambition, united with their network of partners to deliver a stronger commitment to shape a greener future in the coming years.



🌱 Growing a Global Green City Network

Green City activities led by AIPH contribute significantly to building a global green city network. To support this network, AIPH launched the Global Green City Forum: a virtual platform to facilitate knowledge exchange and discussion which drive transformational change in cities. The [AIPH Global Green City Forum](#) is an online community for all individuals who are eager to engage with people with a shared passion for the plants and nature on which our increasingly urban lives critically depend. The AIPH Global Green City Forum provides a platform through which members of the global green city movement can unite, engage, and co-develop innovative ideas at the nexus of research, policy, and practice. The AIPH Global Green City Forum stimulates discussion and knowledge exchange between individuals from diverse sectors and disciplines who are working towards a shared vision of shaping a greener world for future generations, and who believe in the power of collaboration and co-creation.

The invitation to join the AIPH Global Green City Forum is open to all, to participate and benefit from engaging with this growing green city community. To support the AIPH Global Green City Forum, a dedicated [AIPH Green City Twitter account](#) was established in July 2022. This presents a series of social media campaigns to grow and nurture a specific green city audience on social media, working with and through partner organisations.

The Forum is also a powerful tool for promoting and sharing the wide range of AIPH Green City activities to a growing green city audience. For instance, the Global Green City Forum provides the space to share news of the AIPH Green City Briefings 2022/2023. It hosts the webinar recordings for on-demand viewing. The [AIPH Global Green City Guidelines](#) have been added as resources on the Forum for the benefit of members.

Promoting and sharing best practice in Green City activity

🌱 AIPH Green City Briefings

In 2022, AIPH launched the second series of Green City Briefings, featuring world-leading cities demonstrating the power of plants. In 2021, the City of London Green City Briefings saw 100s of attendees from 50 different countries join and participate in the AIPH vision for greener, more cohesive, and more resilient cities. The 2022-23 AIPH Green City Briefings, presented in collaboration with the [Worshipful Company of Gardeners](#) and sponsored by [Expo 2023 Doha, Qatar](#), continues to provide expert opinion, features successful city implementation, and generates an in-depth discussion among participants.

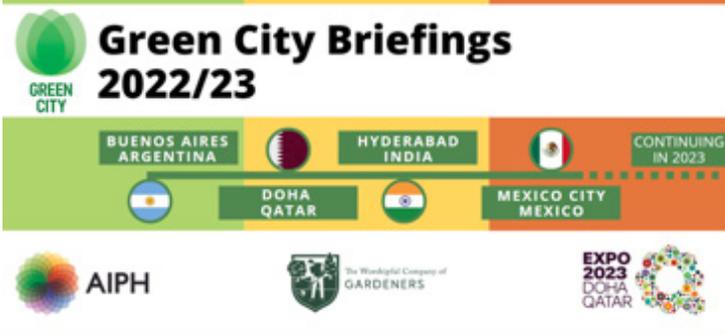
The AIPH Green City Briefings 2022-23 feature winning cities from the AIPH World Green City Awards 2022. Each themed webinar, featuring world-renowned experts alongside global examples of best practice, aims to link up knowledge with practice. The presentations are suitable for an audience of policymakers, urban planners, practitioners, and the interested general public. Sharing the experience of practitioners and researchers of the many ways to enhance cityscapes through the power of plants is vital to bringing about global change. AIPH Green City is proud to be at the centre of creating this conversation and will continue to deliver monthly webinars in 2023 and beyond. [All webinars are available for on-demand viewing.](#)



Scan QR code to watch recordings of Green City Briefing webinars.

Global Green City Update

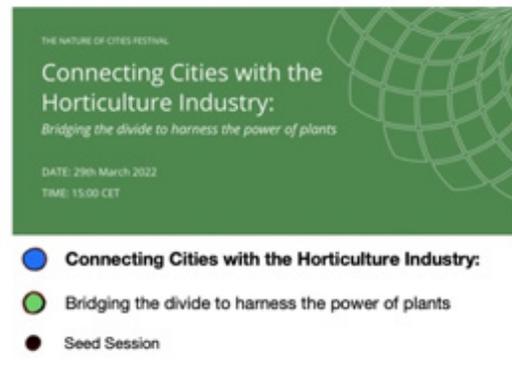
AIPH presents the power of plants for city resilience



Green City Briefings 2022/23

BUENOS AIRES ARGENTINA | DOHA QATAR | HYDERABAD INDIA | MEXICO CITY MEXICO | CONTINUING IN 2023

AIPH | The Wonderful Company of GARDENERS | EXPO 2023 DOHA QATAR

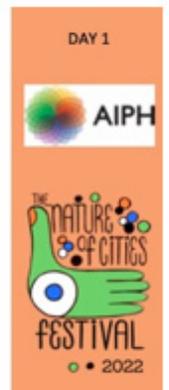


THE NATURE OF CITIES FESTIVAL

Connecting Cities with the Horticulture Industry:
Bridging the divide to harness the power of plants

DATE: 29th March 2022
TIME: 15:00 CET

- **Connecting Cities with the Horticulture Industry:**
- Bridging the divide to harness the power of plants
- Seed Session

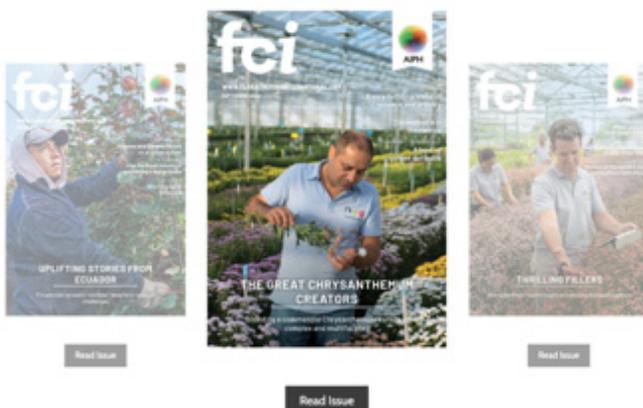


DAY 1

AIPH

THE NATURE OF CITIES FESTIVAL

● 2022



Read Issue

Read Issue

Read Issue



- Category Winners
- Living Green for Biodiversity
- Living Green for Climate Change
- Living Green for Health and Wellbeing
- Living Green for Water
- Living Green for Social Cohesion
- Living Green for Economic Recovery and Inclusive Growth
- Certificates of Merit

🌱 AIPH Green City Guidelines

The AIPH Green City Guidelines is an internationally relevant digital publication that provides practitioners and decision-makers with the essential information they need to understand and communicate the benefits of urban green space and nature-based-solutions.

The green city principles presented in the AIPH Green City Guidelines brings this information into the mainstream in a form that is immediately accessible, and which is supported by the evidence-based solutions that gives practitioners in different cities and climates around the world the confidence to implement successful green city projects.

The AIPH Green City Guidelines have at their core the belief that living green is critical to the creation and survival of healthy, successful, liveable urban spaces. Implementation of the Green City principles is presented in these guidelines in four landscape scales:

1 **Green cities** - considers key elements of the planning process and its relationship to green space.

2 **Green neighbourhoods** - examines those green spaces that form part of the wider neighbourhood and contribute to the social and catchment-scale functioning of the community.

3 **Green Streets** - introduces the contribution of street trees and plants to the effective functioning of city streets in relation to air quality and urban microclimate.

4 **Green Buildings** - explores how the performance of buildings can be enhanced through the application of green infrastructure elements. This could include positioning within the landscape, green roofs and walls, as well as interior landscaping.

* Green cities and the ornamental horticulture industry

A primary aim of AIPH, as the world's champion for the power of plants, is to identify and to enable engagement between the horticulture industry (the suppliers of plants) and the cities who use these plants. In a [TNO Roundtable](#) hosted by AIPH, we asked 30 diverse participants from a wide range of backgrounds to respond to the following question: "Can we enable better decision-making when it comes to urban plant selection and preparation? Does urban ecology and the horticulture industry need to be better engaged with each other?"

This led to the hosting of a seed session at the TNO Festival 2022, titled "[Connecting Cities with the Horticulture Industry: Bridging the Divide to Harness the Power of Plants](#)". This was a significant highlight of 2022 in the sense that the conversation generated in this session epitomised the purpose of the AIPH Green City programme - to strengthen the linkages between the horticulture industry and cities committed to achieving their green ambitions. This connection is critical as it is increasingly known that with conscious and careful plant selection in collaboration with growers, cities can harness maximum benefits for urban populations.

Case studies are a powerful means of demonstrating examples of leading cities who are harnessing the power of plants. AIPH collates these inspiring examples in their [Green City Case Study Collection](#), which has rapidly grown in 2022 with the addition of [case studies from each of the finalist cities of the AIPH World Green City Awards 2022](#). These are organised across the six Awards categories, and [six certificate of merit recipients](#). In 2023, AIPH will continue to grow this collection with a suite of new case studies that have recently been commissioned and which demonstrate the relevance and importance of the ornamental horticulture industry in being involved in decision making, implementation and management of liveable, resilient green cities.



Scan QR code to learn more about all of the activities happening with the AIPH Green City Programme.

* Publications and news

Knowledge sharing is a key component of the [AIPH Green City programme](#) for connecting research and policy with practice, and positioning the global ornamental horticulture industry as a key player in the green city sector.

AIPH continues to lead in the global green city space with the launch of the monthly AIPH Global Green City Update in April 2022: a monthly compilation of green city activities from around the world. Each edition contains the latest news and events from the AIPH network, partners, and other key organisations. The AIPH Global Green City Update presents case studies and stories of best practice from cities around the world, research findings which are made relevant to a diverse audience, new policy recommendations, green city principles, and much more. Each month, the AIPH Global Green City Update is distributed to over 2,500 readers, and this number continues to grow. You can subscribe to ensure you do not miss a beat [here](#).

In addition to the existing [latest news](#) web channels, key highlights are featured in [Green City Posts](#) and dedicated articles in each edition of the industry magazine, [FloraCulture International](#) (FCI).



**EVERYONE
WINS**
CITIES. PEOPLE. PLANET.





On Tuesday 24th January, alongside the AIPH-approved Trade show IPM ESSEN, the industry's most prestigious award ceremony will celebrate the best ornamentals producers and name the AIPH International Grower of the Year 2023.

