

November - December 2023

THE LEADING FLORICULTURAL JOURNAL IN THE REGION

FLORICULTURE

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*Harnessing Nature's Warriors
for Sustainable Flower Production*

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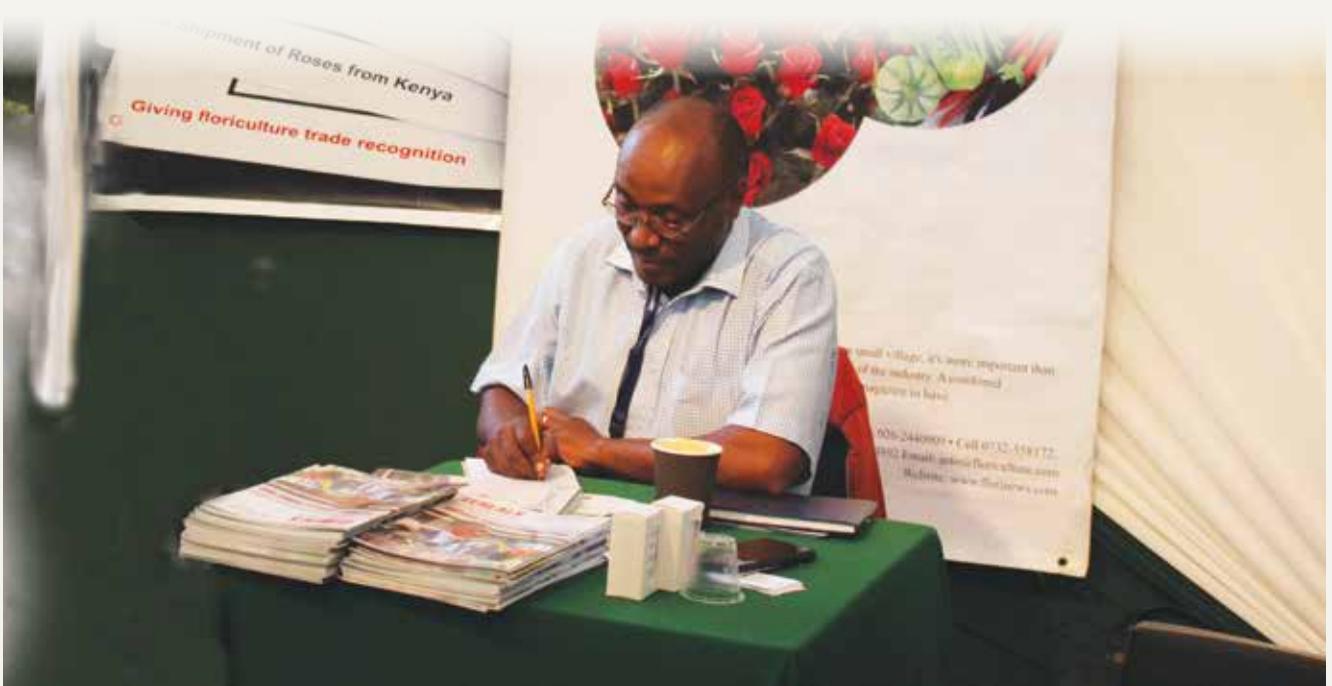
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ELGON KENYA

Appointed Distributor



Choose the sky

2023: a year that everyone looked forward to. Leading up to this year, I made a list of things I wanted to do. Now when I look back, I realize 2023 had totally different plans for me than I originally thought. Unlike the exciting and busy year that I planned, most of this year was spent in moments of roaming in both flower and Cereals farms, wear and tear on the keyboard or listening to endless excuses when deadlines are not met.

All said, there are two ways to parse the 2023 data. My 2023 main goal was to be respectful of the reader's attention. I am glad that when I did write, I wrote about what felt important and not as "content filler." Looking back at my editorials, and by extension a glance of the 2023 magazines am just with my 2023. Are you?

Well, the sky can't talk, but it sure listens. Hence 2023 repeatedly told me, when there's chaos on the ground, choose the sky.

