

# FLORICULTURE

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**Meet Eliud A Seasoned Cut Flower Marketer**



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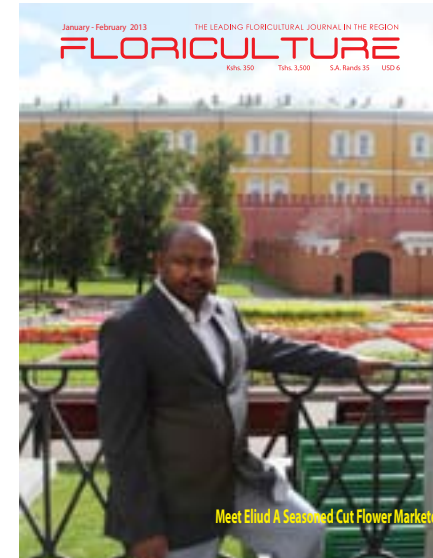
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# Contents

## Inside

- 6** Colombia Floriculture
- 9** IFTEX To be Held in June
- 10** Well-Attended FloraHolland Fair
- 12** Meet Eliud, The Marketer
- 18** Cut Flowers Trends
- 23** The Global Flower Trade
- 26** Hortiweek
- 28** Challenges in Horticultural Export
- 33** Coragen® – A new Mode of Action



Cover Photo Courtesy of Pigeon Blooms Ltd

### The Leading Floriculture Magazine

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## Keeping Customers Coming Back to Buy More

Today, let us learn from Jesus; the most successful marketer ever. After people were converted into Jesus' ministry, He gave excellent customer service; He made the conversion process simple (delivery); and He stayed in contact after the conversion process. In Mark 6:33-37, Jesus shows his excellent customer service by feeding over five thousand of his new converts/ customers after they had bought His product of everlasting life. In terms of a simple delivery method of his product (everlasting life), Romans 10:8-10, 13 tells us that we simply have to call on the name of Jesus to be saved. So simple; there are not hard works or hoops to jump through. All business owners should learn from this when constructing a method to deliver your product - the simpler, the better.

You may be thinking, Ok, He had great customer service and an uncomplicated delivery method. But how did He stay connected with people and follow up since He physically left the planet over two thousand years ago? Well, I am glad you asked that question. The answer is the Holy Spirit. John 14:26 reads. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. The Holy Spirit is Jesus' follow up plan and His way of staying connected with us.

What is certain, now as ever, is that every business needs marketing to realise its aims through its customers. So, does Kenya's flower sector. But with the challenge of new channels and new technology both the job, functions and direction of marketing are in need of re-affirmation and re-assertion. There is need to take the lead in demanding and creating genuinely new and powerful solutions to build your business. Encourage and work collaboratively with your colleagues to solve the problems that your business faces. Even if the problem lies outside of your functional area the health of the business remains your primary responsibility. This is what Eliud Njenga the Seasoned Cut Flower Marketer tells us.

Now that you have attracted potential customers, and converted some into paying customers, your final mission is to keep customers coming back by giving excellent customer service, delivering the product or service in a non-complicated & enjoyable manner, and staying in contact with them after the sell. To ensure this we have carefully looked at both the Cut Flower Trends and Challenges in Horticultural Export.

We all know if customer service after the buy is terrible, you'll never buy from that company again, and you'll tell your friends not to either. It is vital that your business provides great customer service, and in fact if you can't offer great customer service you should not sell the product or service until your customer service systems are in place. You cannot evaluate this better than been with your customers. This is why we have taken you to Hortiweek, IFTEX and Floraholland Exhibitions.

Secondly, no one likes a complicated buying process. The process to purchase your product or service should be as simple as possible, and the delivery of it to the customers should be even simpler. If you want to kill repeat sales, make the buying process complex.

Thirdly, you need to stay in contact with people after the sale. Send out Christmas Cards to your customers, email them coupons, and give them a quick call to see how they are doing, and so on. Your goal is to show them that you care, and that their interest is your top priority.

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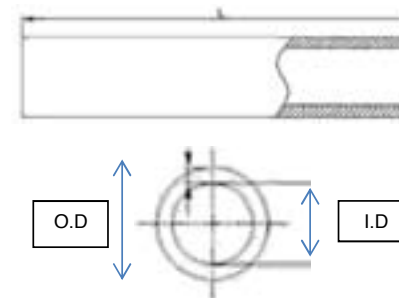
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## British Ornamental Plant Producers Announce New Certification Body

*The British Ornamental Plant Producers Scheme (BOPP) has announced that Oxford-based NSF-CMi Certification Ltd will provide its evaluation services as of 01 November 2012.*

This follows the announcement in July by Santia Certification Ltd that it will no longer provide certification body services from 31 October 2012.

BOPP was developed by the industry for the industry to set high standards of professionalism in the way in which certificated businesses operate, and through unbiased and effective evaluation by a UKAS accredited Certification Body.

BOPP members comprise producers from the bedding, pot plant and nursery stock sectors, cut flowers, bulbs, ornamental packhouses and growing media producers and supply products to the UK retail market. NSF-CMi Certification is a recognised leader in providing certification services to the farming, processing & manufacturing, food service & hospitality

and retail sectors. Since being established in 1985 NSF-CMi has grown into a highly regarded international company with offices throughout Europe, Africa, Asia and the America.

NSF-CMi has the breadth and depth of experience in the produce and ornamental sector coupled with a reputation for reliability and integrity. They are currently accredited to operate GLOBALGAP IFA V4, Tesco NURTURE and the LEAF marque, and BOPP will complement their portfolio of services.

Rebecca Grant of Joseph Rochford Gardens Ltd and Chairman designate of BOPP says "BOPP is delighted to have secured a new high calibre certification body so quickly. We are looking forward to making the most of NSF-CMi's proven track record in this arena and benefiting from their experience to help us to move forward as a scheme and achieve our ambitious strategic aims."

## Colombian Floriculture : First to Control CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions

Bayer and Asocolflores, in conjunction with the Colombian Business Council on Sustainable Development, Cecodes, have come up with a Floriculture Footprint Calculator for strategizing and offsetting floriculture CO<sub>2</sub> emissions as part of this industry's overall sustainable strategy and in celebration of the 2012 World Environment Day.

Augusto Solano, president of Asocolflores, said that this innovative footprint calculator will help establish a nationwide baseline on flower company CO<sub>2</sub> emissions; an indispensable measure for ensuing carbon footprint reduction and offsetting. Frank Dietrich, president of Bayer Andean Region, added "the development of a custom tailored CO<sub>2</sub> footprint calculator

for the Colombian flower production process was possible thanks to this collaborative effort. Bayer contributed its conceptual design experience and provided technicians to create a computer program for the Asocolflores footprint calculator that allows its affiliates to calculate their own emissions and go on to make informed decisions on how to not only reduce their footprint, but even offset it."

The Floriculture Footprint Calculator gauges the CO<sub>2</sub>eq in tons generated on flower farms during their production process by measuring greenhouse gases and displaying them as either direct or indirect emissions. Florverde and Bayer CropScience have been working on this industry initiative since October 2010. Nine flower farms are currently participating in this Web-app pilot project that will steer future strategies for improved CO<sub>2</sub> reduction and offsetting.

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## IFTEX To be held in June

The organizers of International Flower Trade Expo (IFTEX) have pushed the date to June 5-7 2013. The annual event normally held in March will now take place two months later since the country expects to hold its general elections during the month of March.

The event, now going for its second year, was held in Nairobi at Oshwal Centre in Kenya and attracted all stakeholders in the flower industry. Growers, breeders, buyers, manufacturers other supporting products and importers of products and services were at the show to meet and network with their clients.

According to IFTEX organizers, HPP Exhibitions, last year, visitors and exhibitors represented about 39 countries. The fair filled itself with both national and international visitors of which most were international flower buyers from Dubai, Qatar, Canada, Bulgaria, Russia, Spain, Germany, Tjehie, Italy, Japan, Holland, England, Belgium, Australia, South Africa, and more. Even though it was the first time for such event in Kenya, a total of 140 companies exhibited. Out of the total, 93 were Kenyan companies which included 61 local growers.

Kenya Flower Council (KFC) also facilitated in making the expo a success by mobilizing its producer members who included Magana Flowers, Sian Roses, Finlays Horticulture, Mweiga Blooms, Maridadi Flowers, Oserian, Xpressions, P. J. Dave flowers, Black Petals, Harvest Ltd, Elbur Flora, Isinya ,Mosi, Simbi Roses, Desire Flora, Mt. Elgon, Kreative Roses, Primarosa, and Vegpro Group. KFC Associate members included Bayer Crop Science, Elgon Kenya, Koppert Biological, Syngenta, De Ruitter East Africa, Dipchem East Africa, FloraHolland, Schreurs, Hortilink, Kuehne + Nagel, The Flower Hub Kenya, and UFO Supplies.

The event also provides a platform for the players in flower sector to reflect on the opportunities and challenges facing the industry. Last year, Kenya Minister for Agriculture Sally Kosgei told the exhibitors that the government is aware of the problems the industry is facing ranging from high freight charges, rising fuel costs, lack of any subsidies and requested the stakeholders to work together to minimize impact on everyone involved.

Trade Show	Date	Vanue
1. World Floral Expo 2013	March 13-15	New York, USA
2. HortiFlora Ethiopia 2013	March 20-22	Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
3. IFTEX Kenya 2013	June 5-7	Nairobi, Kenya.
4. Flowers Expo	August 28-31	Moscow, Russia.
5. IFTF Expo	November 6-8	Vijfhuizen, Holland.

## Positive Vibes at the Well-Attended FloraHolland Trade Fair Aalsmeer



**M**ore than 10,000 visitors attended this year's FloraHolland Trade Fair in Aalsmeer. About 700 exhibitors were able to show and promote their companies and products. A positive atmosphere prevailed during this international trade fair where the focus was on networking, gaining inspiration and preparing orders.

The heart of the trade fair was 'The Village; Consumer Intelligence & Inspiration Centre'. Together with the Flower Council Holland, FloraHolland demonstrated how growers' products can be translated to different consumer groups and how these products can best be presented through different market segments.

Increasingly, the consumer's point of view is being considered. Aided by well-supported insights into the target groups, solutions for shop floors can be devised to further stimulate sales.

The visitors especially considered the way in which different target groups were approached as inspiring and convincing. Griffioen Mijdrecht (stand 30.7) won the Best Stand Award of the FloraHolland Trade Fair Aalsmeer 2012.

The aspects that were taken into account were styling, message, product use, innovation, stand crew, layout and traffic. FloraHolland Marketing manager and jury member Marc Eijsackers

praised Griffioen's 'original story' and their accompanying 'bold' philosophy — You order, we serve. The next international trade fair will be the FloraHolland Trade Fair Naaldwijk, from 13 through 15 March 2013. To register for the trade fair in Naaldwijk, please visit the FloraHolland website.

Next year, the International Horti Fair and the FloraHolland Trade Fair Aalsmeer will be merged into a new trade fair combination which will still retain the separate, strong characteristic profiles of the two fairs. Starting in 2013, the visitor will find the fairs running simultaneously and under one roof at FloraHolland in Aalsmeer. The fairs will be held from 4 through 8 November 2013.



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The main function of Potassium within the plant is as a water regulator which in turn affects many plant processes such as:

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- cell turgidity
- transpiration rates
- translocation of photosynthesates and enzymes.

Low levels of potassium can critically affect the growth of the crop, subsequently affecting quality and yield. hyK is a unique formulation containing a high concentration of potassium. This high analysis ensures optimum uptake of the potash where required and also assists the plant to create a leaf environment unfavourable to disease development.

Analysis of hyK	Weight/Volume	Weight/Weight
Total Nitrogen (N)	3.00%	1.95%
Potassium (K <sub>2</sub> O)	50.00%	33.00 %
pH: (10% solution)	11.0 – 12.5	

Recommended Rate: 3 litres per hectare  
 Water volume: 1000 litres  
 Frequency of application: Apply 10-14 day intervals

### Directions of use:

1. Always shake container before use.
2. Fill half the required amount of water in the spray tank.
3. Measure the required amount of hyK and add to tank. Maintain constant agitation.
4. Add remaining water to correct dilution.
5. Spray and ensure full coverage.
6. The product should always be used with a compatible wetter/sticker (not a buffer).

### Tank Mixing Compatibility

Although it is compatible with most, but not all pesticides, growth regulators and micro-nutrients, it is advisable to use hyK on its own in a tank mix with a compatible wetter only (not a buffer). Always carry out a phytotoxicity test on a small area before large scale application.

Liability cannot be accepted for any loss or damage as not all pesticides and fertilisers have been tested for compatibility. Efficacy of any mix will depend upon crop type and growth stage, pesticide concerned, climatic conditions, water volumes and various other factors.

### Storage & Shelf life

Store in a cool dry place away from the heat and sunlight with optimum storage range between 5-40°C. Although hyK is low in toxicity, it can cause eye and skin irritation in concentrated form. It is non-hazardous and non-flammable. However, when handling the concentrate, protective gear should be used such as gloves and face shield.

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## Meet Eliud a Seasoned Cut Flower Marketer

In matters of flowers, he is unquestionably an authority, and he commands the respect of his peers, colleagues and competitors alike. His understanding of the business has been gained from rising painstakingly through the ranks of many different departments to his present position, Managing Director Pigeon Blooms Ltd and Credible blooms limited.