AUTHOR: HANNAH PINNELL

Supported by Headline Sponsor Royal FloraHolland and Founding Partner FloraCulture International, the 13th edition of the AIPH International Grower of the Year (IGOTY) Awards recognise best practice in horticulture by the top ornamental production nurseries from around the globe and celebrates the expertise and energy they give to the industry.

The 2023 IGOTY Awards Ceremony returns this year to Essen, Germany, to coincide with the much anticipated IPM Essen trade show. The evening event includes a drinks reception with plenty of food and an opportunity to network with others in the industry. Following this, the awards will be presented for the five categories.

From among these categories, only one winner will be crowned the 'AIPH International Grower of the Year 2023' and receive the 'Gold Rose' – the industry's most coveted prize last won by Metrolina Greenhouses, USA.

"It's a great testament to our whole team, all 3,000 of our employees, everybody back in America, who made this possible. This Gold Rose is indicative of all the work everybody put in," said Abe van Wingerden, co-CEO of Metrolina Greenhouses.

AWARD CATEGORIES

- **Finished Plants and Trees;** for finished plants and trees that are ready for final sale.
- **Cut Flowers and Bulbs;** for flowers and foliage cut for indoor decorative use and bulbs.
- **Young Plants;** including cuttings, plugs, liners, seedlings etc. which are sold or grown on.
- **Sustainability;** for best practice and innovation.
- **Young International Grower of the Year;** for the most inspiring young grower aged 25-40.

THE FINALISTS

Ten ornamental horticulture growers from around the world have reached the finals. Commenting on the final list, AIPH Secretary General, Tim Briercliffe said: *"I am delighted to see this list of amazing companies from around the world. Each one is leading our industry and setting an example to the global industry. It is a huge achievement to reach this final list and I congratulate every one of them for this."*

AIPH thanks Headline Sponsor Royal FloraHolland, Founding Partner FloraCulture International, Sapphire Sponsor GLOBALG.A.P. & GGN Label, and Pearl Sponsor IPM Essen for their continued support of the awards.

ALLENSMORE NURSERIES LTD, UK

Allensmore Nurseries is a family-owned grower, supplier and trader of ornamental plants to supermarkets, DIY/Box stores, garden centre chains, and independent garden centres in the UK. With over 50 years of trading experience, the business operates on 140 acres of land and has built a reputation for exceptional product and service quality across a broad product range supplied to a diverse customer base. The company's business strategy is aligned to four Pillars of Growth: for the environment, people, community, and customers.

"Becoming a finalist means a great deal to the business. All of our team work hard to grow, sell and distribute our plants and whilst our guys know they are doing a great job becoming a finalist for an international award is something we all genuinely value."



BROOKDALE TREELAND NURSERIES LIMITED, CANADA

Brookdale Treeland Nurseries Limited (BTN) is one of the largest and most respected growers of garden plants in Canada. They service garden retailers, landscape contractors, municipalities, and golf courses throughout Canada and the United States. With four farms in Ontario and one in British Columbia, BTN has a land base of more than 800 acres. BTN specialises in building full-service programs in Flowering Shrubs, Evergreens, Broadleaf Evergreens, Holiday Greens, Vines, Perennials, Trees, Small Fruits, and Tropicals.

"Being an IGOTY finalist is a true honour for our company. To be named along with the other top growers in the world means that we are performing at the top of the industry that we love so much."

FRUCTOPLANT SP. Z O.O., POLAND

Established in 2007, Fructoplant is a dynamically growing Polish producer of garden plants. It supplies products to the largest supermarket chains and garden centres in Europe. Fructoplant is continuously developing its production facilities. The foil tunnel, which was built in 2019, combines modernity and functionality. This allows the company to produce and deliver nearly 5 million plants every year.

"Being finalist is a huge reward for our bestselling products and brands, and also honours the hard long-term work for all people and partners related to our company. We are really proud and happy and excited for new coming opportunities."



MOREL DIFFUSION, FRANCE

Morel Diffusion is a family company with a history of over 100 years specialising in breeding Cyclamen Persicum. The company's story began in 1919 with Pierre Morel, who grew cyclamen, primroses, and vegetable seedlings at his nursery in Châtillon-sur-Chalaronne. His six sons began marketing the original open pollinated lines, inherited from their father, into F1 hybrid lines in 1989. Now, Morel Diffusion operates 3.5 Ha of glass and plastic greenhouses in Fréjus, on the Mediterranean coast of France.

"What an honour! The feeling that "trying to do the right thing" daily can be recognised by industry experts, is very rewarding. A great recognition of a fantastic teamwork."

ROYAL BASE CO. LTD, CHINESE TAIPEI

Royal Base Cooperation is one of the world's largest Phalaenopsis growers. They specialise in Phalaenopsis variety breeding, production, and sales. Products include Phalaenopsis tissue culture, young plants, flowering plants and cut flowers. Royal Base Co. is the first company in Asia to receive three key certificates: MPS-ABC, MPS-GAP, and MPS-Quality. The certifications recognise the environmentally and socially responsible operation of the business.

"For this company, the awards mean everything. It shows that our investment is meaningful. We are proud with what we have contributed to the Horticultural business."



SB TALEE DE COLOMBIA SAS, COLOMBIA

SB Talee was founded in 1962 in Italy by Duke Forese Salviati and Mr. Palee Brunn as an enterprise to breed carnation varieties and to produce and commercialise its plants. In 1988, Mr. Salviati expanded his company to Colombia, a country where the flower industry was successfully developing. The tropical conditions that allow the production of flowers all year round made it possible to transfer the breeding and development program of varieties from Italy to Colombia in 1998.

“It is a great honor to have been shortlisted as a finalist for the IGOTY 2023 Award. This is a recognition to the legacy of our founder, Duke Forese Salviati, who knew how to imprint in us all his passion, knowledge and commitment.”



GIORGIO TESI VIVAI S.S., ITALY

Giorgio Tesi Group of Pistoia is one of Europe’s leading nursery companies for ornamental-plant production. In addition to its headquarters in Pistoia, the company has four other branches located in Grosseto, Orbetello, Piadena, and San Benedetto del Tronto. Production extends onto more than 500 hectares – of which 362ha is for products that are planted in land, 116ha for vase plants, and 22ha covered by greenhouses and high tunnels.

“Being among the ten finalists is a great honour. Furthermore, because of the level and skill of the candidates, it is well known that the IGOTY Awards collect excellent producers coming from all over the world.”

XIAMEN ICAN SEED CO LTD, CHINA

Xiamen Ican Seed Co., Ltd. started flower seedling production in 2016. The company operates three modern seedling production bases in Chengdu, Xiamen, and Kunming, with greenhouses covering 103,000 square meters. The company’s production facilities are equipped with advanced mechanisation and automation equipment. With the use of advanced technology, they produce more than 100 crops and over 500 varieties.

“Being an IGOTY finalist has a special meaning for our company. It is a recognition of our products and services, which would be an incentive for everyone in the company.”



ZENTOO, THE NETHERLANDS

Zentoo is a collaboration of chrysanthemum growers. Founded in 2007 with four growers and 20 hectares, it has now grown into an association of 15 growers with over 100 hectares. This growers’ collective offers more than 100 innovative varieties and together they produce more than 360 million stems a year. This form of collaboration is unique within the floriculture sector. The growers each have their own ‘garden’, but share knowledge with one another.

“After our nomination for the Dutch Horticulture Entrepreneur Award 2022, we were inspired to challenge our company on a similar international and competitive level. Our nomination for IGOTY 2023 is a huge boost and inspiration for our growers and staff.”

ZHEJIANG TOYOSHIMA CO., LTD., CHINA

Zhejiang Toyoshima Co., Ltd. was founded in November 1993, when they began to grow and sell fresh cut flowers – mainly chrysanthemums and carnations. Today, Toyoshima operates cut flower production bases in Zhejiang, Yunnan, and Hainan. The production area exceeds 92 ha with an output of 25 million chrysanthemum stalks and 10.5 million carnation stalks. To date, Toyoshima has introduced 179 chrysanthemum varieties and 66 carnation varieties.

“All our employees are very excited and proud! Being shortlisted for the International Grower of the Year by AIPH is a great honour. It brings a very good atmosphere, vitality and responsibility to our team!”



YOUNG INTERNATIONAL GROWER OF THE YEAR

Last year, AIPH collaborated with Jungle Talks to introduce the Young International Grower of the Year category. This category celebrates vibrant individuals, aged 25–40, who will lead the industry into the future. Once again, participants of Jungle Talks' Pro Manager Mastercourse who submitted an entry for the award have been assessed and three young professionals have reached the final.



Eliot Barden
*Production and Education
Manager, Majestic Trees, UK*

Eliot had an interest in horticulture from an early age and began his education in the subject via a Royal Horticultural Society evening class at the age of 15. He subsequently studied at the Kew Royal Botanic Gardens before joining Majestic Trees in 2018.

Shane Wang

*R&D Manager, Royal Base,
Chinese Taipei*



Shane also acts as Chairperson of the Taskforce of Automation. One of his goals is to pioneer AI and automation within the industry in Asia. He has already been successful in combating bacterial diseases in Royal Base's Phalaenopsis, greatly reducing the percentage of loss in the last five years.



Tatiana de German Ribon
*General Manager, Flores La
Conchita, Colombia*

With an MBA from Wharton, USA, Tatiana is an aspiring business professional who seeks to effectively adapt to the rapidly changing industry. Prior to joining Flores La Conchita, Tatiana was responsible for Cultural Affairs for the Colombian Embassy in Washington D.C.



AIPH INTERNATIONAL GROWER OF THE YEAR 2024

IGOTY 2024

Entries for the AIPH International Grower of the Year Awards 2024 opens on 24th January 2023. Show the world that your company is one of the best in the industry by submitting your entry before XX 2023.