Masila Kanyingi
Editor



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Application Rate:

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WHO Classification: U





Harnessing Nature's Warriors

One crucial aspect of sustainable flower production in Kenya is the use of biologicals. These are biological agents, such as beneficial microorganisms, insects, and other organisms, which play an essential role in maintaining a healthy and balanced ecosystem in flower farms.

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Floriculture

November - December
2023

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How to appeal to millennials

Marketing flowers to Millennials can be challenging, particularly since they perceive them as traditional and more of a luxury purchase. However, Millennials are the largest generation in the United States, with plenty of spending power. So, how can you increase their interest in buying flowers? Here are eight ways to appeal to their values and lifestyle with your floral marketing.

Share Your Knowledge with Online Content

Because flowers are perceived to be expensive to this group, it's vital to show the added value of flowers. Create a blog where you provide information about how to care for flowers, tips to make floral arrangements last longer, the meaning behind each flower, DIY guides, and socially conscious information (sustainable products, reduced chemical usage, etc.). This extra knowledge will add perceived value to your flowers and boost customer loyalty. Publishing content regularly is also a great way to move up the search engine rankings!

Tell Stories on Social Media

Engaging storytelling can help Millennials connect emotionally with your brand, so use platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Pinterest to create visually appealing stories. Showcase your floral products in various settings, from weddings to home décor. Add user-generated content to improve engagement and increase authenticity. And make sure to include behind-the-scenes videos that share your flower-sourcing process and show your arrangements coming to life.



Focus on Convenience

As Millennials are all about convenience, find ways to make buying flowers easy. Offer a user-friendly website and mobile app that allows them to browse, customize, and order flowers effortlessly. Add features like augmented reality that lets customers “see” how an arrangement will look in their living space. Provide an option to order online and pick up in-store and perhaps offer same-day or next-day delivery to cater to their fast-paced lifestyles.

Customize and Personalize

Give Millennials a way to express themselves through your flowers, as they highly value individuality and uniqueness. Offer personalized arrangements that give them control over the types of flowers they use and the cost. Provide online tools they can use to create custom bouquets. And, of course, encourage them to share their creations on social media, as this will be fantastic word-of-mouth marketing.

Excel in Customer Support

Go above and beyond to engage on social media, particularly when it comes to customer support. Rapidly deal with any ordering error, help customers pick the right flowers for specific occasions, answer every question, and let customers voice their opinions on your products. By doing this, you’ll not only gain their loyalty and trust, but you’ll also learn ways you can improve your products and offerings to provide even more value.

Provide Value with Loyalty Programs and Subscriptions

Millennials are cost-conscious, so give

them extra value on every purchase. Offer loyalty programs that reward repeat customers with discounts, exclusive access, or even free workshops. Also, create subscription services that are easy to use and cancel, which can overcome their price hesitation. These services will keep customers returning, particularly if you ensure your flowers are high-quality and reasonably priced.

Generate a Buzz on Social Media

As you’ve read, millennials are more skeptical of traditional advertising and are more likely to be influenced by word-of-mouth and social media. Use that to your advantage by maintaining a strong social media presence. Launch interactive contests, encouraging customers to share their most creative floral arrangements for a chance to win prizes. And don’t forget to use humor and creativity in your marketing, as this will increase engagement with Millennials.

Create Memorable Experiences

Millennials value experiences over products, particularly those that fit their lifestyle and preferences. Host workshops and classes where they can learn about flower arranging or plant care. If feasible, let them bring their own containers to tie into their desire for sustainability. Offer immersive pop-up events or flower truck tours so they can engage with your brand in fun and unique ways. These experiences not only drive sales but also build lasting brand loyalty.



‘IMAGINE MORE’
 is much more than a slogan, as the
 Danziger’s founder, Ernest Danziger,
Celebrates his 100 birthday!

as indelible as Ernest Danziger has on the floriculture industry. As we reflect on a century of a life well lived, we celebrate a hard-working and creative leader who is blessed with unwavering optimism. Together with his wife, Zahava Danziger, they have built an enduring legacy with their own hands.

2023 is a special year for Danziger, celebrating 70 years as a company alongside the celebration of the founder, Ernest Danziger’s 100-year birthday on November 16th.