A long the way, he has worked his way through since joining the flower industry in early 1990. He started as a general worker in the greenhouse, head of postharvest department, Sales and marketing manager to his current position of Managing Director Pigeon Blooms Ltd, one of the fastest growing flower trading company in the country. Eliud Njenga, himself a respected business manager with an entrepreneurial leaning could not have been more resourceful than serving the industry he loves most, the flower industry.

The Founder and Managing Director, Credible Blooms and an associate member of Kenya Flower Council is passionate about flowers. Leading the company alongside a team of motivated people who have good managerial skills, modern business approach and excellent company culture is what makes the effort worthwhile, says Eliud as he is popularly known, in a 30-minute interview with Floriculture Team.

'Pigeon Blooms Ltd is currently exporting half a million roses every week out of Kenya. In one word, they exist for the sake of simplicity. They focus their efforts into taking on all the worries over marketing from their customers, leaving them to concentrate on their core activities. Their contribution to the business mix is brief, crisp, penetrating, perceptible and a creative insight into the minds of buyers. 'Listen first, don't write' he said as I picked my pen to scribe after the usual salutations. Below is the 30 minutes interview.



Floriculture: Mr. Njenga, you have traversed and served in different sectors, kindly discuss your background?

Eliud: My background! Let me recollect it briefly. I was born 44 years ago in a big family. I attended local primary School and completed my 'A' level (form six) in 1988. I later on joined one of the leading colleges and graduated with a diploma in Sales and marketing besides other computer courses.

I joined the flower industry as a general worker in different departments at Fairview flora limited where I later on served as a data clerk and head of post harvest department in a span of 7 years.



In 1996 I joined Valentine growers where I served as a Sales and Marketing Manager, and later moved to Harvest Ltd in 2007 in the same capacity for nearly 2 years. Having acquired the necessary knowledge, experience and exposure I asserted to start my own company, Pigeon Blooms in 2009 with the help of my lovely wife Nancy Njenga.

Pigeon Blooms Ltd is a trading company supplying flowers to various destinations including Netherlands, Germany, France, UK, Sweden, Russia, Ukraine, Estonia, Japan, South Africa, Nigeria and Australia. Currently we are working with 30 farmers across the country from high to low altitude to satisfy our buyers.

In summary I have 23 years in flower industry and exposure both locally and internationally. Pigeon Blooms limited was set up on a strong Christian foundation and we uphold Christian values in our daily business activities.

**Floriculture:** Flower trading is such an high risk business, briefly discuss why you decided to bite the bullet.

**Eliud:** (Smiling) The biggest risk in this world is not to take the risk. The years I had served as sales and marketing manager, I had seen a big gap in buyers' communication with growers. A buyer would wait for several hours or even days to receive feedback from flower farms. This left many buyers disappointed forcing them to opt for less fulfilling options.

I decided to set up a one stop shop where a buyer can make a single call and enjoy flowers from any of the thirty growers. This was a clear efficiency in communication and customer service. By consolidating shipments, we save costs for our clients on logistics and communication.

Being locally based, we co-ordinate orders, deliveries, monitor quality at the airport, ensure proper documentation, place freight requirements and make follow-ups to ensure smooth departure of shipments. Pigeon Blooms Ltd has also been in the fore front in offering auction oriented farms alternative direct markets for their products. This is through specialization on value adding activities such as special bunching, sleeving and use flower

foods. Our customers have access to fresh finished products and hence reducing handling costs abroad. Pigeon Blooms Ltd is the second trading company in Kenya to get fair trade certification after Flower Hub hence distinguishing us from other local trading companies.

**Floriculture:** You had a large scope of professions to choose from, why did you settle on horticulture?

**Eliud:** Growing up in the rural, I spend my early childhood assisting my parents in farming activities. I got an interest in agriculture but I wanted a sub-sector that would be challenging to me.

I chose floriculture because the industry is dynamic. No single day is like the other in floriculture. Dealing with over 15 buyers in different countries has been in itself a massive platform to learn divers faces of this business.

You get to know different cultures and practices which has propelled us to position ourselves to remain relevant to each of those markets. In the process, one gets to learn the many opportunities, risks and threats. Great changes are taking place in this industry daily and one has to keep pace with such changes by continuously developing new ideas. This makes all my days different.

**Floriculture:** Having been in farming for some time now, do you think your family investments (education) into you were a waste?

**Eliud:** Absolutely not a waste because it helped me discover my potential. Knowledge, experience and



exposure is the greatest treasure one can ever have. Big salaries during my years of employment can come and go but the knowledge and experience will remain. This has helped me and my family a lot since I have been able to network with diverse persons all over the countries I have traversed.

**Floriculture:** Over the years, you have been in different positions, which is your highest professional achievement?

**Eliud:** Starting of credible blooms Ltd a flower farm located at the foot of Ngong Hills. Is there anything more beguiling than the sight of a worker practicing scientific theories? You train them, slowly they learn, practice and finally the farm gains potential yield. This is my highest achievement because flower farming was believed to be a reserve of foreigners or Africans with massive financial muscle.

**Floriculture:** You have mentioned Credible Blooms, why start a flower farm while you were very successful as a trader.

**Eliud:** A very good question. This is a question many

people have been asking. Pigeon Blooms Limited has been able to bridge the gap between buyers and farmers. I can be able to give clients what they want in the quickest time possible.

However, this was not good enough; starting Credible blooms was to me a market entry strategy. We had a number of potential buyers whose policy does not allow working with middlemen but prefer to deal with the source of the product. Credible blooms opened these doors and to date I am exporting to these markets courtesy of our own farm.

Secondly, I have a passion for flowers. This has been my world all through and did not want to waste the years I have invested in flower farms. Experience and exposure were my biggest gain over the years and I wanted to put them into practice. My networks both locally and internationally were going into waste.

Lastly, floriculture is not selfish investment like real estate where you only need one person to manage an estate worthy billions. It is a mass employment sector that has positively impacted the lives of people. I wanted to make my contribution for this noble course.





**Floriculture:** What drives you?

**Eliud:** First and foremost my Faith in God has been the main drive. If I listened to people then my dream would have been buried long time ago but I chose to listen to the inner conviction from God. My love and passion for the flower has also inspired me to keep going on and exploiting new ventures in the industry.

Creation of employment is also a factor that spearheads me knowing I can accommodate more people to live a better life. God used people to create employment for me and I feel glad to be a tool in God's hand for the same purpose as my dream unfold step by step.

**Floriculture:** Do you think you have been utilized fully? Have you climbed the ladder highest in the profession, education and social status?

**Eliud:** I am too young to have been fully utilized. I still have a lot of energy to be used. There is also still untapped opportunity, gaps in Kenyan industry and the market outside. I believe someone must tap them. Professionally, I will train as time allows. I must always

be one step ahead of my business and build enough capacity to manage the growth. Socially, I just want to be identified with the common man. Am satisfied with Serving God as leader in the Church, which I regard as the highest office in this world.

**Floriculture:** How about pigeon blooms, has it tapped all the potential we have in the market?

**Eliud:** There is a lot of untapped market outside there. With the expanded European Union there are many emerging markets outside the traditional Central Europe. The traditional European markets are crowded and is a mass market with low prices hence less margin. Eastern European Market is growing rapidly but I would like to point out that it is a high risk market in terms of payment. We have to explore means of how to reduce these risks and convert the threats to opportunities. In the next couple of years Pigeon Blooms Ltd will want to concentrate on such new markets.

**Floriculture:** Who is your Role model?

**Eliud:** People whose success started from a humble

beginning and they ended up leaving a mark in their times. People who started with zero and became a house hold name. These are the people who drive me to excel. Success in life doesn't entirely depend on how much money one has but the biggest challenge is to come up with a noble business idea and have capacity to execute it.

However, I cannot fail to mention Mr. Phineas Moscovitch, the managing Director Amiran Kenya Ltd. He trusted me at a time when no financier could trust me. I had an idea that could propel a vision but had no money. Every financial institution asked for collateral which I did not have. Mr. Moscovitch trusted my idea and extended sufficient credit facility to me. This is how credible blooms was started. I would like to emulate him because he has had a huge impact in this industry by supporting other people's vision. To date am very grateful for support.

**Floriculture:** Though too early, would you encourage your children to join horticulture as a (profession or business?)

**Eliud:** Though I would love to support their choice, I would encourage my children to take up this business when I retire. I resigned to build a sustaining foundation for them. I sacrificed to earn half of the salary I was earning and forgo so many benefits to sharpen their future and families. Occasionally I take them around the farm to familiarize with details in the company so that they can take over when I retire.

**Floriculture:** Other than being a grower what else do you practice in Nation building?

**Eliud:** I am one a church elder at Gates of praise Tabernacle. I support church ministry and enjoy



fellowshipping with other Christians. I Treasure my family so much and try to be the best father. I also support some community programs.

I would love to go golfing but time is a big factor. Am a hands on business manager who has daily duties to perform both in the office and farm. My travelling also prohibits a lot of other activities.

**Floriculture:** Give your closing remarks.

**Eliud:** A profession is a vocation. There is no way you can live your dream without been a perfectionist. However you also need to live a balanced life. Off the cuff, I do not understand the current trend in the industry where big growers are shifting from middle to very high altitudes say over 2400m above sea level.

I believe these farms have additional expense in terms of crop protection, disease prevalence, logistics etc. This translates to disease challenges, long flash intervals, Low production, heavy flowers hence high cost of freight. I am yet to establish whether it is really profitable compared to low and medium Altitude farms who have high production.

Marketing of flowers is also becoming more demanding and sophisticated. Despite the increase on cost of labor and inputs, weather challenges have impacted negatively in the last one year. The market is also demanding for so many certifications by different bodies. However, they do not guarantee market or give special prices for these certificates despite adding expenditure to the grower. Fair-trade is the only accreditation with business value to the grower. Buyers on the other hand expect growers to be loyal and supply flowers for low prices despite all these additional costs. Growers must start thinking outside the box to remain in business.

# Trends and Segments for Flowers

The flower market is very dynamic. Consumption patterns change and differentiation in market requirements forces growers to focus on one particular market segment. Large retail chains comprise one of the fastest expanding flower outlets. Growers in developing countries can target either these retail chains or more traditional segments with innovative products, by answering to one or more of the trends identified in this module.

## Strong increase in purchases for own use

The past decade has seen a strong rise in purchases of flowers for own use, like the decoration of consumers' own houses. These purchases are often so-called impulse purchases pushed by large retail chains, which have gained significant market share in many EU countries.

In general, products sold in this market segment can be characterized as sharp-priced bulk flowers. The module 'Trade structure and channels' provides more information on the EU flower retail sector. The growth of the own-use market segment should not be seen as a shift away from gifts and special occasions, but rather as the development of an alternative market segment. In the EU, most flowers are still bought as gifts for special occasions.

Florists remain the main retail outlet for this segment, while more impulsive purchases occur at large retail chains. The rise of flower purchases for own use also affects exporters in developing countries.

## Increased diversity in assortments all year round

Consumers in the more developed markets have become used to a wide assortment of products and year-round

availability. Growers nowadays are able to maintain a far more continuous production, ensuring year-round availability of most products. This has added to increasing purchases of non-traditional flowers.

Increased demand for new and exclusive flowers has partly substituted demand for more traditional flowers, such as Dianthus. Dianthus became a bit "old fashioned" in the eyes of many customers, who are often looking for new interesting products.

## Consumers demand environmentally friendly production

Consumers have become more concerned about the environment. A large share of consumers has come to realize that future generations also have a right to a healthy environment. They are therefore making increasingly stringent demands with respect to production systems. Consumers assume that the flowers they buy have been cultivated using the smallest possible amounts of crop protection agents, energy, water and fertilizers and generating the least possible waste.

This trend is particularly visible in the Northwest EU countries, where several retail chains like Tesco, IKEA, Marks & Spencer, Sainsbury, Migros, Coop Schweiz, Carrefour and Botanic France have made participation in environmental certification schemes like MPS a purchasing criterion for their suppliers. Note that interest in organic certification is still limited.

## Consumers demand fair labour conditions

Consumers are becoming increasingly aware of their influence on labour



conditions at flower farms. Reports on low salaries for local standards and dangerous working conditions (use of chemicals), have shocked consumers and resulted in consumer boycotts. Labels and certificates like Fair-trade, ETI, Global GAP and MPS Socially Qualified have therefore become valuable instruments to guarantee a socially responsible product and compliance with Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) standards for the farm workers.

## Cooler chains

Cut flowers are highly perishable products. The quality of the product at the end of the cold chain is therefore determined for a large part by the quality of the cold chain. Maintenance of a cold chain requires sophisticated logistics. The selection of a freight forwarder must give high priority to the ability of the company to manage the cold chain. Insurance provisions must be in place to finance losses which

could result from poor handling or storage, in some developing countries, poor cold chain management can also cause major losses.

## Virtualization changing the flower trade

Transactions in the EU flower trade are increasingly handled by computer systems. Trade becomes virtual, as the physical presence of traders and products is no longer needed at the moment of trading. Therefore, accurate exchange of information is critical. FloraHolland plays an important role in the virtualization of the flower trade. Their remote buying system, 'KOA', enables buyers to purchase at the auction through an internet connection. More than 60% of the flowers are currently traded via the KOA system. European wholesalers also increasingly put their products on offer in an online webshop, where customers (wholesalers and retailers) can directly buy from their stocks.