THE CRITERIA

Judges look at the following criteria before selecting the winners. The nominated horticulture business needs to demonstrate:

- **Economic performance;** the best businesses must be profitable to remain productive and deliver ongoing developments.
- **Innovation;** the best businesses must be innovative, bringing something new to the industry or market, doing something differently and pushing boundaries.
- **Market Insight;** the best businesses will understand their market and customers inside out.
- **Sustainability;** the best businesses will be sustainable, with demanding environmental and social standards, practices and ambitions.
- **People Policy;** the best businesses will value their human resources and foster a working environment of unity, respect and reward.

ENTER IGOTY 2024



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SPECIAL IPM ESSEN EDITION 2023

THE BIG INTERVIEW

**AIPH new President
Leonardo Capitanio**

THE BIGGEST READS

**Featuring our top
stories from 2022**

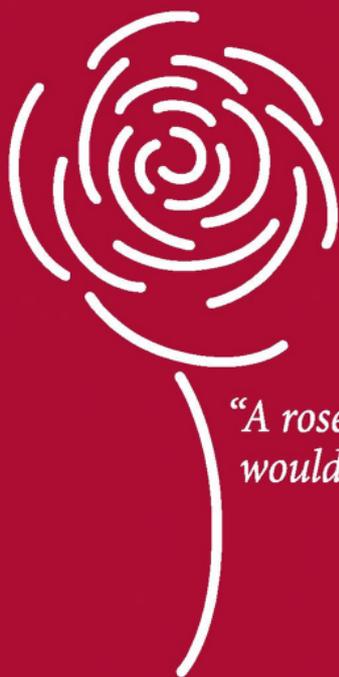
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**Understanding the
mechanism of PBR**



NEW YEAR, NEW HOUSEPLANTS

But has the green revolution reached its peak?



*“A rose by any other name
would smell as sweet”*

No doubt that Shakespeare was true.
But with another name, that rose could
have a different value.

**Jacobacci Law. Since 1996, legal
defense for your plant varieties.**

Jacobacci & Associati is a Law Firm that has, since the day it was founded in the mid-1990s, specialized in the field of Intellectual Property, with a practice area dedicated entirely to the protection of New Plant Varieties, specifically focusing on the flower industry. Thanks to the experience we have gained over nearly two decades, our Professionals are able to offer the highest quality services in relation to contentious and non-contentious matters, updating traditional strategies and tools by means of new technologies. Because any technology has been contemporary, Jacobacci - Contemporary IP for the future.

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FCI Editor,
Ron van der Ploeg

Welcome...

The FCI editorial team covers significant news developments as it happens online and goes more in-depth in the monthly FCI magazine. Our weekly newsletter, topical webinars, country trade missions and many other side events have the aim of supporting the floriculture industry.

In preparing content, the editorial team has an outline plan available online under the Media Kit tab on the menu bar of the FCI home page. Naturally, content decisions also depend on significant world events. For example, when Russia invaded Ukraine at the end of February, we spoke to many producers and suppliers about their reactions, reported on their efforts to support Ukraine, and discussed the broader implications for the global flower industry.

Our monthly Vis a Vis section is where we interview industry leaders and production honchos. This year we have talked to 'hard-to-reach' CEOs, including Jan van Dam of Dutch Flower Group (DFG) and Mariska Dreschler, RAI director of horticulture. A vital part of our magazine's content is the country profiles; our journalists have sourced stories on the challenges of growing roses in Iran and how the markets in South Korea are thawing. FCI always seeks to create synergy with its owner and publisher, AIPH, promoting the high-profile events of the organisation, including the inaugural World Green City Awards and the ever-popular International Grower of the Year.

In this special edition for IPM Essen, we have put together some of our popular articles for you to enjoy.

 **FCI strives to publish down-to-earth grower stories in which horticultural entrepreneurs talk of how they overcome challenges**





(Left to right) DFG's Chief marketing officer/chief sustainability officer, Marcel Zandvliet, and DFG's CSR manager, Raimon Loman.

THE GREEN MASTERS OF CSR

Reflecting on Dutch Flower Group's sustainability aims, the company's CSR manager, Raimon Loman and chief marketing officer/chief sustainability officer, Marcel Zandvliet, set out why Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) matters to the world's largest floral wholesaler and why CSR should matter to all global supply chain actors too. Warning: suppliers that ignore DFG's CSR strategy do so at their own risk.

AUTHOR: RON VAN DER PLOEG. PHOTOS: DFG/MELINDA-LOU VAN DER LINDEN

There's a Dutch saying, which literally and therefore uneasily translates as, 'you cannot eat from a pretty plate', meaning that outer beauty is only skin-deep, while what is on the inside is what really counts. In different, more floral-related jargon, it is not enough for growers and traders to only offer drop-dead gorgeous blooms, lush green plants, and exceptional service. Because in today's world, consumers have increasingly higher standards for corporate dedication to sustainability and social rights. Simply put, businesses should not only be interested in the single bottom line figure of profit in their books, but they must also do good for the planet and its people. Companies also face greater scrutiny from media, NGOs, customers, employees, regulators and investors, and these groups are ready to call for action when they feel corporate decisions are wrong."

CSR

As a result, businesses are increasingly protecting their public reputation by adhering to

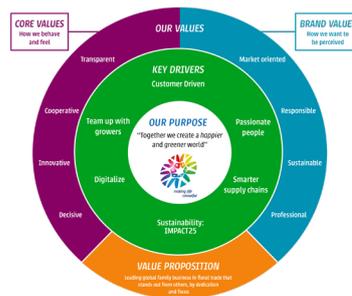
corporate social responsibility (CSR) principles. This business model helps a company show transparency and honesty with its stakeholders and the public. Essentially, it's about holding yourself accountable for your organisation's impact on all aspects of society including social, environmental, and economical. "CSR is part of our mission and corporate DNA, coupled with a genuine desire to create a positive impact for the world, along with value for our business," says Marcel Zandvliet, CMO /CSO at Dutch Flower Group. To demonstrate he uses a bullseye diagram from a PowerPoint Presentation. In the very middle, the 'Together, we create a happier and

greener world' message summarises the company's purpose. To make this happen, Zandvliet adds, "we need key drivers such as passionate people, smarter supply chains, partnerships with growers, digitalisation plus firm green credentials, and that's where my colleague Raimon and I come in." While the happy green message for some may sound like an overly optimistic refrain of an Up with People song, or a line from the green gospel urging humanity to care for God's good earth, for others, CSR is the top priority in the B2B world. Because being unethical can tarnish a company's reputation. And frankly speaking, between the 'greed is good culture' and a 'green-good culture', the choice is easily made as CSR will benefit us all in the long run.

WHY IS CSR SO IMPORTANT?

DFG is expected to post a €2bn turnover this year. It is a globally acting conglomerate of more than 30 trading companies selling bouquets, flowers, plants, and everything in between to traditional wholesale, retailers, and online flower and plant delivery services.

This family of companies generates approximately half of its annual revenues through supermarket sales, and Raimon Loman stresses that in that



Together, we create a happier and greener world' message summarises the company's purpose.

market segment there's virtually no escaping from CSR. "In the retail market, CSR is a license to operate. If we as DFG are not managing our environmental and social risks, we would no longer be permitted to supply supermarkets," says Loman. CSR is also used to guide the company and the entire floral industry along the path to forthcoming EU legislation, of which the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) and the Directive on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence (CSDD) stand out prominently. The first directive aims to increase transparency on corporate performance in terms of sustainability. Companies not previously required to report under the predecessor to CSRD will now be expected to comply with a broad range of reporting requirements by 1 January 2024. Loman explains, "Under CSRD, companies will be required to publicly disclose information about environmental matters including carbon emission, biodiversity, and how your company impacts social factors such as human rights, working conditions, equality, and non-discrimination in the value chain. Approximately 130 factors must be checked and measured, which requires much paperwork." CSRD will apply to all large EU companies, that is, companies exceeding two of the following three criteria: more than 250 employees on average during the financial year, a balance sheet totalling more than €20 million, and a net turnover over €40 million. At the same time, DFG wants to be ahead of the EU's directive on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence (CSDD), a sort of x-ray of the company looking for potential liabilities and problems with the target company. It aims to 'foster sustainable and responsible corporate behaviour and to anchor human rights and environmental considerations in a company's operation.'

Though its impact on our industry

is not fully clear, Zandvliet has it on good authority that "businesses will be held accountable for adverse impacts of their actions, including in the value chain inside and outside Europe. Organisations will be required to provide information on the origin of their products."

The new legal framework will apply to large corporations first, but SMEs must follow suit. Therefore, Zandvliet thinks downstream companies must engage with their upstream floral supply chain. "We will ask them to identify their risks. So, even if you are a small grower wanting to have your flowers incorporated into our bouquets, you must adhere to this due diligence, as it is also ours. You will be required to take action, whether you have annual revenues of €100,000 or €40 million."

PEOPLE, PLANET, BUT WHAT ABOUT PROFIT?

In its slipstream, CSR can help companies improve their reputation and reduce costs by, for example, installing a solar roof, using less packaging, and conserving water. But will CSR also improve profit margins? Zandvliet responds, "This is not our approach. We find that CSR is part of our business continuity plan and that there's no other option than channelling the sustainability movement into momentum. Our supermarket customers are urging us to manage our risks because if not, they can no longer put our products on their shelves. There's also pressure from NGOs urging us to act because otherwise, our beautiful floral category will be in trouble."

Scan the QR code to read the full story.



CLIMATE CHANGE IS HERE

Dr David Bek is a Reader in Sustainable Economies based at the Research Centre for Business in Society at Coventry University (UK), where he co-leads the Sustainable Production and Consumption Cluster

"The last decade has been the warmest on Planet Earth for 125,000 years, with average temperatures being 1.1 degrees higher than the pre-industrial era less than two centuries ago. According to the IPCC's 2021 report, this warming is causing discernible changes in weather and climate across the globe. What does this mean for the horticulture industry? Taking the floriculture industry as an example, there are clear threats in the major global production areas- East Africa is predicted to be a global 'hotspot' for temperature increases, whilst Holland and England's fenlands will confront erratic weather patterns and increased threats from rising sea levels. Furthermore, these changes are happening now, they are not a distant, existential threat. Changes in locations of production are inevitable in the very near future aligned to greater use of technology to control growing environments.