With enthusiasm for flowers, appreciation for beauty, and everything in between, Ernest and Zehava Danziger founded their company in the early 1950s. At that time, they could not have imagined that in 2023 Danziger would produce and sell more than 750 million plants and cuttings worldwide, adding color and happiness to many places in the world.

In the fast-paced world of business and innovation, few individuals leave a mark



Born a century ago, Ernest’s journey commenced on the seat of a tractor, cultivating fields and dreams alike. From these humble beginnings, he sowed the seeds that would grow into a thriving company, a testament to his unwavering determination and the belief that “in work, you will find peace.”

What sets Ernest apart is his ability to think outside the box. He is a true innovator, turning challenges into opportunities and setting the stage for the success of his team. His life story is a testament to the power of creativity and the importance of embracing unconventional paths in the pursuit of one’s dreams.

Besides his entrepreneurial success, Ernest and the Danziger family are well known for their long-lasting partnerships with customers. Ernest was the first to understand that collaboration is not just a business strategy but also a powerful force that could turn aspirations into reality. His life story is a testament to the power of collaboration in building thriving enterprises. This essence is still at the heart of the company and is one of the strongest values of the business.

Now, even at the remarkable age of 100, Ernest is a great ping-pong player, an amazing testimonial for his agility and resilience in both his personal and the professional lives. "It is never as bad



“*In the fast-paced world of business and innovation, few individuals leave a mark as indelible as Ernest Danziger has on the floriculture industry. As we reflect on a century of a life well lived, we celebrate a hard-working and creative leader who is blessed with unwavering optimism. Together with his wife, Zahava Danziger, they have built an enduring legacy with their own hands.*”

as it looks,” he always reassures everyone, even in challenging times like the past month in Israel. “We’ve been through so many challenges together over the years, and we know we have a strong and resilient team, a great country and loyal partners that have become our global friends, and this is all we need in order to overcome any obstacle,” said Ernest at his 100-birthday party.



It is in this same spirit that Micha and Gaby Danziger, his sons, have run the company for the past 47 years, joined by Ori Danziger, the third generation, 12 years ago. Together they continue to build bridges, forge partnerships, and navigate the future with the unwavering belief that with a spark of innovation, passion and dreaming big, we can achieve everything.

Harnessing Nature's Warriors: Beneficial Nematodes



In floriculture, where growers strive to produce vibrant and healthy plants, plant-parasitic nematodes can be formidable adversaries. These microscopic worms infest the roots of plants, causing damage that can lead to reduced yields and plant vitality. To combat this challenge, growers are turning to nature's tiny warriors: beneficial nematodes.

bodies of their prey through natural openings or by penetration, releasing symbiotic bacteria that kill the host and provide nutrients for the nematodes to reproduce.

Understanding Plant-Parasitic Nematodes

Plant-parasitic nematodes are a diverse group of microscopic worms that feed on the roots of various plant species, causing damage that can lead to stunted growth, wilting, and even plant death. They are a significant concern for floriculture as they can affect the quality and marketability of ornamental plants. Nematode-infested plants not only look unhealthy but also have reduced nutrient uptake, making them more susceptible to other stressors such as diseases and environmental factors.

Plant-parasitic nematodes can be challenging to manage due to their size, rapid reproduction rate, and the damage they cause beneath the soil's surface. Traditional chemical pesticides are often less effective against nematodes, and they can harm the environment, non-target organisms, and human health. To combat this menace, the use of beneficial nematodes offers an eco-friendly, sustainable, and effective solution.

The Heroes of the Soil: Beneficial Nematodes

Beneficial nematodes, also known as *entomopathogenic* nematodes, are microscopic roundworms that have earned their reputation as natural predators of soil-dwelling pests. These nematodes have a symbiotic relationship with specific species of bacteria, making them formidable hunters when it comes to parasitic nematodes. Beneficial nematodes enter the

There are several species of beneficial nematodes, each with unique characteristics, but they all share the common goal of controlling soil-borne pests.

Steinernema and *Heterorhabditis* are two commonly used genera of beneficial nematodes in floriculture. *Steinernema* species are known for their adaptability to different environmental conditions, while *Heterorhabditis* nematodes are particularly effective in warm and tropical regions.