Standardization and correct information has to guarantee that purchasing through computer systems is reliable. Exporters in developing countries must therefore adhere to these standards for quality and information exchange to make the virtual trade in their products a success.

During the coming years, computer systems are also expected to facilitate the applications for phytosanitary certificates. The computer system, which was initially implemented in the Netherlands, has also become available in Kenya and is expected to be implemented in several other developing countries, providing an Automated System for Customs Data.

#### Cooperation is becoming a key for success

Large retail chains are increasingly sourcing flowers directly from growers. These retailers generally have very specific requirements, which are difficult to meet in traditional value chains consisting of individual market players. The FloraHolland auctions propose to develop consortia around the retailers, thereby fostering cooperation between retailers, traders and growers.

Retailers also increasingly source for

specific sales campaigns through tenders. For example, large discounters establish a future contract for a large amount of small bouquets. Potential suppliers can bid on the contract by drawing up an offer. In many cases, several suppliers have to make an alliance in order to have sufficient capacity to meet volume requirements.

#### Exclusive flowers for special occasion

Consumers in this segment expect a top-quality product. They like to be surprised by a new product or colour. Generally, longer stems and bigger buds are required, which are supported by strong stems. In Rose trade, 60 cm and longer is a generally accepted norm for intermediates and T-hybrids.

The quality of the flowers must also be immaculate in terms of bud damage and leaf yellowing. Flowers in this segment fetch higher prices. Vase life is not the most important issue. Buds may have opened to present the flowers at their most beautiful stage to the receiver.



#### Bulk flowers for special occasion

Price is a major purchasing criterion in this segment. However, stems are longer and buds are bigger than those of bulk flowers for own use, which also results in higher prices. Consumers expect high quality in terms of bud damage and leaf yellowing. In contrast, vase life is not always the most critical issue. In fact, buds have generally opened in order to present them at their most beautiful stage to the receiver. Exporters must take extra measures to protect the buds during the post-harvest handling.

#### Bulk flower for own use

Price is the primary purchasing criterion in this rapidly growing market segment. Price generally comes at the cost of stem length and bud size. The minimum stem length for sweetheart Rose as accepted by the Dutch auctions is 35 cm. In the European trade, the minimum bud size for sweethearts is generally 2.5 cm.

Although price is the main criterion for bulk flowers for own use, consumers still expect high quality in terms of vase life, colour, bud damage, leaf yellowing and bud opening. Vase

life is particularly important in this segment, because consumers want value-for-money. They want to enjoy their flowers for a relatively long time. Exporters in developing countries which target these large retail chains must implement stringent quality controls and keep the cold chain intact.

#### Exclusive flowers for own use

Institutions constitute most of this relatively small segment. These institutions use the flowers for presentational purposes and therefore require long stems, big buds and a high quality in terms of bud damage and leaf yellowing. They are prepared to pay a higher price for the flowers than in the segments for bulk flowers. A long vase life is generally not important, as flowers are thrown away after the presentation or replaced frequently. Buds have generally opened in order to present the flowers at their most beautiful stage.

#### Segmentation by region Mature markets in Northwest Europe

Consumer purchasing power is highest in this region and the market segments exclusive flowers for special

occasions and bulk flowers for own use are relatively big. Many consumers are willing to pay extra for exclusive varieties of trendy flowers. At the same time, many supermarkets in Northwest Europe offer cheap mono-bunches of traditional Chrysanthemums and small-budded Roses, which are purchased by consumers to brighten up their own homes.

As a consequence of the relatively large share of bulk flowers for own use, vase life guarantee is quite common in supermarkets in Northwest Europe. Similarly, a relatively large share of the

flowers is sold with closed to half-open buds. However, keep in mind that flowers which have been cut too raw and do not open are usually not accepted.

#### East European markets in development

Most countries in Eastern Europe have a low consumer purchasing power. Flowers are considered luxury items

and are purchased mainly for special occasions. Consequently, the market mainly consists of exclusive flowers for special occasions and bulk flowers for special occasions. In order to present the flowers at their most beautiful stage, buyers mostly purchase flowers with half open or fully open buds. In general, East European markets are slower to take up new trends than West and South European markets.

#### Southern Europe

The South European countries are well-developed flower markets. However, bulk flowers for own use are not as common as in Northwest Europe. Flowers are mostly purchased for special occasions. Therefore, average quality in terms of stem length, bud size, bud damage and leaf yellowing are significantly higher than in Northwest Europe.

Moreover, in order to present the flowers at their most beautiful stage, buyers mostly purchase flowers with half open or fully open buds. The market share of scented flowers is estimated to be highest in this region, which also shows a preference for neutral colours,



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Floriculture is a major global industry in both developing and developed countries

The global trade volume is estimated to be worth more than \$100bn per annum. The main players are divisible into producers (in developing countries) and consumers (in developed countries, including many in Africa). The major consumer markets are Germany (22%), the US (15%), France (10%), the UK (10%), the Netherlands (9%), Japan (6%), Switzerland (5%) and Italy (5%).

Given the perishable nature of flowers, major producers have historically been near the main consumers. That is why the Netherlands was first able to cultivate a position as a leading centre of flower production: from its central position in Europe, it was able to supply its flower-hungry neighbours. By balancing its production portfolio with a movement into the auctioning and distribution end of the floriculture value chain, the Netherlands has retained its position as Europe's most important producer of flowers, as well as an important supplier to other continents.

Its flower auction in the northern town of Aalsmeer is by far the world's largest flower market. However, the Netherlands is a notable exception to the general trend whereby production centres have moved from locations near markets to places with more favourable climates for flower cultivation and lower labour costs. New production centres stretch from Africa to Asia and Australia. East African countries like Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania host important floriculture industries. In Latin America, major flower cultivators include Colombia, the second largest exporter of flowers in the world, and Ecuador. India, Israel, Thailand and Malaysia are notable flower exporters in Asia.

Australia and New Zealand, because of their location within the southern hemisphere, supply seasonal flowers that are otherwise unobtainable in North America and Europe. Trade in floriculture is generally regional. For example, Latin American flowers are exported to the US, African countries mainly focus on markets in Europe, and Asian countries export to Japan and Hong Kong. Therefore, competition within the industry tends to be regional rather than global.

The industry has been characterised by increased competition in recent years in terms of both production and distribution. For example, in Asia, the rapid growth of flower industries in new producers such as India and China



## The Global Flower Trade

is worrying established flower producers in the region, such as Malaysia and Thailand. In Africa, Kenya has expressed similar concerns about emerging competitors on the continent such as Ethiopia.

Other growth-led developments include the appearance of new flower distribution centres in Asia, including Tel Aviv in Israel, and Kunming in China. Such centres create new possibilities for distant producers (such as Africa) to export their products further afield. Another trend is the merging of major flower production and distribution


companies. For example, the two largest Dutch auctions, FloraHolland and Bloemenveiling Aalsmeer recently merged as FloraHolland, which has a turnover of almost \$5bn. The UK-based flower distributors Finlays PLC also recently took over the leading Kenyan agricultural company, Homegrown Ltd, to create a combined value of €500m.

Global trade flows suffered when the financial crisis hit in 2008. However, it is steadily recovering and world export rates are predicted to reach \$25bn in 2012.


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**CONSIST MAX**  is a combination product containing two active ingredients - Trifloxystrobin and Tebuconazole from different chemical groups. stops and controls powdery mildew in various stages of disease development cycle.

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- appressorium and haustorium formation
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The active ingredient Trifloxystrobin inhibits respiration in the mitochondria and Tebuconazole acts as a demethylation inhibitor (DMI) of fungal sterol biosynthesis. Due to the dual mode of action, Consist Max® presents a perfect mix for resistance management.

### Directions for use


Begin application preventatively or at the early stages of disease development and repeat at 5-7 day interval. Use the shorter intervals when disease is severe. Maximum 2-3 consecutive applications per flush cycle.

### Application Rate

0.3kg/ha in 1200 L water

### Sensitivity to Different Varieties

As different species and varieties of ornamentals may differ in their sensitivity to pesticides, users are advised to always check for the crop tolerance by first treating a few plants before large

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P.O. Box 30321, 00100 GPO Nairobi, Kenya.

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Email: info.ke@bayer.com, bcs.ke@bayer.com, www.bayercropscience.com

scale application is undertaken.

### Use of Adjuvants and Wetters

Do not apply in combination in tank-mix with adjuvants (non-ionic surfactants, crop oil concentrates, penetrants). The volume of the spray to be used should be sufficient to give a high level of penetration and wetting of the foliage.

### Re-entry period: 6 hrs (WHO class III)

As a general rule, treated areas should not be entered before spray deposits on the leaf surface have dried, unless protective clothing is worn.

### Main Advantages

- Contains two tried and trusted modes of action
- Inhibits all the development growth stages in the pathogen life cycle
- High and long lasting activity
- High persistence and good kick-back activity
- Beneficial physiological effects (greening and yield enhancement)
- Mesostemic action and systemic activity
- Low use rates
- Built-in resistance management
- Favorable environmental and toxicological profile
- Compatible with IPM programs. Harmless to predatory mites.

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**CONSIST MAX** 



## Horticultural Industry Counts Down to Hortiweek

**H**ortiWeek, brought together several of the major Dutch exhibitions, trade events and open days within one week. Trade professionals from across the globe converged in Holland (on October 30th to November 2nd) with shuttle buses joining all of the major events and airports.

Amsterdam's HortiFair 2012, the International Flower Trade Fair at Vijfhuizen and the FloraHolland Trade Fair at the Aalsmeer flower auction were the centre-pieces of International HortiWeek.

As one of the most international show of its kind, HortiFair 2012 was a key event for suppliers of products to commercial growers and for cut flower and pot plant breeders, growers and marketers.

Their focus was horticultural

technology. The 2nd Horti Congress was held on Tuesday morning October 30th at the RAI convention centre. While the traditional Horti Dinner was for the evening of October 30th. Daily presentations were held at the House of Technology & Innovation.

Other theme pavilions were: Interpolis House of Quality (Novelty Quality Competition), the AVAG Market (greenhouse builders), Career Plaza, Technical Trials, the House of Supply Chain and New to Market (a gathering of companies who have not previously had a stand at the trade fair).

In this way, companies became acquainted with the Horti Fair at a reduced rate. Cut flowers occupied pride of place in Hall 10 where every two hours a spectacular floral fashion show by the Israeli designer, Shlomi Ilani wowed the crowds featuring spectacular dresses festooned with

flowers under the theme 'Earth continents'. Flowers and plants were provided by breeding companies, De Ruiter, Fides, HilverdaKooij, Corn. Bak and Anthura.

The FloraHolland flower auction hosted the FloraHolland Trade Fair Aalsmeer. For three days, this international trade fair was the place where traders and producers of ornamental plants and flowers met each other and to do business. More than 650 growers from inside and outside the Netherlands presented their wares and displaying new products or concepts to exporters, wholesalers, and their customers.

The heart of the trade fair was



'The Village; Consumer Intelligence & Inspiration Centre'. Together with Flower Council Holland, FloraHolland showed how growers' products can be translated to meet the needs of different consumer groups, as well as how products can be made available via various market segments.

Knowledge of consumers and the market was given form in concrete sales concepts. A meeting point set up in the middle of 'The Village' and

several exporters demonstrated at the Trade Fair how they position products from growers who are at the fair.

This dovetails nicely with the different consumer groups represented in 'The Village'. Last but not least, the International Flower Trade Fair, the IFTF the number visitors increase with a third compared to last year's figures. A cut flower focused show, the IFTF gathered breeders, growers, floral wholesalers, retail florists and representatives of the worldwide

retailing industry. The Boerma Instituut, a leading floral art school, organised demonstrations throughout the fair in the Boerma Floral Design Theatre.

These demonstrations were given by (free-lance) teachers of the Boerma Instituut: Atsuko Saito, Geralt Joren, Hiroe Yoshimoto, Klaas Dijkstra, Jacqueline Boerma, Johan Licher, Mariska Visser, Minako Yakata, Manon Groot Enzerink, Mark van Eijk, Petra van der Veen and the famous German Master florist Wally Klett.



# Emerging and Current Challenges in Horticultural Export to EU

The requirements of international regulations and the need for very large and regular consignments of produce in EU markets have combined to concentrate export horticulture in the hands

of the larger and highly capitalised producers. **Need for traceability** The need for traceability has accelerated the trend to concentrate export horticulture in the hands of

highly capitalised producers. It is essential for EU importers to receive supplies from known sources and to be able to check agricultural practices and handling standards on the farms. This favours large commercial farms than

smallholders.

## Fair trade ethics

Supermarkets in the UK and other EU markets, being increasingly concerned with ethical trading issues, are supportive of utilising smallholders provided that they can meet import standards.

Customer concerns over the apparent exploitation of African producers are assisting smallholders to be incorporated fairly into international trade.

Consumers also express their concern about the ethical behaviour of exporting companies by means of ethical buying and consumer behaviour.

The ethical consumers of horticultural produce in the EU feel responsible towards Sub-Saharan societies and express these feelings by means of their purchasing behaviour towards ethical issues such as human rights, labour conditions, environment, fair-trade, products free from child labour, organic foods, promoting development of poor African nations.

However, the fair trade ethic has risks to these categories of exporters and they should not be complacent (Blowfield 1999).