Horticulture has a key role to play in the drive towards 'net-zero' carbon emissions. Horticultural products themselves lie at the heart of wider climate change mitigation policies, especially the greening of spaces in urban areas. Whilst ornamental horticultural products offer every citizen the opportunity to contribute to the larger battle against climate change - each garden plant helps to trap carbon in the soil where it belongs, every garden or even window box can help to promote local biodiversity.

The industry as a whole needs to loudly promote these benefits and bring consumers along the sustainability journey. Commercial players must get their own houses in order. Noise around sustainability in horticulture has grown exponentially in the last five years, with 'green' products and branding exploding within the horticultural marketplace. Now measurable and transparent actions are needed across the industry to make sure that initiatives are truly sustainable and not greenwash. Programmes such as the multi-stakeholder HortiFootprint project, which provides a robust tool for assessing environmental impacts suggest that the industry is grasping the nettle. The stakes could not be higher and it is vital that impactful sustainability measures are adopted as the norm across the industry as a whole as soon as possible. There is no more time to waste."

Dr David Bek was the keynote speaker at AIPH Sustainability Conference 2021. Scan this QR Code to view the recording.



THE GLOBAL FLORICULTURE INDUSTRY

FCI had a conversation with Sylvie Mamias, Secretary General of Union Fleurs – the International Flower Trade Association, to look at the challenges and opportunities, post-Covid

AUTHORS: RON VAN DER PLOEG AND RACHEL WAKEFIELD. PHOTOS: SASKIA VANDERSTICHELE.

Union Fleurs is the international umbrella organisation representing and promoting the interests of national associations and companies active in the floricultural trade, including cut flowers, cut foliage and potted plants. Union Fleurs was founded in 1959 in Brussels and now has members in 20 countries worldwide, spanning Europe, Africa, Middle-East, South and North America, and Asia. Within its membership, Union Fleurs gathers over 3,000 companies worldwide. Members account for more than 80 per cent of the total value of the worldwide trade of cut flowers and potted plants.

The Union Fleurs Board of Directors is composed of Richard Fox, President (Kenya Flower Council); Frank Zeiler, Vice-President (BGI / Germany), Matthijs Mesken (VGB / the Netherlands), Augusto Solano (Asocolflores / Colombia), Peter Larsen-Ledet (FloraDania/ Denmark) and Paolo di Massa (ANCEF/ Italy).

Sylvie Mamias has been Secretary General of Union Fleurs since 2011.

FloraCulture International: The Covid-19 pandemic caused massive disruption to the global floriculture industry. Where are we now, and what has been Union Fleurs' major achievements in helping the sector navigate the rocky waters of this global health crisis?

Ms Sylvie Mamias: "The international floriculture industry has been an outstanding example of a highly integrated global supply-chain making a very significant socio-economic contribution to developed and developing economies worldwide. Increased globalisation has driven greater efficiency in the supply chain. It has stimulated efforts

across the floriculture industry to ensure businesses are socially and environmentally responsible. But it is precisely because of this intrinsic interdependence that this industry suffered during the worldwide escalation of the Covid-19 pandemic. The build-up to the first peak of the pandemic and the consequent strict lockdown measures implemented across the globe triggered an unprecedented and massive 'domino effect' throughout the floriculture supply chain. However, after the initial shock, the floriculture industry demonstrated its resilience with a steady upturn in sales throughout 2020 and 2021. This uptake was thanks to consumers rediscovering



The pandemic highlighted the vulnerabilities of the traditional reliance on airfreight from the major producing areas in Africa and South America.

the importance of having flowers and plants in their daily lives. Although some segments of the industry, particularly hospitality and events, have continued to suffer due to restrictions on public attendance adopted in most countries.

During the initial stages of the pandemic, Union Fleurs' activities focused on three main strategic areas. Firstly, to give visibility to governments and policymakers on the specific challenges the ornamental supply chain was having to deal with in its globality due to the implementation of lockdown measures and the sudden closure of supply chain linkages and sales outlets.

Secondly, to stimulate cooperation across the representative organisations of the supply chain to work together; and thirdly, to promote the sense of wellbeing that floriculture products can bring to a society spending a lot of time in lockdown.

Union Fleurs, with its unique and comprehensive cross-sector supply chain profile, was able to secure, together with a coalition of national, European and international organisations representing the various segments and sub-sectors of the ornamental industry, the attention of policymakers to create awareness of the specific needs and unique challenges of the sector during the Covid-19 crisis. A unique survey carried out with members across the EU revealed estimated losses of 4.12 billion EUR for March and April 2020 arising in 17 EU countries across the four sub-sectors of cut flowers, potted plants, bulbs and nursery stock, accounting for close to 10 per cent of the annual total EU market value.

National governments' lack of coordinated action, with only a few countries granting direct financial support to the sector or other meaningful measures such as classifying the sector and sales outlets as 'essential', demonstrated governmental intervention's limitations. It also triggered discrepancies that

have substantially impacted the functioning of market structures and sales channels.

The major supplying countries in Africa and South America faced immense logistical challenges resulting from a sudden and substantial decline in demand. Consequently, a reduction in scheduled flights and reaction by international cargo operators to re-allocate their services to the movement of goods related to the pandemic efforts continues to be recognised to this day.

One of the very tangible lessons of the Covid-19 crisis has been the importance of cooperation and collective work throughout the supply chain to increase the visibility of the sector and address challenges as they arise.

A straightforward result of this collective work has been the unlocking of an emergency budget by the EU of about two million EUR for the generic promotion of flowers and plants towards consumers. It was activated in the pan-European campaign Shine On carried out in the Spring of 2021 by a consortium of our members across several EU countries.

This campaign highlighted the benefits to wellbeing that flowers and plants bring to our daily life. Joining forces across the industry to sustain the consumer market and make it grow as a whole ultimately positively benefits all operators along the supply chain. This message is an important outcome from the past two years that the floriculture industry should take on board and continue to stimulate, and where trade associations at national and international levels have a crucial role to play going forward."

Scan the QR code to read the full story.



SOUNDING THE ALARM FOR PLANT HEALTH

Mr Ralf Lopian was chair of the International Steering Committee for the International Year of Plant Health 2020. Ralf is Finland's Deputy Chief Plant Health Officer at the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

"Invasive, exotic pests and diseases threaten our plants. One of the primary drivers of this increase is an expansion of international agricultural trade. We see disturbances in and weakening of ecosystems. And it is well known that weakened and disturbed ecosystems are much easier prey to pests and diseases. And we have climate change, which changes our climatic parameters, affecting our ecosystems.

In recent times, we see the resources of National Plant Protection Organisations diminishing. We see that plant health research is reducing in many countries of this world. We see individual disciplines in the plant health field, such as taxonomic expertise, decreasing substantially, and we see fewer diagnostic services in many countries.

These challenges increase the risk for pests and diseases. Plant pests and diseases do not respect national borders and do not show passports. This increase in threats was the reason for the International Year of Plant Health 2020. It was an effort to raise public and political awareness of plant health and help governments and the international community address these challenges.

In effect, plant health will help humankind achieve some of its most critical objectives as described in the United Nation's Sustainable Development Agenda. In particular, goal number 20, 'hunger' and goal number 13, 'Climate action.'

Incredibly global pests and diseases are responsible for up to 40 per cent losses in all food crops, a loss of 220 billion USD per year. The world's population will increase to ten billion by 2050, and agricultural production must rise by 60 per cent to feed the world. Plant health measures can help stop or slow the spread of pests and reduce losses and damages.

Climate change affects the interaction of plants against infestation from pests within the ecosystem. For example, already in Europe, there are Bark Beetle sightings in areas where they've never been before.

We can do something about this with better cooperation between public and private sectors. In my keynote speech at AIPH's International Plant Health Conference in March 2021, I discuss the benefits to society of working together for the sake of plant health."

Mr Ralf Lopian was the keynote speaker at AIPH International Plant Health conference 2021. View the conference recordings by scanning this QR Code.





FloraCulture International is your gateway to global ornamental horticulture. It is free online everymonth, and is distributed internationally through FCI Partner Associations, (consisting mainly of growers, breeders, wholesalers, landscapers and retail), 11 times a year (July-August is a combined edition).

FCI magazine's global reach, will enable your business to promote your brand and give visibility to your products in both new and existing target markets.

Scan the QR code for the media kit



CPVO: supporting breeders in protecting new plant varieties

One application, One procedure, One plant breeders' right

The **Community Plant Variety Office** (CPVO), a key institutional partner to the European horticultural sector, will be present at **IPM Essen 2023** in a joint stand with four leading national examination offices: **Bundessortenamt** (DE), **Naktuinbouw** (NL), **GEVES** (FR) and **COBORU** (PL).

The CPVO is the European Union agency responsible for granting EU-wide **Plant breeders' rights (PBRs)**. We are committed to protect and encourage **innovation in plant breeding** for a **more sustainable world**. Thanks to **harmonised procedures**, breeders from all over the world can receive with one application to the CPVO a PBR valid in the whole **European Union**.



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Hall 2
Stand 2B23



Bundessortenamt



Community Plant Variety Office





Francesco Mattina was appointed President of the Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO) by the Council of the European Union in December 2021. He officially started his presidential duties in February this year. FCI sat down with the 51-year-old lawyer by training, born in Naples. He weighs his words when discussing his organisation's past, present and future.

'THE MECHANISM OF PBR'

AUTHOR: RON VAN DER PLOEG

The Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO) is a self-financed EU agency responsible for managing the Community Plant Variety Rights System. Located in Angers, France, the CPVO was created by the Council Regulation 2100/94 and has been operational since April 1995.

FloraCulture International: Signor Mattina, you officially started CPVO's presidential duties on the first of February this year. You are no stranger to CPVO because you have been with the organisation for nine years. Can you take us back to 2013, when you joined CPVO??

Francesco Mattina: "In 2013, the CPVO appointed me as its new Head of the Legal Unit due to my background as a lawyer by training versed in Intellectual Property (IP), the enforcement of IP rights, and IP litigation in several EU members states.

I subsequently moved up within the organisation to become CPVO's Vice-President for almost four years. Then, the position of President became available. I applied for the job and in December

2021 the Council of the EU appointed me for a first five-year term."

What attracted you most to the organisation?