Strategies for Using Beneficial Nematodes in Floriculture

1. Species Selection: Choosing the right species of beneficial nematodes is crucial for effective pest control in floriculture. The choice should depend on the specific nematode species causing the problem and the environmental conditions of the production area. As mentioned earlier, *Steinernema* and *Heterorhabditis* nematodes are popular choices due to their versatility.

2. Timing: Timing is essential in the deployment of beneficial nematodes.

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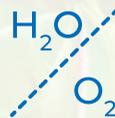
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Plant-parasitic nematodes can be challenging to manage due to their size, rapid reproduction rate, and the damage they cause beneath the soil's surface. Traditional chemical pesticides are often less effective against nematodes, and they can harm the environment, non-target organisms, and human health.

It's crucial to release nematodes when the target pest nematodes are in their vulnerable stages, typically in their juvenile (larval) or young adult phases. This ensures that the beneficial nematodes can effectively attack and eliminate the pest population.

3. Application Methods: There are several methods to apply beneficial nematodes in floriculture, including spraying, drenching, and soil incorporation. The choice of application method depends on the type of plant and the distribution of the target nematode population. For potted plants, a soil drench can be effective, while soil incorporation is suitable for field-grown crops.

4. Proper Storage: Beneficial nematodes are living organisms and should be handled and stored with care. They are sensitive to environmental conditions such as temperature and humidity. Ensure they are kept in optimal conditions until application to maintain their viability.

5. Quality Control: When purchasing beneficial nematodes, ensure that you acquire high-quality nematode products. The

nematodes should be alive, with viable symbiotic bacteria. It's essential to buy from reputable suppliers who can guarantee the quality and viability of the nematodes.

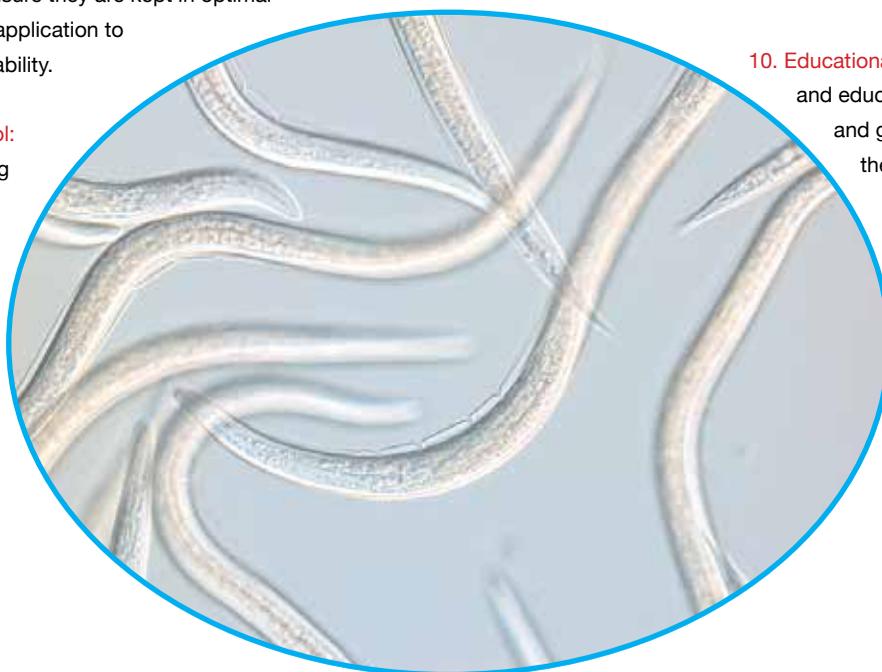
6. Soil Preparation: Healthy soil is essential for the success of beneficial nematode applications. Proper soil preparation and maintenance can enhance the nematodes' ability to establish themselves and effectively control pest nematodes. This includes maintaining appropriate soil pH, organic matter content, and moisture levels.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation: Regular monitoring of plant health and nematode populations is crucial for assessing the effectiveness of beneficial nematode applications. It helps in making necessary adjustments to the control strategy if required.

8. Integrated Pest Management (IPM): Integrating the use of beneficial nematodes into a broader IPM program can enhance overall pest control. This may include combining nematode applications with other biological control agents, cultural practices, and selective chemical treatments when necessary.