## Proliferation of private standards and supermarket power

In EU countries there is rapid multi-nationalisation and consolidation of the supermarket sector, with own private standards over the EU legislated standards, with profound changes in procurement systems affecting the conditions facing small-scale farmers in Sub-Saharan countries.

Every supermarket has its own standards over the EU legislation which directly determines the quality, quantity and specific health and safety requirements for the EU consumers.

These supermarkets provide trade opportunities for horticultural exporters. However, the standards increase the overhead costs to the smallholders which may constrain their performance in the horticultural export industry and future expansion of export business.

## Climatic change: food miles, carbon 'foot print' and life-cycle Greenhouse gas (GHG)

There is a growing concern in the EU about the sustainability of agricultural and food systems and the unintended side effects that can be imposed on the environment and human health. Evidence is mounting that 'farm' to 'plate' transport costs, or the 'food miles' could be substantial. Products that have travelled long

distances is perceived as being harmful to the environment and has some media attention in key EU markets for horticultural produce. UK studies indicate that total agricultural environmental and health cost were very high with 0.1% contributed by UK imports of fruits and vegetables, which was a relatively smaller percentage.

It has been found out that sub-Saharan countries use lower energy and lower emission per tonne of horticultural produce exported to EU compared to those produced within the EU. However the food mile policy still affects horticultural exports to the EU markets.

There is increasing quantities of greenhouse gases (GHG) in the earth's atmosphere which has led to modification in the climate. Horticultural production contributes to this build up of GHG and global warming.

The emission of GHG is associated with long distance food production and distribution. In the life-cycle supply chains GHG emission is dominated by production phase which contributes CO<sub>2</sub> emission per year 'foot print' for food consumption.

Transportation represents only 11 percent of life-cycle GHG emission and delivery from producer to retail four percent only. Therefore 'buying local' policy of EU consumers will not lower the

average household's food related climate Carbon 'foot print'.

## WTO agreement on Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary (SPS) measures

The sanitary and phyto-sanitary (SPS) measures aim to protect the life and health of consumers of horticultural produce among WTO members. The SPS does not discriminate between WTO members.

The European legislation represents the minimum requirements for market access which can constitute obstacles to trade between EU and African horticultural exporters.

The 'private voluntary standards' (PVS) have extended the level of control by EU retailers back along their supply chain to horticultural producers and exporters. Suppliers rather than retailers meet the cost of compliance with PVS, which are per certification and individual farm units, regardless of the size.

African smallholders face difficulties in meeting these costs and fees because the standards were originally developed for large farms in Europe.

## Conclusion

Despite liberalisation of the international agricultural markets, Western retailers are becoming increasingly influential in the horticultural production and export trade from Africa to EU.

The recent rapid growth of horticultural trade has been accompanied by the strengthening of marketing chains. It is estimated that UK retailers now control 70 percent of fresh horticultural imports into the UK from Kenya.

The dominance of the large supermarket chain in the UK and EU has resulted in the development of flexible contractual food supply networks, with powerful supermarkets imposing EU requirements and satisfy new consumer demands with increasing global sourcing policies.

The wholesale network is based on international ties, often based on kinship, and dependent for its trading success on trust, flexibility and mutual agreement.

The supermarket chain relies on various types of contract and agreements. Both the marketing chains must take account of the international and national regulatory frameworks, which requires that produce meet quality and food safety standards.

Challenges faced by African horticultural exports include need to comply traceability, WTO agreements, being non-complacent with fair-trade ethics, meeting the challenges of supermarket and consumer needs and demands, health and environmental issue which focus on climate change due to horticultural exports and imports.



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# Why Life Comes up Roses for Florists

UK's Daily Express today reported a new survey has showed that florists and gardeners are the UK's happiest workers, while bankers stand out as the least content.

The survey claims greater job satisfaction is down to workers having more flexibility and control over their daily routine. The results are in line with previous studies that show that money doesn't buy long-term happiness.

A survey of 2,200 workers by the vocational awards body City & Guilds found that almost nine out of 10 gardeners and florists were happy in their job, compared with four out of five hairdressers and three out of four plumbers. In contrast, just 44 per cent of finance and bank workers and 48 per cent of computer staff were happy.

The report said that despite the presumption that jobs in banking, computing and human resources were often well-paid, in reality they did not offer fulfilment. And it highlighted that those earning over £60,000 were the unhappiest, at 22 per cent.

Overall, people in vocationally trained, skills-based jobs, such as hairdressers, gardeners, plumbers and electricians, were happiest. The research also revealed that 85 per cent of self-employed people were happier at work.

Professor Cary Cooper, of Lancaster University, said as long as employees earned a base-rate wage other factors then become motivators. He said: "The evidence is that

it's not money at all that makes us happy. People get no more happiness from extra money.

"What's important is controlling your own time, seeing the end result and that your work is valuable. It's also about not being micromanaged and creating your own life-work balance." Bankers have little

control of their high-pressured jobs and currently have a poor image, so money is not a major motivator."

Psychologist Anjula Mutanda added: "It's about passion over pay. Earning lots of money can involve long hours, deadlines and commuting whereas people choosing their passion have

a greater sense of joy at work despite less income."

The findings were published ahead of the Skills Show in Birmingham later this week. Nick Bradley, group director at City & Guilds, said: "Those who have taken the vocational route are happiest and feel the most pride in their work."

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# How do you learn from your competitors?

*Aping your competition is a good idea, but it pays more to go a mile farther and improve on what they are doing to beat them at their game.*

No matter what business you are in, you always have to keep a close eye on what the competition is doing. But some entrepreneurs spend so much time looking over their shoulders at the competition that they lose track of where their own companies are headed. Too much focus on "What are they up to now?" can result in a corporate culture that is strictly reactionary rather than one in which innovative products and services show the way forward.

Building an innovative culture requires that you strike a balance, learning from your competitors' mistakes while pushing ahead with your ideas. Here are three tips for forging that balance:

### Study Your Competition

You need to pay the most attention to your competitors when you are considering whether to set up a new venture. Specifically, look at common weaknesses in an industry, for example, ask yourselves why customers are not happy with what is available on store shelves. This is why I often just say "Screw it- let's do it": A lot of decision-making is often based on instinct and experience rather than hard numbers and market research.

Improve upon rival's shows model  
Experience that most

common reasons that big, established players begin to fail is because of needless complexity. As their business expand, their bureaucracies grow and so do their procedures, which directly affect the customer. So new entrants to a market should not be intimidated by the sheer size of the competition, but instead focus on meeting customers' needs.

In the US, "it's like trying to speak to the phone company" is a line people use to describe any hopeless customer service interaction. Sure enough, when you look at phones or more particularly the cellular communications business, it is a hot new gizmo that everyone has to have and also involve red tape and complex contracts that nobody truly understands until they want to get out of them- and by then it is too late.

When setting a company in a market which is crowded with you established players, succeed by throwing away the industry play-book: You introduce a pay-you-go system with no contracts or monthly bill. Simplicity and good customer service will win every time.

### Be your own customer

Scottish poet Robbie Burns wrote that if everyone had "the power to see ourselves as others see us", we would all do

things differently. Applied in the business world, this means that rather than focusing on what your competition is doing, you should frequently check out your competition's competition. (That would be you!) To get a sense of where you could improve, try buying your company's products or services incognito, then use them.

If you run into a problem, get in touch with customer relations- assuming, of course, that you can track down the contact information a page that is usually hard to find on most websites. Throughout this process, take notes and take names. When you are done, follow up and review with your team: what changes would make your product or service not only more useful to your customers, but more memorable and enjoyable? Were the interactions with customer service representatives of the sort that you would like your customers to have? How could they be more helpful?

While your people may be quick to point out a competitor's mistakes, they are more likely to try to cover up any such blemishes at your own operation- particularly if it could reflect badly other personal performance. So remember to take this opportunity to also catch your employees doing something right.

# Coragen® – A new Mode of Action

Dupont has a proud record of leading the world not only in research and development but equally promoting responsible use of earth finite resources. Geared to the need of the Kenyan market, their products are precisely formulated to suit local crops and conditions. This was well articulated as flower growers welcomed the entry of Coragen, an insecticide powered by Rynaxypyr. The new insecticide for roses, carnations, vegetables, cotton, potatoes and top fruits which was recently launched into the market.



- Coragen® is the superior choice to protect your crops against a broad range of chewing insects. Foliar application delivers high efficacy and long lasting protection.
- Due to its unique, innovative mode of action, Coragen® is equally effective against resistant pest populations.
- Coragen® shows an excellent environmental profile. Compared to other commercial Standards, it provided higher biological activity against target pests; it demonstrates very low toxicity to mammals and low impact on birds, fish and beneficial insects.
- This favorable toxicological profile allows the establishment of short Re-Entry and Pre-Harvest-Intervals.
- The formulation offers an excellent crop safety under different environmental conditions.
- Coragen® shows excellent mixing and handling characteristics as well as compatibility with all insecticides and fungicides tested to date.
- Coragen® works quickly and is highly effective at low use rates. It has wide spectrum of activity against numerous key chewing insects attacking a variety of crops.
- Coragen® is a new chemical class with a new mode of action (Group 28, insecticide Resistance Action Committee (IRAC). DuPont™ Rynaxypyr® is the technical

active ingredient in DuPont™ Coragen®.

Rynaxypyr® controls insect pests through a new mode of action, activation of insect ryanodine receptors (RyRs). These receptors play a critical role in muscle function. Contraction of muscle cells requires a regulated release of calcium from internal stores into the cell cytoplasm. Ryanodine receptors act as selective ion channels, modulating the release of calcium.

Rynaxypyr® binds to insect ryanodine receptors in muscle cells, causing the channel to open and release calcium ions (Ca<sup>2+</sup>) from internal into the cytoplasm. Depletion of Ca<sup>2+</sup> stores results in nearly immediate paralysis and crop protection.

Insects treated with Rynaxypyr® exhibit rapid cessation of feeding, lethargy, regurgitating and muscle paralysis, ultimately leading to death. Due to its unique chemical structure and breakthrough mode of action, Rynaxypyr® shows excellent control of pest populations resistant to other insecticidal products.

Coragen® insecticide has a favorable environmental profile. Due to the selective mode of action on the insect ryanodine receptors the product has a very low acute and chronic toxicity to Mammals and a low impact on non-target organisms such as birds, fish and beneficial arthropods.

No adverse effects on vertebrates at environmentally relevant exposures occurred in any study conducted with either Coragen® or its active ingredient Rynaxypyr®.

# Farmers Award

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We are delighted to introduce the annual Farmers Award scheme, that has been mooted as part of the efforts to reposition agriculture as a business as Kenya strives to promote the sector as a key activity under Vision 2030. The first winners will be awarded in 2013, to usher in what we believe is growing an important event in the country's farming calendar.

In this regard, we are calling on industry stakeholders to be part of this exercise by sponsoring a category of their choice, and by so doing stamp their ownership of the Farmers Award, and heighten their brand presence in the agricultural sector.

This will be the first time that farmers are being recognized at national level, a development that should motivate and attract more players considering the importance of the sector to the country's economy, employment and food security.

Elgon Kenya Limited holds and participates in many farmer field days and agricultural events/fairs, where the award scheme will be publicized, giving sponsors enhanced visibility. Elgon Kenya Limited is a known brand in the farming circles, being the largest local agricultural chemicals supplier, and increasingly growing its seeds and fertilizers divisions. The company supplies close to all former farms in the country, works closely with farmer cooperatives and associations, giving the company a wide.

#### Winners will be classified as follows:

1. **Best large-scale farmer - over 50 million annual turnover.**
2. **Best small-scale Farmer - below 50 million annual turnover.**
3. **Best agro-vet dealer.**

## SPONSORSHIP BENEFITS

### MARKETING AND PUBLICITY

Your sponsorship will be supported heavily through a comprehensive marketing, advertisement and public relations campaign programme. It will also be enhanced online through our highly circulated newsletters, flyers and brochures.

### NETWORKING WITH KEY INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS-

This event will present an opportunity to interact with key industry stakeholders which can generate valuable contacts during and after the event.

### NETWORKING WITH INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL COMPANIES

With many organizations present at the event, this will be an opportunity for your organization to interact with leading organizations and get their contacts.

### DISTRIBUTION OF COMPANY PROFILE

The promotional materials will include the sponsoring companies' logo and their profiles.

### STRENGTHENING YOUR CORPORATE IMAGE

Through the event, your company will be projected as an industry player and leader committed to activities that benefit the industry.

## Gold Category - \$10,000

- The award will be named after the GOLD sponsor's name or brand.
- The Sponsor name will be part of the official event name.
- Involvement in all pre-event activities.
- The sponsor will have full corporate branding at the gala venue, including reception
- Promotional items like keyholders, pens, notebooks, T-shirts as part of event packs.

Sponsored by:



**ELGON KENYA LIMITED**

*Your Leader In Crop Protection*

# Farmers Award

East Gate Road, Off Mombasa Road, P.O. Box 46826 - 00100, Nairobi, Kenya.