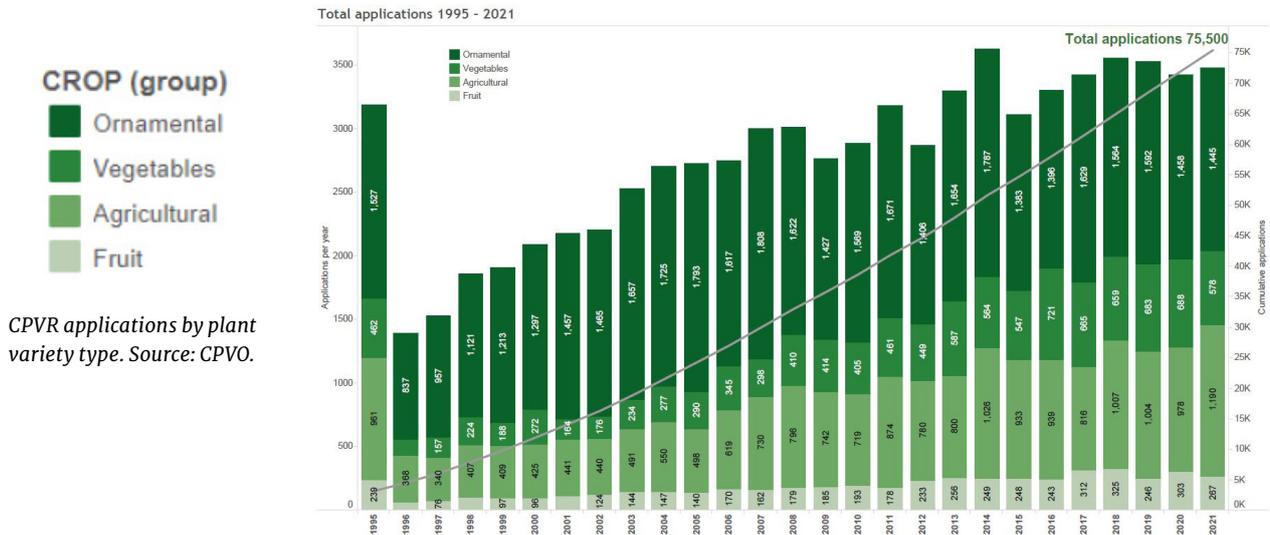
"Before joining CPVO, patents, trademarks, and copyright were among my core activities allowing me to become familiar with innovation in several diversified, highly technical fields. Also, and this may sound banal, I've always been interested in agriculture innovation from an early age, even considering becoming an agricultural engineer instead of a lawyer for a while. In my role as CPVO President, you have to put yourself into the breeder's shoes to understand the innovation genuinely. What's more, understanding the innovation value chain in plant breeding helps communicating complex and technical information in a way that's digestible for judges or the public. Within the CPVO, we work with qualified technical experts from agriculture and horticulture and legal experts to understand the two sides of the coin: the legally/regulatory and technical matters. The complexity of the different aspects is the most fascinating part of this job

from my professional viewpoint. However, I cannot deny it also comes with challenges as talking with technical experts sometimes is difficult. There is a tendency to speak different languages so we must continuously try to agree and understand each other."

The CPVO graph featuring CPVR applications per crop sector between 1995-2020 is a barometer of how the CPVR system performs. Limiting ourselves to ornamental horticulture, what key conclusions do you feel can be drawn from this graph?

"For many years, there has been a stable increase in the number of applications. But last year, we saw a decrease in ornamentals which may be due to the start of the pandemic. We should remind you that cut roses are the sub-sector with the most CPVR applications in ornamentals.

Honestly speaking, the CPVO needs to build in-house technical data and analytics capability to better understand the business trends for the coming years. We also need to recognise and address new demands concerning the European Green Deal policy initiatives coming our way. Because these policies put sustainable production under increased scrutiny, we should be aware of the impact of climate change in



the different EU regions where flowers are grown. “More stats on business structure are needed. Our new study – carried out in association with EUIPO (European Union Intellectual Property Office) – on the impact of the Community Plant Variety Rights system (CPVR) on the EU economy found that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are the backbone of Europe’s economy investing in plant breeding. These small companies account for more than 90 per cent of the registrants of CPVRs and hold 60 per cent of all CPVRs currently in force. The key conclusion is that these breeding businesses pass from one generation to the next with many individual and highly specialised breeders dotting the business landscape. One should realise that you cannot start a breeding company overnight; there’s tradition, a legacy, and research intensity. Managing several lines of genetic material involves a long process for a new variety to successfully reach the market by being accepted by farmers, growers and final consumers. “These are important data for the EU to remain globally competitive with countries such as the USA. Europe is a treasure trove of specialised crops owned by SMEs and not only by multinationals per se. This fact is important to reflect

upon when framing the topic into the EU actions to support economic recovery post-Covid. “In 2020, the EU adopted the communication Making the most of EU’s Innovative Potential; an intellectual property action plan to support the EU’s recovery and resilience. This plan is now in its second phase and is highly relevant to the global ornamentals sector. In terms of the geographic concentration of flower-producing areas, we all know the importance of Africa –Kenya and Ethiopia– and South America – Colombia and Ecuador. Flower breeders from the Netherlands, France, Italy and Germany are active on these continents. And we all know about the EU’s efforts to create a level playing field and the free trade agreements that are key to achieving that. Making the necessary legal environment for EU companies to operate and invest in these



countries is not always easy. Ethiopia is not a UPOV member. More generally speaking, implementation under the UPOV framework is frequently controversial or opposed by NGOs based on what I call emotional arguments or politically distorted arguments. “One may remember the time in which Ecuador’s extremely high application fees for PBRs created a barrier to investment in that country. CIOPORA made an awful lot of effort to solve the problem but to date problems of compliance in these countries persist.”

In the light of your study on the Impact of the Community Plant Variety Rights system (CPVR) on the EU economy, how urgent was it to prove CPVO’s raison d’être and how self-congratulatory or independent the research is? “It was the right momentum because of the many challenges we face since the global health crisis and another humanitarian crisis which is currently unfolding since March this year. The study is also relevant in priority decision-making within the EU Commission today and in the years to come. It should help substantiate decision-making with something that is objective and leaves room for better policy making. And yes, it is independent and carried out by the European Observatory on Infringement of IP rights, an independent body regulated under sister agency EUIPO. “CPVO submitted data from registries to be matched with Orbis Europe, the comparable data resource on private

companies. Our main concern was to remain as objective as possible and to use the right tools to measure and interpret the data. While there was an overlap with other EUIPO studies ours was more complex. We had to investigate agriculture and horticulture, define the different business models, the impact of the Green Deal, the impact of the CPVR system on competitiveness of EU growers and farmers, and the impact on the environment and the labour market. Our aim was to collect as much information as possible and I would like to think it laid a strong foundation for future studies to dig deeper into certain aspects. We did not include CPVR infringement and enforcement because that was out of the scope of this study. We will probably set up a separate initiative for that, approaching things from a different angle."

The study details how the CPVR system helps meet the European Commission's Green Deal objectives. But at the end of the day, it all boils down to the breeders who want the best possible protection for their new varieties. Why not regulate plant breeders' rights under the patent law, which, critics say, efficiently and better protects inventions?

"I think these are two different issues, two different IP rights. Here, we should reference not only plant breeders but also farmers. Professional farmers – those who make a living out

of farming, providing income and decent living conditions to their communities – want the best variety to grow under their climatic conditions.

In the seminar presenting the outcome of our study, the President of the European Council of Young Farmers (CEJA), Mrs Diana Lenzi, confirmed that nowadays, young farmers want reliable varieties, access to innovation, something they can grow hassle-free which is acceptable for the end-consumer.

A patent is another type of intellectual property right. The obligation to protect plant varieties by an effective sui generis PVP system stems from Article 27 of the Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement.

This system is deeply rooted in the specificities of plant breeding, so I think that the mechanism of PBR adopting a sui generis system fulfils the breeders' demands.

The breeder's exemption makes the system open and enables smaller breeders to invest in and access the system. All this would not be possible under the patent mechanism.

Another argument is that a patent is usually an IP right system designed to protect key inventions. To get access to patent protection, the legislation imposes certain strict requirements in terms of patentability. And this in my view is not fit for purpose for plant breeding in general."

Scan the QR code to read the full story.



Cut roses are the sub-sector with the most CPVR applications in ornamentals.



WHAT ARE CONSUMERS UP TO ONLINE?

Domingo Iudice is founder of BrainPull – a digital marketing agency based in Italy. How do you see the planet in 2030 – will we reach the United Nation's 17 Sustainable Development Goals?

"Despite the ambitious global goal, it will be tough to reach such demanding targets. As a marketing advisor, I would instead like to focus on what consumers will do. Pandemics and war have changed life's perspective. Moreover, increasing smartphone and social network usage will strongly influence the connection between nations and cultures, inspiring populations and consumers.

I firmly believe that three factors drive consumers that I consider are the dimension of the 'new richness' of life.

Wellness and health – Life expectations will be considered a vital variable in everyday life motivation: people will have average life expectations closer to 100 years with greater attention to appearance, beauty, and work-life balance.

Likewise, people's choices of work careers, places of living, and everyday routine will be chosen in how they impact health and wellness: related services – such as medical, prevention, and wellness services – these will rise fast.

Travel and experience – A wired world would not be enough: an experienced world will be worth more. Enhancing your 'self-being' with sharable experiences will be considered a critical factor in self-motivation and satisfaction.

Education and studying – Automation and AI will increasingly reduce manual work, pushing humans towards a new set of skills and work parameters primarily based on knowledge.

Also, industries usually resistant to innovation (tradings, manufacturings, distributions) will be affected by innovation. On the other hand, high content consumption and high usage of interfaces could affect the consistency of knowledge, turning into a higher degree of functional ignorance: people will be able to read but not deeply understand, bringing a worrying level of 'influenceability' and 'impressionability'."

Is the consumer still king/queen?

"Of course, yes: direct-to-consumer, online shopping, and word of mouth will increasingly impact how brands manage their reputation and products or services. On the other hand, a company's social impact will be considered an impactful variable in purchasing products and services."

What should the ornamental horticulture industry talk about that would attract consumers?