9. Record Keeping: Keeping detailed records of nematode applications, pest nematode populations, and plant health can provide valuable insights for future pest management strategies. It helps in fine-tuning the use of beneficial nematodes in floriculture.

10. Educational Training: Training and educating workers and growers about the benefits and proper application of beneficial nematodes are essential. Understanding the nematodes' life cycle,



behavior, and the factors affecting their performance can lead to more successful applications.

Benefits of Using Beneficial Nematodes in Floriculture

1. Environmentally Friendly: Beneficial nematodes offer an environmentally sustainable solution for nematode control in floriculture. They do not leave behind harmful residues and have a minimal impact on non-target organisms.

2. Effective Pest Control: Beneficial nematodes are highly effective in targeting specific plant-parasitic nematodes. They are natural predators that actively seek out their prey and provide long-lasting protection.

3. Reduced Chemical Dependency: By reducing the reliance on chemical pesticides, the use of beneficial nematodes contributes to a safer working environment for growers and a healthier end product for consumers.

4. Conservation of Soil Health: Beneficial nematodes do not harm the soil's beneficial microorganisms. Instead, they enhance soil health by controlling harmful nematodes and promoting root growth.

5. Compatibility with Other Pest Management Methods: Beneficial nematodes can be integrated into a broader IPM program, complementing other biological control agents and cultural practices.

6. Long-Lasting Protection: Beneficial nematodes establish themselves in the soil and can provide protection against nematode pests for an extended period, reducing the need for frequent applications.

Challenges and Considerations

While the use of beneficial nematodes in floriculture is a promising solution, there are some challenges and considerations that growers should be aware of:

1. Cost: Beneficial nematodes can be more expensive initially than chemical pesticides. However, their long-term benefits and reduced environmental impact often outweigh the higher upfront costs.

2. Specificity: Beneficial nematodes are highly specific to certain pest nematode species. It's essential to correctly identify the target nematode species to ensure the right beneficial nematode is used.

3. Environmental Factors: Environmental conditions, such as temperature and soil moisture, can impact the performance of beneficial nematodes. Growers must consider these factors when planning applications.

4. Storage and Handling: Proper storage and handling of beneficial nematodes are crucial to maintain their viability. It may require special equipment and training for growers.

5. Learning Curve: Growers may need to invest time in understanding the lifecycle and behavior of beneficial nematodes and how to integrate them into their existing pest management practices.

In the world of floriculture, the battle against plant-parasitic nematodes is ongoing, and the use of beneficial nematodes is emerging as a powerful and eco-friendly strategy. These microscopic warriors offer a sustainable solution that reduces the reliance on chemical pesticides while effectively controlling nematode pests.

By selecting the right species, timing applications correctly, and integrating beneficial

nematodes into a broader IPM program, growers can experience healthier, more vibrant plants and contribute to a greener and more sustainable future for the floriculture industry. Beneficial nematodes are indeed nature's answer to the age-old nematode problem in floriculture, and they are poised to play a pivotal role in shaping the industry's future.



Healthy soil is essential for the success of beneficial nematode applications. Proper soil preparation and maintenance can enhance the nematodes' ability to establish themselves and effectively control pest nematodes. This includes maintaining appropriate soil pH, organic matter content, and moisture levels.



Naivasha Horticultural Fair 2023: Thriving Two Decades Later!

Horticultural production is concentrated in regions such as the Great Rift Valley, Lake Naivasha, Mount Kenya, and Nairobi. The total horticultural area spans approximately 496,062 hectares, yielding 7.9 million metric tonnes, with roses dominating flower exports. For more than two decades, the Naivasha Horticultural Fair has been a hub of innovation, knowledge-sharing, and business networking for those involved in the cultivation of plants,



herbs, flowers, fruits, and vegetables. This annual fair has grown from modest beginnings to a grand spectacle, drawing participants from across the globe to showcase their products, exchange ideas, and explore the latest advancements in the field of horticulture.

The concept for this event was conceived by its founder, Richard McGonnell, who aimed to not only boost Kenya's emerging horticulture industry but also support local communities. September 22 and 23 marked the 20th edition of the fair, boasting over two hundred exhibitors and drawing a large crowd of attendees, including farmers, researchers, exporters, distributors, and curious enthusiasts - all with a shared passion for horticulture. The fair had something for everyone, from seasoned industry veterans seeking the latest

breakthroughs to novice gardeners looking for tips to enhance their backyard oasis.