Tel: (020) 6534410 Fax: (020) 6534807

E-mail: awards@elgonfarmersaward.com, Website: www.elgonfarmersaward.com

- The Sponsor will be accorded VIP status at venue, get a table to invite its guests.
- Inclusion of logo on the awards website and hyperlink to its site.
- Make a presentation at the gala event.
- Radio mentions during the event's interviews and advertising.
- Most prominent name and logo placement on all printed materials including t-shirts as GOLD sponsor, together with logos of endorsing industry associations.
- Prominent sponsor name recognition in all press.
- Distribution of its promotional materials including placement at registration desk.
- Full page full colour advertisement in Elgon Kenya quarterly newsletter for one year.
- Photo opportunity with guests of honour.
- Advance notice of future Farmer Award events for exclusive participation.

## Silver Category - \$7,500

- Award category name.
- Corporate branding in the awards venue.
- Category sponsor name.
- The Sponsor will be accorded VIP status at venue.
- Promotional items at gala packs.
- Logo and hyperlink on awards site.
- Presentation at the gala event.
- Radio mentions during the event's interviews and advertising.
- Sponsor name recognition in all press releases related to the event.
- Promotional materials to be distributed at the gala.
- Logo/name placement in promotional materials.
- Full page full colour advertisement in Elgon Kenya quarterly Newsletter for two issues.

## Bronze Category - \$5000

- Award category name.
- Table to invite its guests.
- Inclusion of logo in awards website.
- Presentation at the gala event.
- Radio mentions during the event's interviews and advertising.
- Promotional materials to be distributed at the gala.
- Logo to be part of communications materials.
- Opportunity for sponsor to have full page full colour advertisement in our quarterly newsletter for one issue.

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*Your Leader In Crop Protection*

# Losses Due to Drift, Evaporation and Thermal Air Movements

By Daniel Kisongwo

While spraying, losses always occur, resulting in less pesticide reaching the target.

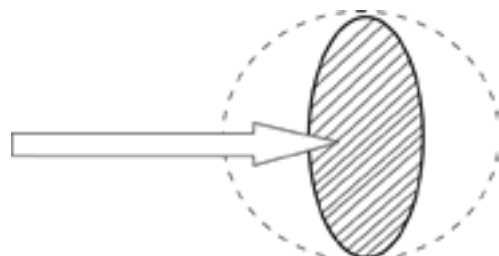
Among these losses are:

## Drift

The droplets may encounter disturbing influences of the wind, called drift. This will prevent their reaching the target.

If this factor is not taken in account, the results of an application may prove to be poor. Drift does not affect small and large droplets equally.

It is commonly known that small droplets are more sensitive to drift than large ones, but weight alone does not account for this difference.



The front surface of a droplet is equal to the section surface of a droplet

For complete understanding, we must take a closer look at the VOLUME and FRONT SURFACE of the droplet.

By droplet size we mean the diameter of the sphere, which is measured in microns (1/1000 of a millimetre).

Knowing the diameter we can calculate the VOLUME with the following formula:

$$\text{VOLUME} = 0.52 \times \text{diameter}^3$$

Let's compare two droplet sizes, for example 200 microns and 100 microns.

The volume of a 200 micron droplet is:

$$0.52 \times 200^3 = 4160 \times 10^3 \text{ cubic microns.}$$

The volume of a 100 micron droplet is:

$$0.52 \times 100^3 = 520 \times 10^3 \text{ cubic microns.}$$

From this we can calculate that out of one droplet of 200 microns, 8 droplets of 100 microns can be made, which means that 200 micron droplets weigh 8 times more than 100 micron droplets.

But weight alone does not explain the sensitivity of smaller droplets to drift. Air friction also plays an important part and is determined by the FRONT SURFACE of the droplet.

The formula is:

$$\text{FRONT SURFACE} = 3.14 \times r^2$$

For 200 micron droplets the front surface is 31400 square microns and for 100 micron droplets 7850 square microns.

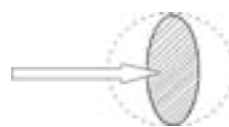
Thus, the front surface of 200 micron droplets is 4 times larger.

The calculation shown above tells us that 200 micron droplets are 8 times heavier than 100 micron droplets, but have a front surface which is only 4 times larger.

In other words, large droplets are heavy and have a relative small front surface, so wind does not easily affect them.

• **Assessment:** compare 400 micron droplets to 50 micron droplets to each other.

1. First guess the relation between weight and surface.
2. Calculate the relation weight and surface.
3. How many droplets of 50 micron does a 400 micron droplet contain?



$$400 \text{ MICRON} \text{ ___} \times 200 \text{ MICRON} \text{ ___} \times 10 \text{ MICRON} \text{ ___} \times 50 \text{ MICRON}$$

Guidelines for good spraying practices:

Never spray when wind speeds are above Force 3 (Beaufort scale), which is approx. 4 m per second.

Meet His Excellency the Marketer Droplets smaller than 150 micron are potentially drift sensitive above this wind speed.

In open fields, therefore, it is advisable to use droplets of approx. 200 - 350 micron.

Avoid spraying herbicides at wind speeds above Force 2, (1,8 m/s), because of their phytotoxicity to sensitive crops nearby.

To analyse the extent of the drift, measure downwind at several locations to see how the spray travels. This can be done with the water-sensitive paper method, which will be mentioned later.

The following table gives the theoretical drift distance for several droplet sizes at a wind speed of force 3.

Diameter (microns)	Distance reached if not evaporated
10	900,0 meters
50	7,5 "
150	4,7 "
200	3,7 "
300	1,8 "
400	1,3 "

PAGV, Holland

## Evaporation

As soon as the droplets come out the nozzle they start to evaporate.

If a droplet completely evaporates before reaching the target, the pesticide is left practically weightless, and will be transported over large distances, even with minor air currents.

The extent to which evaporation occurs depends on factors such as:

- TEMPERATURE
- RELATIVE HUMIDITY
- AIR MOVEMENT
- DROPLET SIZE
- DISTANCE BETWEEN NOZZLE AND TARGET.

Of these factors the droplet size is the most important. The evaporation rate is determined by the relationship between VOLUME and TOTAL SURFACE.

The formula for the total surface is:

$$\text{TOTAL SURFACE} = 4 \times 3.14 \times r^2$$

For 300 micron droplets this is 282,600 square microns and for 50 micron droplets 7,850 square micron.

So, compared to 300 micron droplets, the total surface of 50 micron droplets is only 36 times smaller, but the volume is 216 times smaller.

This means that a small droplet, contains a relatively small amount of water, but has a large "evaporation surface".

The following table shows the evaporation time in seconds for three droplet sizes, at a temperature of 30°C and a Relative Humidity, of 50%

Diameter (microns)	Evaporation time
200	56 sec.
100	14 sec.
50	3,5 sec.

Note:

It is particularly important that the evaporation rate is taken into account on warm sunny days.

## Thermic air movements

Thermic movement is caused by rising air currents, which occur, when the air temperature decreases by 1 degree celsius with every 100 m. increase in altitude.

Air currents are particularly strong on warm sunny days. Droplets smaller than 70 microns are potentially sensitive to air currents.

## Roll off

Due to this problem the use of large droplets is also not recommended, because not enough droplets are obtained from the spray liquid to guarantee sufficient and uniform coverage of the target area.

Droplets which are too large (heavy) may also roll off the leaves or accumulate at the leaf tip, causing tip burn.



## SOURCE DETERMINES REQUIRED WATER TREATMENT

**R**ainwater, ground water and water from a lake or river may look the same, but when used for irrigation there are great differences. Therefore different treatments are needed.

One important feature of water is the oxygen content, which needs special attention when using ground water. It is indisputable that the best source of water for irrigation purposes in greenhouse is rain. The big advantage is the absence of bacterial or mineral, which makes finding the right fertilizer solution much easier.

It can take quite a lot of effort to get the right solution, since there are existing elements in the water to deal with. However, rain water poses a big disadvantage, which is the need of the reservoir to bridge long dry spells. This is not only expensive, but water may also lose its sterility due to pollution in the basin. Pollution can be caused for instance by algae or other organic material like fallen leaves or in the worst cases, even though nematodes.

Organic material can not only block the irrigation system, it is also a breeding ground for bacteria, which causes changes in the Ph of the water. In effect, it may result in a higher or lower Ph than what is required. Keeping dirt out of the basin can be achieved by a floating cover, which also blocks the sunlight.

This is not only beneficial to reduce evaporation. Due to the limited transmission of light into the basin, it will also keep algae away. But when the water becomes green with algae, it will cause oxygen to be extracted through dark respiration.

To prevent the growth of algae, it is also good practice to keep the water as cool as possible, and to preserve the oxygen level by aeration. Therefore, different methods can be used, like stirring the water or pumping the water around. If there are nematodes in the basin, more powerful measures may be required such as filtering or even sterilizing the water by using ultra violet light.

### Oxygen level is important

The oxygen content in rainwater is high enough for plants, which means an

estimated minimum of 4-5 milligrams per liter is measured in the root environment. Whether the oxygen dissolved in water is important, is not well known. Often the roots take on oxygen from air in the soil. However, research conducted by the Dutch institute TNO Fytogoras plant science, proved that water is a more important oxygen source than air.

The reason why roots are in need of O<sub>2</sub> is to burn sugars, which they need so that they can release energy. And with energy they stay active and are able to take in fertilizers which, of course the plant needs to grow. Just like rainwater, water from rivers normally contains enough O<sub>2</sub>.

However, when water is stored in a basin with a lot of organic material, the algae levels may become too low. Stirring and pumping water around will not result in increasing levels; it will not preserve the present levels. The only solution to increase the oxygen content is to use oxygen tower.

Stirring not only keeps the oxygen level up, but also keeps the water clean, cool and dark to prevent the growth of algae and bacterial that also need O<sub>2</sub> for growing.

The only source of water which often does not contain any oxygen is groundwater. When using this kind of water, an oxygen tower is definitely needed.

In many projects this is not the case, resulting in disappointing plant growth. The oxygen content of water can be measured with sensors, and there is a wide range available on the market to choose from.

### Acidity too high

Another problem with groundwater is that the PH level can be too high. This is not only harmful to plants; it can also

cause blockage in drippers because of the formation of the calcium phosphate. This happens when the PH level in the feeding solution reaches over 6.0 to 6.5.

By adding sulphuric acid and active copper to the water, the PH level can be decreased. Adding nitric or phosphoric acid is not recommended, since this acid will promote algae growth.

Also, when the PH of water is high and it contains a high level of bicarbonate, the PH level will remain high despite measures; since it is a buffer that keeps the PH high. Therefore, bicarbonates have to be neutralized, which can be done with nitric or phosphoric acid or a combination of the two. But these chemicals increase the growth of algae in the reservoir; therefore this chemical should be added during fertigation process.

Carbon dioxide dissolved in water tends to bring the PH level down, but it can be also corrosive. Aeration of an open storage tank will allow carbon dioxide to disappear from the water, but the best measure is aerating and a degassing tower. Ground water may also contain an excess of elements, which again may cause problems.

Preferably the concentration of ions in groundwater should not contain much more than three quarters the required in a standard solution. For example, when a standard solution required 2mmol/ltr of calcium the water from this source should not contain much more than 1.5mmol/ltr. To keep concentration somewhat below the standard solution, allow room for adjustment.

### Blocked irrigation system

If the Iron level in the groundwater is too high, it can also cause problems, which is for example the case in parts

of Zambia. Iron in high concentration will oxidize and cause a blockage in irrigation system, especially in drip systems.

Too much iron also makes the pH level drop. Iron level can be reduced by a de-ionising, or a reverse-osmosis, which will eliminate all elements. An acceptable solution of iron should be less than 5 micromol/ltr, and Boron which is already in low concentration and unfavourable, can be removed with the system. Calcium, Magnesium and Potassium are useful elements for crops, but when the concentrations are too high, problems can arise.

The elements will compete with other useful elements, resulting in the uptake of the shortages of other elements in the plant. The EC is also an important factor that determines the suitability of water for horticulture. The EC is determined by the levels of sodium and chloride.

### Fixed amounts of water

In many nurseries water comes from different sources. In order to keep the quality of irrigation water equal, it is best to store the water separately and mixed in fixed ratios. By doing this, the composition of the water will be constant and known. This allows the right fertigation mix also to be known.

The amount of water per irrigation delivery should also be constant to ensure the best plant performance. A variation coefficient of less than 5% is desirable. Also, a stable PH level and EC will promote regular growth.

The interval between the irrigations and the fluctuation in water content between day and night also affect oxygen levels. More frequent irrigations that use lower quantities of water, generally tend to promote oxygen levels, which again is good for the growth.

# The Grey Ghost

Grey mould, Ash mould, Ghost spot - are all names which describe the various symptoms of infection by the common fungal pathogen, Botrytis Cinerea. Botrytis is by far the most common fungal disease encountered under cool, humid conditions, particularly where crops are grown at a high density with limited air movement.



## Introduction

Botrytis is one of the most damaging pathogens with stems, leaves, flowers, fruit and seedlings all being potential victims. Many growers are familiar with the symptoms of Botrytis, but for some, the first encounter with this pathogen results in severe plant losses as early detection and control are vital if the disease is to be prevented from rapidly spreading through a crop. While Botrytis is a formidable pathogen, it is also the same fungus which

is employed by some wine makers and was even given the name 'The Nobel rot' for its ability to concentrate sugars and impart a particular flavor to late harvest grapes. Wine makers in many areas of the world make use of Botrytis infection of their grapes to produce a sweet, high quality wine which commands high prices. Despite this beneficial use of Botrytis, it is a disease which plagues commercial and hobbyist growers alike, and one that affects virtually

all of the crops we grow hydroponically.