"Green impact, sensory pleasure, and health-related factors should be considered great tools in communicating benefits."

Mr Dominto Iudice was the keynote speaker at AIPH World Ornamental Horticultural Summit 2022. View the conference recordings by scanning this QR Code.



SMART GREENHOUSE CONTROLS

Recent developments in greenhouse screen technology bring new ways to manage energy consumption and optimise light levels for the crop.

AUTHOR: SPENCE GUNN

There seems little hope of an early reverse in the eye-watering energy price hikes that started at the end of Covid-19 lockdowns and accelerated through the political responses to Russia's invasion of Ukraine – leaving growers facing inflated and volatile energy costs for the foreseeable future. It has, however, brought energy-saving greenhouse environment control back into sharp focus, including the potential offered by the latest screen materials and climate systems which enable screens to be kept closed for longer.

COST-CUTTING SOLUTIONS

“At the start of this crisis, we were hesitant to approach growers as we knew how painful the situation was,” says Bart Bakker, greenhouse climate consultant for Dutch screens supplier Svensson. “But growers have been coming to us wanting to talk about technology that will help them cut costs.” For example, interest in adding a second screen to the single-screen installations most already have has soared. The space between the two climate screens, when closed, acts in the same way as double glazing. “If a single screen offers you a 47 per cent energy saving, a double screen can give you 63 per cent, and that’s significant,” he says.

“Modern highly transparent screens can be kept closed for longer while current energy prices mean a quick return on investment. We have a calculator based on heating temperatures, screen hours, the type of installation and so on, to work out the benefits of single or double screens to a nursery.” The choice of material for the additional screen depends on the crop. For many cut flower, bedding or pot plant crops, the first screen is usually installed for shade, so the second would likely be to save energy.

CLIMAFLOW

“Keeping the screens closed for longer may reduce energy costs but can need a change of approach to other aspects of climate control, notably humidity. “That’s one reason we started looking into the use of fans in conjunction with screens,” says Bakker. “The result is our ClimaFlow system developed in conjunction with the fan company Hinova, which is now part of Svensson.” It combines Hinova’s Ventilation Jet System and Svensson’s advisory service, Climate House, he says.

Ducts suck air downwards from the top of the greenhouse, while vertical fans below the screens distribute this cooler, drier air around the crop. Svensson’s design model works out the best duct and fan positions

depending on the greenhouse structure and crops grown.

“We’re using the principles of ‘plant empowerment’ previously known as next-generation growing,” says Bakker. “The aim is to keep the screens closed as long as possible, vent above them, and use downward air movement through the closed screens to manage humidity. You achieve the optimum climate evenly across the crop and, as warm air rising from the crop is recirculated, you can run lower pipe temperatures too.”

OPTIMISING CROP LIGHT LEVELS

The interaction between crop temperature and light levels can result in wasted energy if plants receive enough heat but too little light for optimum growth. “I suspect many growers in floriculture err towards giving too much shade,” says Bakker. “That’s understandable but may mean missing an opportunity to improve quality or throughput speed.”

Scan the QR code to read the full story.



LONG-TERM ENERGY OUTLOOK

FCI publishes this long-term energy outlook at the start of the summer of 2022, at a time when the economy is still reeling from the global health crisis and the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the EU's dependence on Russian natural gas urges us to diversify energy supplies.

AUTHOR: SPENCE GUNN

Beast from the East was the British nickname for a storm in February 2018 that drew an icy blast of air eastwards across Europe. The spot price of gas more than doubled in its wake, to over £2 per therm in the UK. Its effect on the market may only have lasted a day or so, but the impact was universally regarded as extraordinary.

KEY REMARKS ON GLOBAL ENERGY MARKETS

It has, however, been totally eclipsed by the movement in energy prices this year, says UK horticultural energy consultant Tim Pratt, particularly in how much gas costs have increased and the speed at which it has occurred. "We've just not seen anything like it before," he says. Volatility was greatest following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February. Still, growers in the UK and across Europe had found gas and electricity prices sharply climbing since economies began to reboot after the pandemic. Jon Swain, director of the UK National Farmers' Union's energy consultancy, NFU Energy, points to the emergence of world economies

from Covid lockdowns coinciding in Europe with new carbon reduction targets. As a result, he says the carbon price on the European emissions trading scheme hit record highs for nine months on the trot, with the knock-on effect of adding further to the cost of using fossil fuels and the electricity generated from them.

Meanwhile, Asian wholesale gas buyers were replenishing storage facilities that had been empty following maintenance at the same time as heatwaves in the region heightened energy demand for air conditioning.

DEMAND RISING FASTER THAN PRODUCTION COULD RESTART

"With some energy supply facilities mothballed during the pandemic, the economic recovery saw demand rising faster than production could restart," says Pratt. "By July last year traders had started to worry about potential gas shortages going into winter."

Consequently, the gas spot price reached more than £4 per therm by December in the UK but halved again in January this year as traders realised they had passed the brink, though it was still four times the level 12 months earlier. Then, just as energy markets looked

to be regaining some stability, Russian troops crossed into Ukraine.

Up to that point, Russia had been the source of 40 per cent of the EU's gas and 26 per cent of its oil imports, so the sanctions imposed on it as a consequence of the invasion were bound to stir volatility in world energy markets as countries began competing for supplies from elsewhere. That saw the gas price triple across Europe.

LONG-TERM TRENDS ARE STILL UP

"Markets started to calm down as we headed into summer, with short-term prices falling, but long-term trends are still up," says Swain, adding: "Any idea that we are going to be returning to pre-2020 price levels is unrealistic. We are going to have to learn to live with higher prices."

Scan the QR code to read the full story.



RETAIL POTENTIAL IN POLAND

FCI'S first webinar on Poland's retail market discussed the opportunities in Eastern Europe for floral breeders, growers, exporters, and wholesalers.

AUTHOR: RACHEL WAKEFIELD

Poland is an important trading partner for flowers and plants. Since the collapse of the Iron Curtain in 1989, the Polish economy has rapidly transformed from a centrally planned economy to a free-market economy. Tomasz Szacon deals with international commercial networks. In Poland, the discount stores covers approximately 70 per cent of all fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) food sales, and the flower sales are 'impulse buys'. Selling your product to these merchants is tough. Szacon warns that you need to know your figures if you want to stand out from the competition. The expected consumer prices for flowers in these stores decrease from PLN 19.99 to PLN 9.99. He adds: "All Polish discounters work through a central warehouse. So, when calculating cooperation costs, you must consider that the delivery will always be to the main warehouse."

Table by Tomasz Szacon for FCI webinar.



(left to right) Tomasz Szacon, consultant of Retail Poland. Robert Radkiwicz, co-creator of Polish Garden Centres.

Collaborating with hypermarkets is a different matter. These are destination shops in good locations; with whole aisles for fresh flowers and gardening. The demographic is much older, but Szacon underlines, "Hypermarkets are often franchised, too, so individual stores can buy without the consent of the head office. The downside is that they won't need to buy a whole truckload of a product." Consumers do go to DIY stores and garden centres to specifically buy ornamentals and plants. Robert Radkiwicz is co-creator of Polish Garden Centre, where he trains many family-run firms on the importance of a customer experience and how to signpost plant displays better. He says, "The customers are 'demanding', looking for new

products and what is fashionable in the current season" He adds, "Polish garden centres are going through massive development, not only due to the pandemic but also because of the wealth of the potential client's wallet, which in the garden store is higher than other retail outlets."

Scan the QR code to watch the webinar recording.



TOP DISCOUNTERS	TOP HYPERMARKETS	LARGEST DIY STORES
Biedronka - 3,150 stores Biggest discounter, this figure is from 2020	Carrefour - 935 stores Currently the most points of sales.	Bricomarche - 171 stores
Dino - 1,880 stores Fastest growing discounter - 360 stores opened in 2021 - that's almost one a day.	InterMarche - 220 stores	Mrówka - 307 stores The majority of these are franchise points.
Lidl - 810 stores	Auchan - 108 stores Recently taken over by Real.	Castorama - 76 stores
Netto - 380 stores This chain took over the TESCO stores.	E.Leclerc - 48 stores A small network with some good locations.	LeroyMerlin - 60 stores
Kaufland - 235 stores		OBI - 51 stores



THE OCEAN VERSUS THE SKY

The Covid-19 pandemic wreaked havoc on timely, efficient transport of cut flowers. Is sea transport the answer with its reduced carbon footprint and lower logistic costs?

AUTHOR: RON VAN DER PLOEG

This year's Ifex show – Kenya's leading horticultural trade show, which was back for its first in-person event in three years at Nairobi's Oshwal Convention Centre in June – featured a Flowers by Sea conference. In the run-up to HPP's second Flowers by Sea conference on 8 November 2022, FloraCulture International listened to the various speakers at the June conference. Here are our biggest takeaways.

FULL STEAM AHEAD

It is full steam ahead from sea freight. From a global perspective, maritime forwarding has increased tremendously over the past three years, by a factor of about 30. Horticultural growing powerhouse Kenya, however, still needs to optimise this mode of transportation. According to Jeroen van der Hulst from FlowerWatch, specific protocols have been developed for roses, carnations, and Chrysanthemums, whilst others are under development. There is good data on many flower varieties. However, floriculture in Kenya is a highly fragmented sector posing challenges mainly related to logistics. "The major obstacles to overcome are the variable box sizes complicating the filling of containers and securing a stable cold chain throughout 2°C", says Van der Hulst. Seaborne flowers also arrive in less-than-perfect facilities. For example, the port of Rotterdam and

the flower auction could use a major overhaul, with the investment needed in power generators, cold rooms, trucks, and others. More money should also be put into the logistics when consolidating consignments to fill up a container between several exporters. Van der Hulst says: "You need full control of all post-harvest issues throughout the cycle. This includes pursuing excellence all the way through by following strict protocols often specific for each flower type, ensuring perfect cooperation between all stakeholders. Bear in mind that a minor mistake can blow up into a disaster; because transit takes five to six weeks, you will only find out long after your flowers have been shipped."