Visitors were greeted with colorful displays of flowers in every hue imaginable, while neatly arranged rows of fruits and vegetables beckoned with their freshness. The air was filled with the fragrant scents of blooms, creating an inviting and inspiring atmosphere.

The heart of the fair was undoubtedly the exhibition area. Spread out across a vast expanse, it was a vivid creation, brought to life through the intertwining of innovation and creativity. Here, visitors could find stalls showcasing everything from exotic flowers that seemed to have been plucked from a dream to rows of meticulously grown vegetables that celebrated the bounty of the land.

During the opening of the Fair, the Chief Guest, Agriculture CS Honorable Mithika Linturi, expressed the government's full commitment to supporting the horticulture sector in the country. He acknowledged the delay in remittance of Value Added Tax (VAT) refunds owed to growers and assured that the issue would be resolved on a case-by-case basis as tax matters are individualized. The government owes flower growers billions in VAT tax refunds. CS Linturi assured that the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) would resolve the situation. He also pledged the government's continued collaboration with agrochemical industries and regulators to ensure the safety of chemicals used in Kenyan agriculture.

In one corner of the fairgrounds, a group of farmers huddled around a demonstration of a cutting-edge irrigation system. The presenter eloquently explained how this technology could optimize water usage and increase crop yields while conserving a precious resource. Nearby, an entomologist also engaged a captivated audience in a discussion about pest control methods, emphasizing the importance of sustainable practices in modern agriculture. Amidst the hustle and bustle, strangers



became friends as they exchanged success stories as well as challenges, bonded by a shared love for nurturing life from the soil. The fair was more than just a marketplace; it was a living testament to the unity of purpose that bound these individuals together.

Among the visitors was Alice, a young agripreneur who had recently ventured into the world of hydroponics. Her eyes sparkled with excitement as she navigated through the stalls, taking note of the latest innovations in controlled environment agriculture. She engaged in conversations with experts who offered advice on optimizing nutrient solutions and overcoming the challenges of soilless cultivation.

On the other side of the fairgrounds, Michael, a seasoned florist, marveled at the array of exotic blooms that surrounded him. He found himself in conversation with a fellow enthusiast, a botanist who had traveled from a neighboring country to share his knowledge of rare orchid species. As they spoke, Michael's passion for his craft was reignited, and he made mental notes of new species to introduce to his customers.



Looking ahead, Richard envisions the fair's continuous expansion. Over the years, proceeds from the event have enabled him to establish critical facilities such as schools, healthcare centers, rehabilitation resources, and more.

As the fair came to a close on the second day, attendees departed with hearts full of inspiration and minds brimming with ideas. The Naivasha Horticultural Fair had once again proven itself as a beacon of excellence, a platform where dreams were nurtured and possibilities blossomed. Exhibitors dismantled their stalls, and the fairgrounds gradually quieted.

One couldn't help but feel a sense of anticipation for the transformations that the knowledge exchanged here would bring to the world of horticulture in the coming year.



Naivasha Horticultural Fair 2023 Photos





Cold chain temperature monitoring maximizes shelf-life and reduces food waste

Fresh produce travels the globe to find its way to the end-consumer and in some cases, the product spends three weeks or more in transit before it reaches its final destination. During the transit process, different factors determine the quality of produce upon arrival. In the end, visual quality and safe quality are what matters.

To allow produce to be monitored along the way, numerous companies have developed a number of cold chain temperature monitoring products. These products play a key role in maximizing shelf-life of produce as well as minimizing food waste. Temperature is one factor that plays a key role during transit. "As soon as the temperature increases, all reactions with a detrimental effect on fresh produce are speeded up. Usually, the increase has an exponential impact. Really, temperature itself is meaningless and it should always be coupled with time.

Data loggers

Companies have developed several different data loggers that are able to monitor the temperature of the product, as well as humidity, light, positioning, etc. Data loggers are able to monitor produce throughout the value chain. From the transportation process to storage (refrigerator, cold storage, etc.), but they are also used in constant temperature machine rooms, laboratories, and other scenes. The data can be traced back all the way to the previous storage environment that reported a normal or safe status.