## Botrytis symptoms

Plants can be attacked at any stage of growth, from tiny seedlings to large, mature plants, but new succulent growth, freshly injured tissues and ageing or dead foliage are favored by this disease. Botrytis usually first appears as lesions on leaves and stems which quickly produce a characteristic grey/brown furry spore development which resembles a pile of ash - hence the name 'grey or ash mould'. As the disease progresses the lesions continue to grow and encircle stems and leaf petioles and will eventually cause plant collapse. Fungal spores can also develop on flower petals, particularly under growing conditions where condensation has been forming and humidity levels are high.

Infection of flower petals leads to rapid disease development in young fruit with the fruit tissue rapidly disintegrating into a water soaked mass. Green fruit that are infected with airborne Botrytis spores, rather than via infected leaf tissue, don't rot and decay,

but they often develop a condition called 'Ghost spot' which results in pale, cream colored rings on the surface of the fruit.

Post harvest rots can often be attributed to Botrytis infection as well, especially when increased humidity in storage promotes the germinating of spores present on the surface of the cut foliage. These rots appear as large water soaked areas often covered with grey mould termed 'conidiophores'.

## Fungal life cycle

Botrytis is commonly a disease associated with humid conditions, which are required for successful spore germination and temperatures around 15°C-23°C, although it can thrive in cooler conditions. Crops grown towards late winter and early spring are most susceptible to disease although it can be prevalent throughout the year in grow rooms. Spores germinate faster as the relative humidity approaches 100% and germination is most rapid where free water is present on the plant foliage such as that produced by condensation.

Once spores germinate on the plant they enter the host tissue and form mycelium which invades the intercellular spaces within the plant tissue. This mycelium then forms conidiophores which

emerge through the infected tissue and release conidia into the air. If infected stems and foliage are not removed from the growing area, they become a source of conidia which develop on lesions and rapidly infect healthy crops when conditions are suitable. High temperature and dry conditions eliminate the survival spores from one crop to the next.

Spores are released from infected crops when the crop is disturbed as in pruning or harvesting and these spores readily infect more plants through open cuts on the stems. Spores are not only produced in large numbers on lesions on the plant, but also on plant debris left in the growing area and in piles of discard plant material outside of the plants environment. These can provide a source of re-infection and so diseased plant material needs to be disposed of carefully to prevent further outbreaks. Spores are easily spread in air currents and by splashing of water, and infection can occur rapidly in an area where both these methods of transfer can occur.

Plant stress which results in overly vigorous or spindly plants causes the crop to become more susceptible to Botrytis infection. This stress may be in the form of over or under watering, heat, light or tissue damage. There are other factors which also influence the development of this disease, maximum sporulation

takes place at wavelengths less than 345nm - and excess nitrogen fertilization can make plants more susceptible to the fungi by changing the size and wall structure of the plants. Calcium and silica enrichment of the plant tissue has been shown to reduce the susceptibility of many plant species to Botrytis infection by strengthening the cell walls against initial attack by the fungus.

Crop management for Botrytis control Environmental control of Botrytis is crucial to the management of many crops and is based on increasing temperature and reducing relative humidity levels to create an environment which is not conducive to spore development and germination. Heating and venting of humid air, allowing drier air to enter the crop environment on a continual basis is important for Botrytis prevention. If warm humid air is allowed to cool in the crop overnight, condensation forms, providing the ideal conditions for spore germination of Botrytis.

Crop pruning and harvesting should be carried out at separate times as spores released from infected plants during pruning will easily infect cuts or open surfaces exposed during harvesting. If some time elapses between the two operations, callus tissue can form over cut or open surfaces protecting the plant

from spore germination and infection.

## Control of Botrytis - chemical and microbial

While there are some fungicides still effective for Botrytis control, much resistance has developed to many chemical products and their use is becoming limited. However, early control can still be achieved in some situations with the use of Dicarboximide fungicide, Benzimidazole fungicides and chlorothalonil. Where persistent Botrytis attacks are common, the various chemical groups should be alternated to restrict the build up of resistance by the pathogen to the fungicide used. There has been some success with the use of various botanical extracts for limiting and preventing Botrytis damage - certain citrus extracts appear to be a promising control agent although many are still under evaluation.

These days, perhaps one of the most effective controls against Botrytis is the use of biological control agents. Many natural bacterial and fungal antagonist can suppress Botrytis through competition. In some research carried out in New Zealand a few years ago, it was found that a number of fungi are antagonistic to Botrytis

and will prevent the infection of fresh wounds on the plant.

Two of the most effective types are Trichoderma and Cladosporium which have now been developed into a number of commercially available products for pathogen control. The methods by which these fungi appear to work involve a complex interaction with the pathogen. The antagonist organism competes with the pathogen for nutrients and sites for spore germination. Also, some of the antagonists produce compounds that inhibit the germination of the pathogen's spores.

Control of Botrytis in the growing environment can be a continual battle under certain conditions, but control is possible with a combination of humidity reduction, prevention of condensation, good hygiene and chemical/microbial control agents. Just as with all other pests and disease problems, monitoring the crop for the first signs of infection is vital, as is providing the conditions which restrict or prevent the pathogen attacking in the first place.



# FLOWER FARMS IN KENYA

FARM NAME	LOCATION	PRODUCT	CONTACT PERSON	TELEPHONE	E-MAIL
AAA Growers	Rimuruti	Roses	Mr. George Hopf	0733-746737	george@aaagrowers.co.ke
AAA Growers-Chestnut	Naromoru	Vegetables	Mr. Mark Kirimi		nanyuki@aaagrowers.com
AAA Growers Ltd.	Thika	Vegetables	Mr. Steve		
AAA Growers-Turi	Nanyuki	Vegetables	Mr. Japheth		japheth@aaagrowers.co.ke
Africallas	Limuru	Zantedeschia	Mr. Robert Holtrop	066-76084	rob@sande.co.ke
Afri-organics (K) Ltd	Timau	Herbs	MR. John Harris		ohn@afriorganic.co.ke
Agripro Horticulture	Nakuru				
Aquila Flowers	Naivasha	Roses	Mr. Yogesh	0715 -817369	gm@aquilaflowers.com
Baraka Flowers	Ngurika	Roses		0727-038432	
Batian Flowers	Timau	Roses	Mr. Andre Borlage	0711-717987	andre@batianflowers.com
Beauty Line	Naivasha	Gypsophila, Solidago	Mr. Munene	072-1372906	
Bigot Flowers	Naivasha	Roses	Mr. Jagtap Kakaseheb	0722-205271	jagtap.kt@bigotflowes.co.ke
Bila Shaka	Naivasha	Roses	Mr. Joost Zuurbier	0711-898689	bilashaka.flowers@zuurbier.com
Black Petals	Limuru	Roses	Mr. Nirzar Jundre	0722-848560	nj@blackpetals.co.ke
Bluesky	Naivasha	Gypsophila,Roses	Mr. Mike	0720-005294	blue-sky@africaonline.co.ke
Buds \$ Blooms -Blis flora	Nakuru	Roses	Mr. Sachin Appachu	0720-804784	
Buds \$ Blooms -Town	Nakuru	Roses	Mr. Shivaji wagh	0720-895911	shivaniket@yahoo.com
Carnations Plants	Athi River	Carnations	Mr. Amir	045-22242	cpl@exoticfields.com
Carzan Flowers	Kipipiri	sammer flowers	Mr. Kiarie Gitau	0722-931159	
Celinico Flowers	Limuru	Roses,Summer flowers	Mr. Chris Shaw	066-72170	celinico@nbinet.co.ke
Charm Flowers	Kitengela	Lisianthus, Roses	Mr. Ashok Patel	020 2222433	info@charmflowers.co.ke
Colour Crops	Bahati	Hypericum, Ammi	Mr. K. Marigoma	020 2313859	admin@coulourcrops.com
Colour Crops	Timau	Summer flowers	Mr. Simon Baker		simon@siluba.co.ke
Colour Crops.	Naivasha	Veronica,fillers	Mr. Geoffrey Mwaura	0724-083111	nva@coulourcrops.com
Colour Vision Roses Ltd	Naivasha	Roses breeders	Mr. Peter van der Meer	(0)50 50 310	petervandermeer@terranigra.com
Countrywide Connections	Nanyuki	Eryngiums	Mr. Richard	062-31023/6	production@countrywide.co.ke
Credible blooms	Nairobi	Roses	Mr. George	0725-762099	
De Ruiters	Naivasha	Roses	Mr. Sebasten Alix	0720-601600	info@drea.co.ke
Delmare pivot (Vegpro)	Naivasha	Vegs, Roses			
Desire flora (K) Ltd	Isinya	Roses	Mr. Rajat Chaohan	0724-264653	rajatchaohan@hotmail.com
E.A. Growers - Jessy	Mweiga	Vegetables	Mr. Antony M.		antonym@eaga.co.ke
Elbur flora	Elburgon	Roses	Mr. Peter K. Kagotho	0724-722039	elflora@africaonline.co.ke
Enkasiti Rose	Thika	Roses	Mr. Tambe	067-44222/3	enkasiti@form-net.com
Equinox Horticulture Ltd	Timau	Roses	Mr. John Mwangi		john@equinoxflowers.co.ke
Everest Enterprises -Chulu	Timau	Vegetables	Mr. Anthony Muiruri		
Everest Enterprises -Lusoi	Naromoru	Vegetables	Mr. Robert Mbutia		robert.mbutia@everest.co.ke
Everes Enterprises - Njumbi	Naromoru	Vegetables	Mr. Robert Mbutia		robert.mbutia@everest.co.ke
Everest Enterprises - Woodland	Mweiga	Vegetables	Mr. George Machariah		george.macharia@everest.co.ke
Everflora Ltd	Juja	Roses	Mr. Bipin Patel	0716-066305	everflora@dmbgroup.com
Fides( K) Ltd	Embu	Roses, Cuttings	Mr. Francis Mwangi	068-30776	info@fideskenya.com
Finlays-Chemirel	Kericho	Roses	Mr. Aggrey	0722-601639	
Finlays Tarakwet	Kericho	Roses	Mr. John Magara	0722-873539	john.magara@finlays.net
Finlays Flamingo	Naivasha	Roses/Fillers	Mr. Peter mwangi	0722-204505	peter.mwangi@finlays.net
Finlays-Kingfisher	Naivasha	Roses	Mr. Charles Njuki	0724 -391288	charles.njuki@finlays.net
Finlays-Kingfisher	Naivasha	Carnations/ Fillers	Mr. Jacob Wanyonyi	0722-773560	jacob.wanyonyi@finlays.net
Finlays - Vegetables	Naivasha	Vegetables	Mr. Daniel Kiboi	0722-206627	
Finlays-Siraji	Timau	Carnations/Roses	Mr. Paul Salim		paul.salim@finlays.net
Finlays-Sirimon	Timau	Lilies	Ms. Purity Thigira		purity.thigira@finlays.net
Finlays Lemotit	Londiani	Carnations	Mr. Richard Siele	0721-486313	richard.siele@finlays.net
Flora Kenya	Naivasha	Roses	Mr. Jack Kneppes	0733-333289	jack@maridadiflowers.com
Flora ola			Mr. Dominic	0723-684277	
Flora delight	Limuru	Summer	Mr. Hosea	0724-373532	hosndai@yahoo.com
Florema (K) Limited.	Naivasha	Begonia	Mr. Peter Maina	050-2021072	info@floremaKenya.co.ke
Florensis	Naivasha	Cuttings	Mr. Eddy Verbeek	050-50010	florensis@florensis.co.ke
Fontana Ltd - Mau Narok Ayana	Nakuru	Roses	Mr. Gideon maina	0721-178974	gideon@fontana.co.ke
Fontana Ltd - Njoro farm Akina	Nakuru	Roses	Mr. Arfhan	0722-728441	Arfhan@fontana.co.ke
Fontana Ltd - Salgaa	Nakuru	Roses	Mr. Kimani	0733-605219	production@fontana.co.ke
Foxton Agriculture	Naivasha	Vegetables	Mr. Foxton Asanya.		
Gatoka Roses	Thika	Roses	Mr. Chriss	0715-215840	gatoka@swiftkenya.com
Goldsmith Seeds	Naivasha	Lisianthus	Mrs. Lynette S.		
Goodwood	Nyaururu	Hypericum	Mr. Bernard	0701-166466	
Goodwood Properties	Nyeri	Vegetables	Mr. Kahiga		dwagacha@qfp.co.ke
Greystones Farm			Mr. Silas Mbaabu	0722-312316	silas.mbaabu@greystones.co.ke
Groove	Naivasha	Roses	Mr. Peter	0724-448601	groovekenya@gmail.com
Hamwe Ltd	Naivasha	Hypericum	Mr. Andrew Khaemba	0722-431170	production@hamwe.co.ke
Harvest Ltd	Athi River	Roses	Mr. Farai Madziva	0722-849329	harvest@harvestflowers.com
Highlands Plants	Olkalau	Outdoors			
Hummer	Naivasha	Carnation, cuttings	Mr. Annemaria		
Indu Farm	Naivasha	French beans	Mr. James		