UNINTERRUPTED COLD CHAIN

Competition between other flower suppliers in the international floriculture arena is fierce – Colombia and Ecuador, for example, have brought up sea freight close to perfection and are using it routinely. Yet, at best, only about 14 per cent of exports are being shipped by sea, with the rest still going by air which begs the question, why? With an uninterrupted cold chain being so critical, official on-farm inspection for pests and diseases, which avoids opening containers at the port/ airport, becomes of the utmost importance. A representative from KEPHIS (Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service) and Esther Kimani from PCPB (Pest

Control Products Board) declared that in Kenya, this is not only possible but also already being carried out at the premises of various flower exporters. Clement Tulezi, CEO of the Kenya Flower Council, clearly described their significant role as connectors, linking all concerned in making sea freight successful. "This includes mobilising and messaging," he said, referencing the need to inform government officials about what is needed to create successful sea freight distribution of cut flowers happen; providing information and training to growers, and even improving consumer perception as there are still some segments believing flowers coming by sea are not as fresh as those which are air freighted. According to Tulezi, maritime transport is the future, and the current momentum will make this trend unstoppable. "We aim to send 50 per cent of our flower exports by sea by 2030," he said.

COSTS, SUSTAINABILITY, AND PROTOCOLS

Dennis Nyamweya, director of sales and marketing at Kuehne and Nagel, mentioned three main challenges to overcome before sea transport becomes a full-fledged reality.

Scan the QR code to read the full story.



ROSY PROSPECTS FOR ECUADOR



Ecuadorian flower exporters are directly impacted by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, highly changeable markets, political unrest, inflation, and higher input costs. But the country’s growers have taken an active approach, finding alternative trade routes and are confident that the industry will thrive.

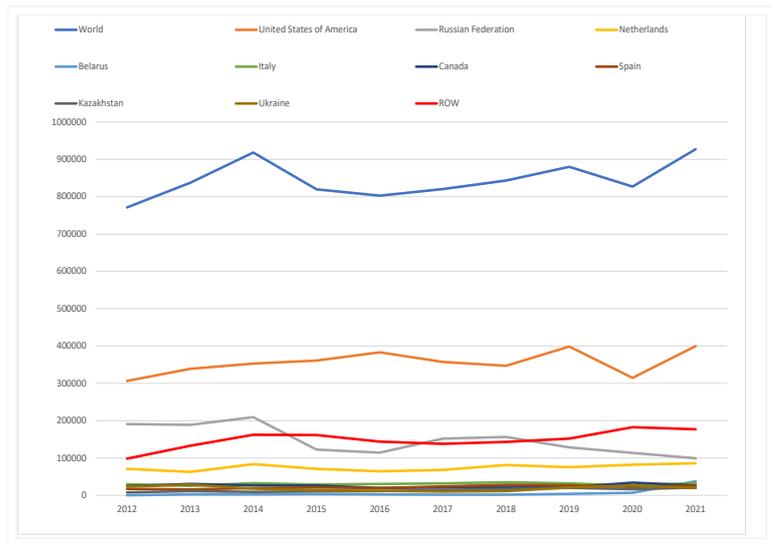
AUTHOR: MARTA PIZANO

With the motto “Let’s meet again”, Ecuador is ready for its EXPOFLOR 2022 tradeshow in Quito between 5-7 October. Booths are sold out; more than 2,000 visitors have registered –including buyers from across the world – and there is great expectation and optimism in the air. But the last few years have faced Ecuadorian exporters with various hurdles, significantly rose exporters. First, the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 brought challenges, mainly associated with logistics and transportation costs.

Then, political unrest in Ecuador led to strikes and road blockages. To add to the country’s problems, Russia launched a large-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022. For many years, these two countries and others in the region have been prominent buyers of Ecuadorian roses, with peak demand around International Women’s Day celebrations (March 8), precisely when the conflict began. .

ECUADORIAN EXPORTS - THE STATISTICS

To get a clearer sense of these events’ impact, FloraCulture International analysed Ecuadorian flower exports. We contacted EXPOFLORES (the Ecuadorian Association of Flower Exporters)



and some key growers. Over the past decade, total cut flower exports have fluctuated, with a dip reflecting difficulties in the Russian market in 2015, which picked up until 2019, falling again since then (Fig 1). Total flower exports have increased substantially since 2020, and a shift towards the US market is evident. Exports to The Netherlands have remained relatively stable over this period, and the ROW (rest of the world) category has gathered some strength, showing efforts towards diversification.

MODERATE DIVERSIFICATION TREND
According to EXPOFLORES, Ecuadorian floriculture currently spans a little more than 6,000ha

in production. Although roses still comprise about 70 per cent of the mix, a variety of flowers, including Gypsophila, Hypericum, cut Hydrangea, stock, and others often referred to as ‘summer flowers’, compose nearly 25 per cent of the product offer. Carnations and Chrysanthemums comprise about five per cent of the total product offer.

Scan the QR code to read the full story.



ROSES BLOOM THROUGH MANY CHALLENGES IN IRAN

We asked flower and plant grower Ruhollah Mahmoudi Meymand from Yazd-based Khatam Rose to comment on the current state of ornamental horticulture in Iran.

AUTHOR: RON VAN DER PLOEG. PHOTOS: HASTI BIDAKI

Nobody does New Year quite like the Iranians do. The Nowruz festival, since 2019 officially registered on the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, combines good food, new clothes, concerts, fairs, quality time with loved ones and other celebratory activities.

Occupying pride of place amid the many festive celebrations is the Haft-Seen, a table decked with seven (haft in Farsi language) symbolic items and all beginning with the letter S- (seen in Farsi). Primary items include *somaq* (sumac berries), *samanu* (a pudding made of wheat germ), *seeb* (apple) and *sombol* (hyacinth) and several other flowers. Also frequently spotted at the Haft Seen is a coin, candles, and a bowl with goldfish, each of them symbolising different things such as health, tolerance, nature, greenery, wealth, and light.

TIME FOR REFLECTION

For cut flower and houseplant grower Ruhollah Mahmoudi Meymand, the end of the year is a time for reflection. His thoughts filled with positive memories. The 44-year-old grower was born in Yazd Province. As a business owner, Mahmoudi Meymand wears many hats – from CEO to crop expert, from sales manager to market watcher. He says, “It has literally been a good year for the roses. I must say that we have had a very good year in terms of sales.”

Typically, there is a sharp decline in the market in the month leading up to Nowruz. “People first clean their houses and repair or replace broken things. Purchasing cut roses always comes with a delay, so our Nowruz orders tend to come at the last minute. But currently, the market is performing well. Not all people decorate their Haft-Seen with blooms such as hyacinth, roses and tulips, but it is safe to say the holiday fuels a boom in cut flower sales.”

TRIAL AND ERROR

Each Nowruz, Mahmoudi Meymand's thoughts automatically transition to the beginning when he was a novice flower grower. “The first time I planted roses was near a derelict and abandoned house. Old houses in Iran are often made of straw and clay. I reused the soil and plant material in the raised rose beds when razing the building. I had timed my first crop of roses for the Nowruz holiday. But I was new to rose growing, and unfortunately, all flowers incurred severe delay in blooming. By the time we began harvesting the first flowers, it was already one month after Nowruz, when demand was very low. So, Nowruz taught me a big lesson in terms of growing techniques and crop scheduling.”

A STRONG INTEREST IN ALL THINGS AGRICULTURE

From an early age, Mahmoudi Meymand loved nurturing and growing seeds into plants, taking an interest in agriculture, land use, and land degradation in particular.

“I studied desertification at Yazd University, at the Faculty of Natural Resources and Agriculture. Here I learnt the basics of greenhouse farming, growing cucumbers and other summer vegetables in the soil. Soon I developed an interest in growing other plants in new and more sophisticated soil-less growing media. That has made me the greenhouse rose grower I am today.” Mahmoudi Meymand's cut flower and plant nursery Khatam Rose opened in 2005, harvesting its first roses one year later.

Today, he has 43,000m² of land, of which 20,000m² greenhouse growing spaces. Around 45 employees harvest 2.5 million rose stems per year.

YEAR-ROUND PRODUCTION

Mahmoudi Meymand grows his roses year-round. “The production is relatively constant throughout the year because there is always a basic demand for our flowers. Of course, we do our best to schedule and increase output in the run-up to Mother's Day, International Women's Day, Father's Day, Valentine's Day, Girl's Day, and Nurse's Day because flower gifting is much more frequent.”

Scan the QR code to read the full story.



NEW YEAR, NEW HOUSEPLANT, but has the green revolution reached its peak?



Dirk Mermans, "We have had two very unusual years with crazy trading."

The new year is only four days old, and the weather is typically dull, grey, and gloomy. Strong winds push my car along to Wommelgem, which is around 8km east of Antwerp. Here I meet Dirk Mermans inside his newly built greenhouse complex packed with tropical foliage plants. He shows a high degree of New Year optimism; tropical foliage plants have yet to reach peak popularity and while rising input prices will test his resilience, they will also lead to improved market equilibrium.

The Christmas tree still occupies pride of place in the entrance hall of the company's new office building. But while Twelfth Night traditions will seal its fate, Dick Mermans' tropical houseplants may be the answer for many homes looking for greenery to brighten up the place.

THE OUTLOOK FOR 2023

On 19 November 2022, the Flemish hortipreneur finally gathered business associates, friends and family to celebrate his 50th birthday. For the now 52-year-old, it was also the day to host a grand opening of his new greenhouse and office building, just in time for January's boom in houseplant sales. "It continues to be a peak price period," says Mermans. "We have had two very unusual years with crazy trading. However, over the summer of 2022, the industry saw the first oversupply of Monsteras and Alocasias. I feel that the energy crisis will eventually lead to a shakeout, consolidation, and a more balanced supply and demand. At the same time, we see that consumers are tightening their purse strings as the cost-of-living crisis continues. So, I am not sure what this all means for 2023. As we speak, garden centres and cash and carry stores across Europe are filling their shelves with tropical foliage plants, but the pertinent question is whether this will translate into repeat sales. Ideally, the post-Christmas peak is followed by several smaller peaks throughout the year. Only then, we may conclude we are on the track."

AUTHOR AND PHOTOGRAPHER: RON VAN DER PLOEG



ROCKET SCIENCE

Industry veteran, and former FCI publisher, Jaap Kras provides background to the Green City initiative that started in space.