# FLOWER FARMS IN KENYA

FARM NAME	LOCATION	PRODUCT	CONTACT PERSON	TELEPHONE	E-MAIL
Interplant roses	Naivasha	Breeders	Mr. Geoffrey Kanyari	0712-215419	geoffrey@interplant.co.ke
Isinya roses	Isinya	Roses	Mr. Yash Dave	0700-797849	info@isinyaroses.com
James Finlays	Kericho/Londiani	Roses	Mr. John Magara	0722-206627	flowers@finlay.co.ke
K.H.E.	Nanyuki	Vegetables	Mr. Elijah Mutiso		mutiso@khekenya.com
K.P.P. Plant Production (K) Ltd	Juja	Cuttings	Mr. Wilson Kipketer	020-352557	w.keter@selectakpp.com
Kabuku Farm	Thika	Roses	Mr. Anand Kumar		kabuku@eaga.com
Kalka	Isinya	Roses	Mr. Captain	0715-356540	production@kalkaflowers.com
Karen Roses.	Nairobi	Roses	Mr. Rober Kotut	020-884429	bob@karenroses.com
Kariki Ltd.	Juja	Hypericums	Mr. Samwel kariuki	0722-337579	production@kariki.co.ke
Karuturi flowers	Naivasha	Roses.	Mr. Sylvester Saruni	0722-873560	saruni@karuturi.co.ke
Kenflora	Kiambu	Roses	Mr. Aleem Abdul	0722 -311 468	info@kenfloraa.com
Kenya Cuttings Ltd.	Thika	Cuttings	Mr. Careml Ekartd	060 2030280/1	info.kenyacuttings@syngenta.com
Kenya highlands	Njoro	Roses	Mr. Kariuki	0721-436211	agricentre@africaonline.co.ke,
Kisima Farm	Timau	Roses	Mr. Kenneth	0722-475758	flowers@kisima.co.ke
Kongoni Gorge farm (Vegpro)	Naivasha	Roses,vegs	Mr. Anand Patil		
Kongoni Star Flowers(Vegpro)	Naivasha	Roses	Mr. Shailesh	0722-203750	sailsh@vegpro-group.com
Kreative Roses	Naivasha	Roses	Mr. Julias Kinyanjui	0734-505431	farm@kreative-roses.com
Kudenga Flowers	Molo	Hypericum, Eringium	Mr. Juma/Rotich	0725-643942	production@kudenga.co.ke
Larmona/Hamcop	Naivasha	Roses	Mr. Peter Mureithi	0722-238474	lamonaaccounts@africaonline.co.ke
Lathyflora	Limuru	Beddings			
Lauren international	Thika	Roses	Mr. Chris Ogutu	0722-783598	laurenflowers@access.co.ke
Lex + Blomming oasis	Naivasha	Roses	Mr. Thomas Nyaribo	050-20-20612	lex@lex-ea.com
Live Wire Limited	Naivasha	Hypericum,Lilies	Mr. John Gitonga.	050-50371	info@livewire.co.ke
Lobelia Farm	Timau	Roses	Mr. Peter Viljoen	062-41060	info@lobelia.co.ke
Londia farm	Naivasha	vegetables	Mr. John		
Longonot Horticulture	Naivasha	Roses, vegetables	Mr. Chandrakant	050-50173/4	longonot@vegpro-group.com
Maasai flowers	Kitengela	Roses	Mr. Clement Ng'etich	0725-848914	cng'etich@sianroses.co.ke
Magana Flowers (K) Ltd.	Kiambu	Roses	Mr. Peter Mwangi	0726- 212520	Pmwangi@maganafloowers.com
Mahee flowers	Olkalau	Roses & Carnations	Mr. Vijay Kumar	020-822025	info@eaga.co.ke
Marera Farm	Naivasha	Vegetables	Pierluigi		
Maridadi	Naivasha	Roses	Mr. Jack	0733-333289	jack@maridadiflowers.com
Maua Agritec	Isinya	Roses	Mr. Kori	0722-206318	gm@mauaagritech.com
Mboga Tuu	Isinya	Vegetables	Mr. Dan Agao		
Migotiyo	Nakuru				
Molly flowers	Limuru	Summer flowers	Elizabeth		
Morop Flowers	Bahati		Mr. Wesley	0720-983945	agribiz@africaonline.co.ke
Mosi Ltd.	Thika	Roses	Alice Murugi	0722-204911	alicemurugi@mosiflowers.co.ke
Mt. Elgon Orchards	Kitale	Roses	Mr. Bob Anderson	0734-333095	bob@mtelgon.com
Mweiga blooms	Mweiga	Roses	Mr. Jesse Waweru		mweigablooms@wananchi.com
New Hollands Flowers	Olkalau	Roses	Mr. Guna Chitran	0700-718570	guna@bth.co.ke
Nini farm	Naivasha	Roses	Mr. Fred Okinda	0720-611623	growing@ninitld.com
Nirp E.A	Naivasha	Rose Breeder	Mr. Chege	0720-477717	ethanc@nirpinternational.com
Ol Njorowa	Naivasha	Roses	Mr. David, charles	020-574011	mbegafarm@icconnect.co.ke
Oserian Dev Company	Naivasha	Roses,Fillers,statice	Mr. Ruri Tsakiris		
Panacol International	Kitale	Roses	Mr. Paul Wekesa	054-2030916/7	paul.wekesa@panacol.co.ke
Panda Flowers	Naivasha	Roses	Mr. Peter osiro	0723-148307	osiro@pandaflowersco.ke
Pangot	Naivasha	Roses Cutting	Mr. Mwangi		
Penta Flowers Ltd.	Thika	Roses	Mr. Tom Ochieng	0733 -625 297	tom@pentaflowers.co.ke
PJ Flora	Isinya	Roses	Mr. Absalom O.	0721-423730	pidaveflowers@wananchi.com
PJ Dave Flowers	Isinya	Roses	Mr. Hitesh Dave	045-21381/2	pidaveflowers@wananchi.com
PJ Dave	Timau	Roses	Mr. Israel	0712-184433	pidavetimau@pidaveepz.com
Plantations Plants.	Naivasha	Geraniums	Mr. William M.	050-2021031	pplants@kenyaweb.com
Pollen	Ruiru	Cuttings/Seedlings	Mr. Patrick Chege		patrick.chege@syngenta.com
Porini	Kerinet	Roses	Pitamber		
Porcupine	Naivasha	Vegetables	Eyal		
Pressman Kenya Ltd	Nakuru	Roses	Jelle Posthumus	254 (0)786 580 761	jposthumus@preesman.com
Primarosa	Nyahururu	Roses	Mr. Santosh Kurkani	0712-030610	santosh@primarosafloowers.com
Primarosa Flowers Ltd	Athi River	Roses	Mr. Dilip Barge	0733 -618 354	dilip@primarosafloowers.com
Protea Farm	Timau	Roses	Mr. Philip		info@lobelia.co.ke
Ravine Roses	Eldamaravine	Roses	Mr. Kennedy	0720-339985	kapkolia@karenroses.com
Receme	Naivasha	Gypsopilla/vegs	Mr. Boni	0721-938109	bonny@kenyaweb.com
Redlands II	Kiambu	Roses	Aldric Spindler	0733-609795	aidric@redlandsroses.co.ke
Redlands Roses	Ruiru	Roses	Aldric Spindler	0733- 609795	aidric@redlandsroses.co.ke
Rift valley Roses	Naivasha	Roses	Mr. Peterson Muchiri	0721-216026	rvr@livewire.co.ke
Rift valley vegetables	Naivasha	Vegetables	Mr. Nicholas		
Riverdale	Yatta	Roses	Ms. Zipporah Mutungi	020-2099501	rdale@swiftkenya.com
Rose plant	Kitengela	Roses	Mr. Atenus		
Roseto Ltd -Salgaa	Nakuru	Roses	Mr. Annan	074-848560	gm.roseto@megaspingroup.com
Roseto Flowers	Nakuru	Roses	Mr. Vijay	0717-617969	gm.roseto@megaspingroup.com

## FLOWER FARMS IN KENYA

FARM NAME	LOCATION	PRODUCT	CONTACT PERSON	TELEPHONE	E-MAIL
Rozzical garden	Naivasha	Vegetables	Mr. Robert		
Rozzika Garden Centre Ltd	Mweiga	Vegatables	Mr. Kinuthia		eunice@rozzika.co.ke
Savanah plants	Naivasha	Geraniums	lukulu		
Shade Horticulture	Isinya	Roses	Mr. Mishra Ashutosh	0722-792018	mishra@shadeshorticulture.com
Schreurs (Linsen)	Naivasha	Roses	Mr. Pius Osore	020-2070339	info@linsensenroses.co.ke
Shalimar Farm	Naivasha	Roses	Mr. Vijay Kumar	020 822025	info@eaga.co.ke
Sian Flowers- Agriflora	Nakuru	Roses/ Lilies	Mr. Laban koima	0722-554199	lkoima@sianroses.co.ke
Sian Flowers -Equator	Eldoret	Roses	Mr. Nehemiah Kangogo	0722-848910	nehemiah@equator.sianroses.co.ke
Sian Flowers- Maji Mazuri	Mois Bridge	Roses	Mr. Wilfred Munyao	0725-848912	wmunyao@sianroses.co.ke
Sian Winchester	Nairobi	Roses	Mr. R. Mulinge	0725-848909	rmulinge@sianroses.co.ke
Sierra roses	Nakuru	Roses	Mr. Anand Shah	0787-243952	
Simbi Roses Ltd.	Thika	Roses	Mr. Jefferson Karue	020-2042203	kingi@sansora.co.ke
Sirgoek flowers	Eldoret	Roses	Mr. Andrew	0725-946429	sirgoek@africaonline.co.ke
Solo Plant (K) Ltd.	Kiambu	Roses	Mr. Haggai Horwitz	0732-439942	hagai@soloplant.co.ke
Stockman rozen	Naivasha	propagator	Mr. Julius Muchiri	0722-200890	jlius@srk.co.ke
Subati Flowers Ltd	Subukia	Roses,Gypsophila	Naren Patel /Ravi Patel	+254(20)2048483	info@subatiflowers.com
Subati Flowers Ltd	Naivasha (Kinangop)	Roses	Naren Patel / Ravi Patel	+254(20)2048483	info@subatiflowers.com
Suera Flowers	Nyahururu	Roses	Mr. Joseph Mureithi		suerafarm@suerafarm.sgc.co.ke
Sunripe	Nanyuki	Vegetables	Mr. James Muhoho		
Sunripe savanah	Naivasha	vegetables	Mr. George		
Tamalu	Timau	zante	Mr. David N.	0722-764759	nzomahd@gmail.com
Tambuzi Flowers	Naromoru	Roses		062 3101917	info@tambuzi.co.ke
Terrasol	Limuru	Cuttings	Eva	0722-455996	info@terrasol.com
Timafior Ltd	Timau	Roses	Mr. Bryan Allen	062-41263	brian.allen@timafiorltd.com
Timau flair	Timau	Roses	Mr. Philip Ayiecha	0723-383736	
Transebel Ltd.	Thika	Roses	Mr. David Muchiri		admin@transbel.co.ke
Tropiflora (K) Ltd.	Limuru	Carnations, Astroemeria	Mr. N.Krasensky	0722-783280	tropiflora@tropiflora.net
Tulaga	Naivasha	Roses	Mr. Denis Wedds	0724-465427	denis.weds@africaonline.co.ke
Uhuru Flowers	Timau	Roses	Mr. Ivan Freeman	020-3538797	ivan@uhuruflowers.co.ke
Valentine Kibubuti	Kiambu	Roses	Susan Maina	020-3542466	info@valentineflora.com
Van den berg roses	Naivasha	Roses	Johan Remeus	050-5050439	johan@roseskenya.com
Vegpro (k) Ltd - Kitawi	Naromoru	Vegetables	Das		
Vegpro (k) Ltd - Liki River	Nanyuki	Roses	Mr. Madhav Langre		madhav@vegpro_group.com
Vegpro (k) Ltd- Kongoni	Timau	Roses	Vivek Sharma		vivek@vegpro_group.com
Waridi Ltd	Athi River	Roses	Mr. P.D. Kadlag	0724-407889	kadlag@waridifarm.com
Wiham Veg Mwanzi	Nyahururu		Madadi	0721-491633	
Wildfire flower	Naivasha	Roses/Hypericum	Christine Karambu	0722-468031	christine.karambu@wildfire-flowers.com
Windsor Flowers	Thika	Rose	Mr. Virash singh	067- 24208	farm@windsor-flowers.com
Xpression ltd -Africa Blooms	Salgaa	Roses	Mr. Samir	0072-4518140	
Xpression ltd -Elburgon	Nakuru		Mr. Inder	0719-748175	
Zena roses - Asai	Eldoret	Roses	Mr. Lucas O.	0718-925040	lucasoongena@yahoo.com
Zena Roses	Thika	Roses	Mr. Peter Ochami	0712-006323	productionthika@zenaroses.co.ke
Zena Roses - Sosiani	Eldoret	Roses/Carnations	Mr. Fanuel O.	0724-631299	

## FLOWER FARMS IN ETHIOPIA

FARM NAME	CONTACT PERSON	PRODUCT	TELEPHONE	E-MAIL
A" flower	Rashid Mohammed	Roses	+251 11 553 3237	mekiya@ethionet.et
Abyssinia flowers		Roses	+251 11 554 0368	ggh_link@ethionet.et
Agri flora plc		Roses	+251 11 237 2325	flowers@ethionet.et
Alliance flowers plc	Ravi	Roses	+251 116184341/ 2849329/30	allianceflowers@yahoo.com
Almeta impex plc	Ato Yonas Alemu		+251 11 553 4222/24	almeta.lmpex@ethionet.et
Aq roses plc			+251 46 441 4277	ethiopia@aqroses.com
Arsi agricultural	William Ngelechei/Tahir Aman	Roses	+251 11 442 3661 /	arsiflower@ethionet.et
Mechanization service	Belay		+251 443 1946/49	
Avon flowers plc.			+251 11552 8900	Gomba@ethionet.et
Awassa greenwoods plc	Hypericums		+251 552 8900 / 0462210045	awassagreenwood@ethionet.et
Beauty green plc	Yonas Tsegaye		+251 11 554 4601	seidlert@ethionet.et
Blen flowers plc	Anteneme Zenebe			blenflowers@ethionet.et
Blu nile flora plc				bnf2etf@ethionet.et
Chibo flowers	Ato habtamu gesesse			expincor@ethionet.et
Dandi bour floralia plc				dbuc@ethionet.et
Dire highland Flower plc	Tesfaye Asegidew		+251 11 551 3525, 552 6310	dhf@ethionet.et
Dream flowers plc	E.Ravi Chandran / Wycliffe Otieno	Roses	+251 11 618 4341	dreamflowers@ethionet.et
Dugda floriculture			+251 11 554 0509 , 550 1414	dugdaagr@ethionet.et
Dyr	Yosef Beyene	Carnations	+251113390251	dyr@ethionet.et

## FLOWER FARMS IN ETHIOPIA

FARM NAME	CONTACT PERSON	PRODUCT	TELEPHONE	E-MAIL
Eden roses	Tshaye		+251 11 646 1443/5	edenroseplc@ethionet.et
Enyi ethio rose	Tewahido Haymanot	Roses	+251 11 348 1987, 348 2167	enyi@ethionet.et
Eteco plc				eteco@ethionet.et
Et-highland flora plc	Tim Harrap / BrianSheepers	Roses	+251 11 466 0982	Bnf2etf@ethionet.et
Ethio agri-ceft	Arvind / Kebede / Biru abebe	Rose	+251 11 618 6483 , 662 53 27	agricft@ethionet.et
Ethio dream plc	Bimal /Emmanuel	Roses	+251 11 618 9313/143	ethiodream@ethionet.et
Ethio flora plc			+251 11 466 0982	Bnf2etf@ethionet.et
Ethiopian cuttings		Geraniums	+251 11 661 45 11 , 662 46 55	ethiopicutting@ethionet.et
Ethiopian magical farm		Roses	+251 11 662 2570	emf@ethionet.et
Ethioplast plc	Felix Steeghs/ Kontos		+251 11 387 1277	accounts@ethioplants.com
Experience inc. Plc	Telahun Makonnem		+251 11 464 4137	expincor@ethionet.et
Fiyori ethiopia plc	James Mwigigi	Roses	+251 11 663 6292	yoshe@ethionet.et
Florensis ethiopia plc	Ronald Vijverberg	Cuttings	+251 11 652 5556 , 652 5557	flrensis@ethionet.et
Golden rose agrofarm ltd.	Shahab Khan / Sunil Chaudari	Roses	+251 11 466 9971	gomba@ethionet.et
Herburg roses plc	Mr. Adrianus Gerardus		+251 11 441 4279	herburgj@ethionet.et
Holeta rose plc	Navale Bhausaeheb K.	Roses	+251 11 618 4341	holroses@ethionet.et
llan tot plc			+251 (011)656 90/2/3	ilan@ilantot.com
JJ Kothari PLC	Ashok Bhujbal	Roses	+251 11 466 1155	jjkothari@ethionet.et
Joe flowers plc		Roses	+251 11 629 0800	jflowers@ethionet.et
Jordan river herbs plc			+251 11 663 6173 , 654 0207/9	flower_herb@yahoo.com
Joshua Flowers PLC			+251 11 550 7656 /7	joshuaflowers@ethionet.et
Joytech			+251 11 662 0205 , 433 6123/5	arnon@joytechplc.com
Karuturi sai	Ramarkrishna Karuturi/Anil	Roses	+251 663 2437/9	lathmeadows@gmail.com
Lafto Roses PLC			+251 11 554 1485 , 554 1483	laftoroses@ethionet.et
Langano Lily			+251 46 1191497	langanolilyflowers@gmail.com
Linssen roses	Wim Linssen		+251 11 320 5668	linssenroseset@ethionet.et
Lucy ethiopia flowers plc				ger@lucyflowers.com
Mam -Trading PLC	Mussema Aman/Idris/	Roses	+251 11 4402080	mamtrading@ethionet.et
Maranque plants plc			+251 22 119 0750	maranqueplants@hotmail.com
Marginpar ethiopia pvt. Ltd. Co	Peter Pardoen/Mwangi	Eryngiums, hypericums	+251 11 371 6232	marginpar@ethionet.et
Metrolux flowers		Roses	+251 11 466 9273	dgad@ethionet.et
Meskel flowers	Roy/Daniel			
Minaye flowers plc.	Francis Muriuki	Roses	+251 11 372 8666 /7/9	minaye@ethionet.et
Mullo farm plc	Eyob Kebebe/MauriceOjow	Roses	+251 11 554 0368	mullo@ethionet.et
Noa flora plc			+251 11 618 6203	noaflora@gmail.com
Oda flower plc	Mr.David Klein	Roses		odaflowers@ethionet.et
Omega farms plc	Lemlem Sisay		+251 11 466 9273 /76	dgad@comcast.net
Olij Flowers PLC				info@olijethiopia.com
Oromia wonders	Mr.Siva		+251 11 618 4341	oromiawondres@yahoo.com
Rainbow colours plc	Ato. Mekonnen A.		+251 11 646 1105	rainfarm@ethionet.et
Red fox ethiopia plc	G.Symondson	Eryngiums, poinsettia	+251 11 551 4966	g.symondson@ethionet.et
Roman ayele	-	-	-	-
Rose ethiopia plc	Ketema Alemayeh	Roses	+251 11 552 0596	roseethiopia@ethionet.et
Roshanara roses plc.	Mr.K.Bhanu Prasad		+251 11 618 3063	roshanararoses@gmail.com
Sathya sai farms (e)ltd, plc	N.L Shyam Sundar	-		saifarms2006@gmail.com
Saron rose agrofam plc	Bruk Melese	Roses	+251 11 372 8135	saronfarm@ethionet.et
Sheba flowers plc	Clemence		+251 911 453 245	rotem@shebaflowers.com
Siet agro plc	Ermias Tadesse		+251 11 551 1835	sietagro@ethionet.et
Soparasy (mekiya)	Ken Murwayi	Roses		
Spirit plc			+251 011 662 8375	spirit@ethionet.et
Summit plc	Michael Asres /Paul Muteru	Roses		Mekiya@ethionet.et
Supra flowers plc	Rakesh Kumar Gautam		+251 11 663 1144	suprafloritechplc@yahoo.co.in
Tabor herbs			+251 11 551 2033	taborherb@ethionet.et
Tal flowers plc.			+251 11 651 7394	tal@ethionet.et
Top Flower PLC			+251 11 553 4699	mekiya@ethionet.et
Tinaw business s.c	Ato Tesfaye		+251 (011) 372 0110	bap@ethionet.et
Uni-flower plc				uniflower@ethionet.et
Johnsonflower farm.	Ato Yasin Igesse			yassinj@yahoo.com
Zaguwe flora plc	Ato. Adiam Eyasu			adiam.Eyasu@gmail.com
Zubka general business				
Flower farm plc	Zubeda Kedir	Roses		kajo@ethionet.
Top flower plc	Tadesse Bekele			mekia@ethionet.et
Valley farm plc				peval@ethionet.et
Yassin legesse johnson flower farm			+251 11 652 5579 /64	yassinj@yahoo.com
Zaguwe Flower			+251 11 618 7596	adiam.eyasu@gmail.com
Ziway roses plc			+251 46 441 4172	finzr@ethionet.et
ZK Flower			+251 11 466 4476	zkflowers@gmail.com
Zubka General Business PLC			+251 11 439 3470	kajo@ethionet.et

## Away from the Sixth Sense and Fame to Consultancy.

I clearly remember the advice given to me when I was toying with the idea of becoming a scribe. "Don't take up journalism as your career if your sole aim of life is to make money," my mentor told me. "If you want to worship mammon, go back into depreciating fingers with the calculator but not the typewriter where you can mass a lot of wealth," he continued.

And not him alone but even the country's education system took me far from scribing. And the gods of the highest education ensured I land into UON (University of Nowhere) to format me into a tax collector. My own father supported them and called the gods' scribes quoting Jesus, he said. "Woe unto you scribes....." But one man supported me all through, the late whispers, aka father to Domestic Thug and Pajero. He always allowed me to sneak into his world. A year after graduating and started locking myself in a room to cook figures, I sneaked into one of Wahome Mutahi's comedy shows and our world met again. This time round, he ensured I have joined the world of depreciating fingers with the typewriter. So, armed with a portable typewriter I left for Lamu Island where I honed my scribing skills.

Then one day I heard a call. St Valentine called and told me to leave newsroom to the world of flowers. He confided to one officerless alias Catherine Riungu, and Wilfred Munyao of sian Roses. I remembered my mentor's words; "in scribing you only earn a name but not money". Now I was about to leave name making to a very different world. He added, "of course we all need a level of income to live in comfort, pay for our children's education, medical cover, decent holiday and save for our retirement. Quoting Somerset Maugham he said, "Money is the sixth sense without which we cannot enjoy the other five to the full! Even allowing for the sort of ostentatious life, anything in excess is just adding zeros to one's bank balance and gloating over bloated bank statements every month.

As I celebrate a decade and half in scribing about flowers, and ten years after the launch of Floriculture Magazine, I have never earned a great name like colleagues in newsroom nor have I added a lot of zeros in my bank balance but I have enjoyed my call. I believe. As the only scribe who understands the language of flowers I have had a hard nut to crack. Early evening and a fellow scribe calls, "Hi, Mr. Maua, I picked a fight with my wife, I need some flowers to cushion her, what is the best in such a situation?" After a cheeky laughter I recommend, "go for red roses, a sign of true love. If you were on the wrong side you need some daffodils which signify respect and joy". Before long, a young scribe taking his girlfriend for a date calls. Straight away I recommend tulips for passion and love; dressed with orchards which stand for rear beauty

Early the following morning, I'm back to my office. I open my mail and a good friend's wife is inviting me for his son's

circumcision graduation party. But as usual she drops a line, "which are the best flowers for the occasion?" "Go for lilies a sign of happiness and hyacinth for playing joy; I recommend without hesitating. Next on the line is a doctor friend who wants to ask his girlfriend for marriage. "Daktari you need a red rose which signifies true love", I answer. As I settle for the day's schedule, my MP calls, the president is visiting his constituency and he wants the best bouquet for him. Though he beat me through some stolen votes, I advice him, "Mheshimiwa, you need a bouquet of roses with pink indicating happiness, white for the calm of the country, orange for passion and yellow for joy".

Immediately after the MPs call, the secretary informs me of a waiting visitor. It is Annie, a long time friend and an accountant with a leading audit firm. After the normal nitty gritty, I ask, and what brings you to my office. Without mincing words, she says, "there is a guy I have fallen for but it seems he is slow to notice, I know flowers can communicate, what flowers do I give him tonight when we meet?" You need a tiger lily which states I dare you to love me. You can add some calla lilies, for maiden, modestly or beauty. After a long day of consultancy I walk home with pale pink roses for my daughter in remembrance of God's grace to us.

Annie called me around midnight. "This guy bought some orchids and daffodils what did he mean?" she asked. After a long laughter, I answered; "Orchids show love and beauty, it seems the guy is falling to you". Daffodils meant you are the only one," I said. I could hear her sob and what happened next is for all to guess. The other day a top executive and former college mate gave one of the best speeches I have ever heard in life. On my visit to him I carried Irises. He was amazed and asked what does this mean? Irises say, your friendship means so much to me, your eloquence, faith and wisdom is excellent. "So, what do I take to my wife tonight," he asked, "Well.....some Red tulips a declaration of love and some variegated tulips for beautiful eyes. If you need to surprise her get some yellow ones which means, are you truly my love?" I summarized.

Later in the day I dropped by to see officerless with me was some pale pink roses. "Good old boy what does this mean," she asked. "Pale pink means grace. It is by grace I received your call into the world of flowers, it was never meant for me", I answered. She pulled out some Pink Roses for thankfulness as we all laughed. "And what should I give to her," a colleague and a fellow scribe asked. "Yellow for friendship, coral desires and rich modesty" I answered. Back home I found some orange roses, which said, "I am fascinated by your love and innocence." My call has never enriched me or put my name into the world of Oprah Winfrey. However, I will never regret the call Munyao and officerless confirmed to me. For a flower day livens the life of all.



## Partners of Floriculture



Floriculture encourages the pursuit of joint activities in areas of mutual interest with national and international societies, companies and organizations. Agreements have been reached between Floriculture, leading growers and suppliers and trade associations. This unique partnership includes a complimentary copy for each member of the registered associations. Floriculture is proud to announce the cooperation with the above corporates.



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