"In the 1970s, the American Apollo programme sought to answer the question: how do we make oxygen where there is no oxygen in space? Plants seemed to be the answer. Plants produce oxygen, clear the air, and consume carbon dioxide (CO₂).

Based on these NASA studies on plants in the early eighties, the Dutch Flower Council, conducted by Niek van Rest, was inspired to use these basic ideas for a campaign to improve the indoor environment by placing plants in the rooms. The idea was to sell more plants in houses and offices to benefit those living and working in these rooms. It appeared that the performance of the people working in a green environment with plants improved: fewer headaches, better concentration, and more pleasant working hours. Growers like Peter Olsthoorn of Pothos Plants, and later many others, picked up these results and started to sell plants under the slogan 'Air so pure'.

Further scientific studies were performed using flowers and plants and extended to using trees and shrubs. The Dutch Flower Council cooperated with the propaganda council of the plant- and tree growers to introduce space between PPH (Plant Publicity Holland) conducted by Jan Habets - often cited as the father of the Green City movement. In the early 1990s, scientific studies showed the importance of plants and parks in cities. When enough parks and green areas are available for the citizens, criminality decreases, sports activities increase, the climate improves, less dust and more oxygen, and the temperature goes down in hot summers, with parks reporting less heat than in the rest of the city.

Also, citizens like to look at a green environment and are stimulated to go outside, so people are happier. In addition, the property prices for properties located around parks are higher. But parks and green areas have advantages for every citizen in every city. Along with cities' greening, plans must be made to reforest. Trees must be planted. And to produce these trees and shrubs, we need growers. In many countries, growers are organised in producer associations. Supporting the industry, the AIPH globally represents 40 producer associations and 36 enterprises associated with ornamental horticulture. They lead global thinking on the successful integration of nature into the built environment through its Green City initiative, which promotes the essential role of plants in creating vibrant urban areas where people and businesses can thrive.

The importance of green in cities and reforestation is increasingly becoming recognised and accepted. One of AIPH's affiliate members, Wageningen University & Research, is currently studying tree varieties that perform the best in urban environments. Considering climate change and the necessity to do something against the pollution and heating of the earth, greening the cities and reforestation action now cannot be underestimated."

STAYING FOCUSED DESPITE A MYRIAD OF CRISIS

Mermans refuses to lie awake, thinking of a crisis. "Between 2007 and 2008, a crisis engulfed the global financial sector; we have seen periods with less demand for foliage plants. Currently, global prices for natural gas and electricity are soaring while Russia is waging its war against Ukraine. Basically, in life, there is always a crisis. I prefer to live on my own terms, be as independent as possible regarding harvesting my own cuttings and focusing on quality to keep things going."

THE GOOD NEWS

The good news, says Mermans, is that houseplants have yet to reach peak popularity. "The green revolution is still ongoing, at a slower but still steady pace. Trends always make a return. So, it is interesting to look at the 1970s and 1980s when people lavishly decked out their homes with houseplants. So far, we still haven't reached that level. Trends usually last for 10 to 15 years, so considering that the houseplant boom began around 2017, there is room for growth. And all trend- talking aside, there is always a market for green foliage plants. The only thing that happened was that people were thinking: the sky is the limit, and everyone can grow a decent houseplant. This put pressure on the market."

THE NEXT GOOD CHALLENGE

Situated on land a century ago dotted with cold frames in which smallholder farmers grew their vegetables, Mermans now stands here as a fifth-generation grower. His business now ranks among Belgium's top large-scale tropical plant growers. He says, "There's a handful of smaller plant growers, but in terms of decades-old heritage nurseries, there are only a few of them in Belgium. Small and large growers combined; I reckon there's between 12 to 15 ha dedicated to growing tropical plants."

Dutch constructors completed the company's newest greenhouse in January 2020, with Mermans now ready for the next good challenge. He explains, "As a tropical plant grower, I am caught between two realities; the eternal quest for something new and original and an industry which is not particularly famed for its breeding breakthroughs. The most common practice is done by modern plant hunters who collect plants in the wild, try to tame them into the pot and subsequently protect them with breeders' rights. I want to do things differently by actually breeding new houseplants. It certainly will be an endeavour, and no success is guaranteed within five years. I consider it more as a long-term investment."

Scan the QR code to read the full story.



'IF YOU LAMENT EACH DAY, YOU CAN BE SURE THAT YOUR CHILDREN WILL NOT FOLLOW IN YOUR FOOTSTEPS'

AUTHOR: RON VAN DER PLOEG PHOTOS: RON VAN DER PLOEG & VIVAI CAPITANIO

Leonardo Capitanio is the newly appointed President of the International Association of Horticultural Producers (AIPH). At 33, he is the youngest AIPH President to take on this role to continue the work as a thought leader that inspires and educates, stimulates increased demand for ornamentals worldwide, and protects and promotes the interest in global ornamental horticulture.

No one can doubt Capitanio's commitment. He recently stepped down from his role as President of the Italian Nursery Stock Exporters Association (ANVE) before taking on the part of President of AIPH.

He tells us he is happiest working with his family alongside the trees and plants in his nursery, Vivai Capitanio.

Capitanio was born in Monopoli in the southern heel of Italy, where most people are employed in agriculture, wholesale and retail trade or become fishermen.

It's one of the region's agricultural heartlands, well-suited to the production of seeds, olives, olive oil, fruits,

vegetables, and to a lesser extent, ornamentals which are more considered a niche crop.

Generations of farmers in his family have worked the land where Capitanio now resides, with century-old olive groves surrounding his family home. Growing up here, he has fond memories of playing with the children next door while their parents worked with his father.

He also remembers earning pocket money as a child by emptying the pots with dead seedlings and by selling seed-raised *Acacia pudica*. The young Capitanio recalls being fascinated by the leaves of these 'sensitive plants' that move when touched.



YPHA: THE UK'S 'YOUNG PEOPLE IN HORTICULTURE ASSOCIATION'

Natalie Porter is the business development manager at Porters Fuchsias (established 1985), a family-run wholesale bedding plant grower in Formby, just outside Southport, on England's Northwest Coast. The company owns the Happy Plants garden centre brand, including 99 per cent homegrown plants.

"Earlier this year, horticulturist, writer and 'plant influencer' Michael Perry, aka Mr Plant Geek, aired concern that UK horticulture spends so much time talking about how our industry isn't considered an appealing career option that we dissuade many from even considering it. Our negative narrative perpetuates our fragility. But how do we dismantle the preconceptions at play?"

Three years ago, my friends Mollie Higginson, Liam Cleary and I started to piece together a group of younger people who had found their way into horticulture regardless. Each of us knew a few, who knew a few, who knew a few more, and suddenly we realised that not only were there more of us than anticipated, but together we could make a tangible difference.

YPHA was formed in January 2020 and has flourished to a hived mind of 350, representing all corners of UK horticulture. We engage, educate, and empower members through networking, online seminars, and face-to-face events. Lessons are learned, ideas are sounded out, and work events become infinitely more enjoyable, thanks to friendships and business contacts quickly becoming the same.

We are immensely proud of how much stronger our industry is for YPHA's existence. But - having had our (very vague) initial game plan derailed by 2020 - how can we retrospectively channel this energy into a positive force for the future of horticulture?"

We start by rewriting the narrative of what it's like to be a young person in horticulture. By offering ourselves as a central point through which opportunities can be amplified, we have started to match members up with new job roles, contacts, bursaries and even the odd TV appearance. If a younger person isn't appreciated where they are, we can point them towards somewhere that they will be. If they have ideas but not resources, we can help find them a launchpad.

As soon as people start to feel valued and nurtured, they begin to thrive in their respective roles - the benefits of which shine through in themselves, their businesses, and the wider industry.

It's not the whole answer, but we think it's a start."

FloraCulture International: "What does agriculture mean for you?"

Leonardo Capitanio: "I was born the son of a farmer, so I have deep roots in agriculture. I am keenly interested in its history and origins, its evolution, and what the agricultural future holds. I like the social fabric of rural communities with traditional farming based on frugality, family values, generation-old knowledge, culture, and labour-intensive work. And how traditional farming relates to urban farming, which has completely different dynamics.

My father Stefano Capitanio began with 14 cows. He inherited them from my grandad. He was a visionary. He quickly understood that dairy farming had little future under the newly introduced milk quota in the 1980s. He sold off the cattle and tried his luck in growing mushrooms, beekeeping and snail farming. He finally found his calling in nursery stock. That's how he started his journey through relentless curiosity, an urge to innovate and an ambition to bring something different to the marketplace."

In May 2008, your father sadly died from a heart attack while potting plants in the nursery, aged 47. What is the number one life lesson you learnt from him?

"Respect for others and being able to work with others are essential. Today's scholars study the human factor in entrepreneurship from books, courses, teambuilding, and networking events. However, my dad was naturally an entrepreneur, always busy building an effective network, the legacy of which allows me to progress professionally today. My father was my teacher. He taught me to always listen to others carefully, the employees in particular. My brother Simone and I are lucky to be surrounded by a loyal team passionate about what the company does.

Taking on the responsibility of my father's business, I quickly found that some people are quick to judge, criticise and attack. Envy is human, inevitable and comes easy. It has taught me that not everything in life is beautiful and that the world is made up of good and bad people. Upon my appointment as the new president of AIPH, I thanked my 'enemies' because they allowed me to test my limits, break through the challenges and improve. I find an enemy motivates you to maximise your skills. Returning to the initial question, setting boundaries between personal life and work is also important as my dad taught me not to forget to enjoy life."

Family businesses form the backbone of ornamental horticulture. What is your best advice on working with relatives?

"When I talk about family members, I mean also my colleagues because I see them all as my brothers and sisters. To run a successful family business, it is vital to set clear roles and align these with a person's skills and personal wishes. My mother, Giovanna, for example, is the anchor and backbone of the company, but in the beginning, she made it clear she did not want to be involved in the daily running of the business. My brother Simone is the company's production manager and is good at focusing on the technical aspects of growing plants. Then there's my little sister Delia; at 18, she is still studying. I believe the success of a family business boils down to respect, patience, and connection. At Capitanio, we are united in our passion for the plants we grow."



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