Ease of use

In combination with wireless Bluetooth technology, the apps and other ways, customers are able to read the data on the logger remotely without having to open packages. In addition, the logger can be programmed on a mobile device. Data can be transferred to a local computer or cloud platform, allowing customers to remotely access an encrypted PDF report that includes all recording statistics.

[Customers with multiple data loggers are able to view or download their data remotely in bulk to provide a more flexible operation.](#)

How easy is it to download and read the data? According to the requirements of the configuration parameters WiFi devices need to first connect the device to the WiFi network, and then it is a matter of long pressing the start button to open the record. After the recording is completed, the data report can be exported to various formats on the platform or computer. The reports can be shared with colleagues by email, social media, and other applications.

Revolutionizing Packaging: Allpack's Hybrid Flower Box

By Mary Mwende Mbithi

In the not-so-distant past, packaging was a laborious task, with boxes that were a hassle to assemble and far from eco-friendly. Reusability seemed like a distant dream. However, times have changed, and so has the world of packaging. The Hybrid Flower Box, a groundbreaking innovation from Allpack Industries, is definitely where innovation meets sustainability, and where your business meets success and it's set to transform the way we think about packaging.

It is nothing short of a game-changer and not only is it fully recyclable, leaving a significantly smaller carbon footprint, but it also boasts a remarkable up to 4% reduction in the cost per box. And the savings don't end there. Thanks to its reduced weight, that accounts for a significant decrease in freight costs.

One of the most remarkable features of this revolutionary packaging solution is the elimination of staples and tapes. Say farewell to the tedious task of securing your boxes with these traditional methods. Instead, the Hybrid Flower Box introduces a cutting-edge corner pillar design, enhancing its overall strength. This design ensures that the corners which bear more weight are stronger. This ensures your delicate products arrive intact, significantly reducing the risk of damage during transit, and ultimately saving you money.

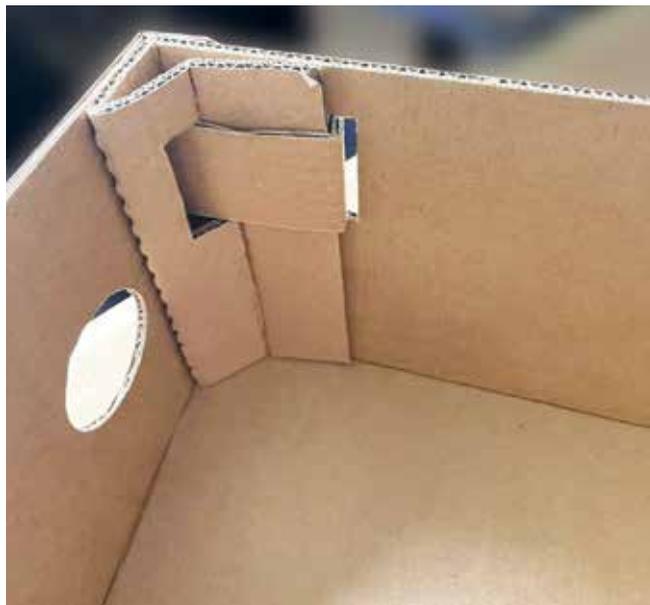
The Allpack Hybrid Flower Box isn't just any ordinary box; it's a comprehensive solution that brings about a packaging revolution. It's a smart choice for your business, offering not only sustainability but also substantial cost savings. The future of packaging is here, and it's available for you to order today.





The Allpack Hybrid Flower Box isn't just any ordinary box; it's a comprehensive solution that brings about a packaging revolution. It's a smart choice for your business, offering not only sustainability but also substantial cost savings.

6. Take the top piece of your Allpack Hybrid Flower box, which also has interlocking flaps. Slide these flaps into the corresponding slots on the main box structure for a secure fit. Once the flaps are securely in place, fold down the top to cover the package.
7. Your Allpack Hybrid Flower box is now fully assembled and ready for use. It's as simple as that! You can now enjoy the convenience and efficiency of this packaging solution for all your needs.



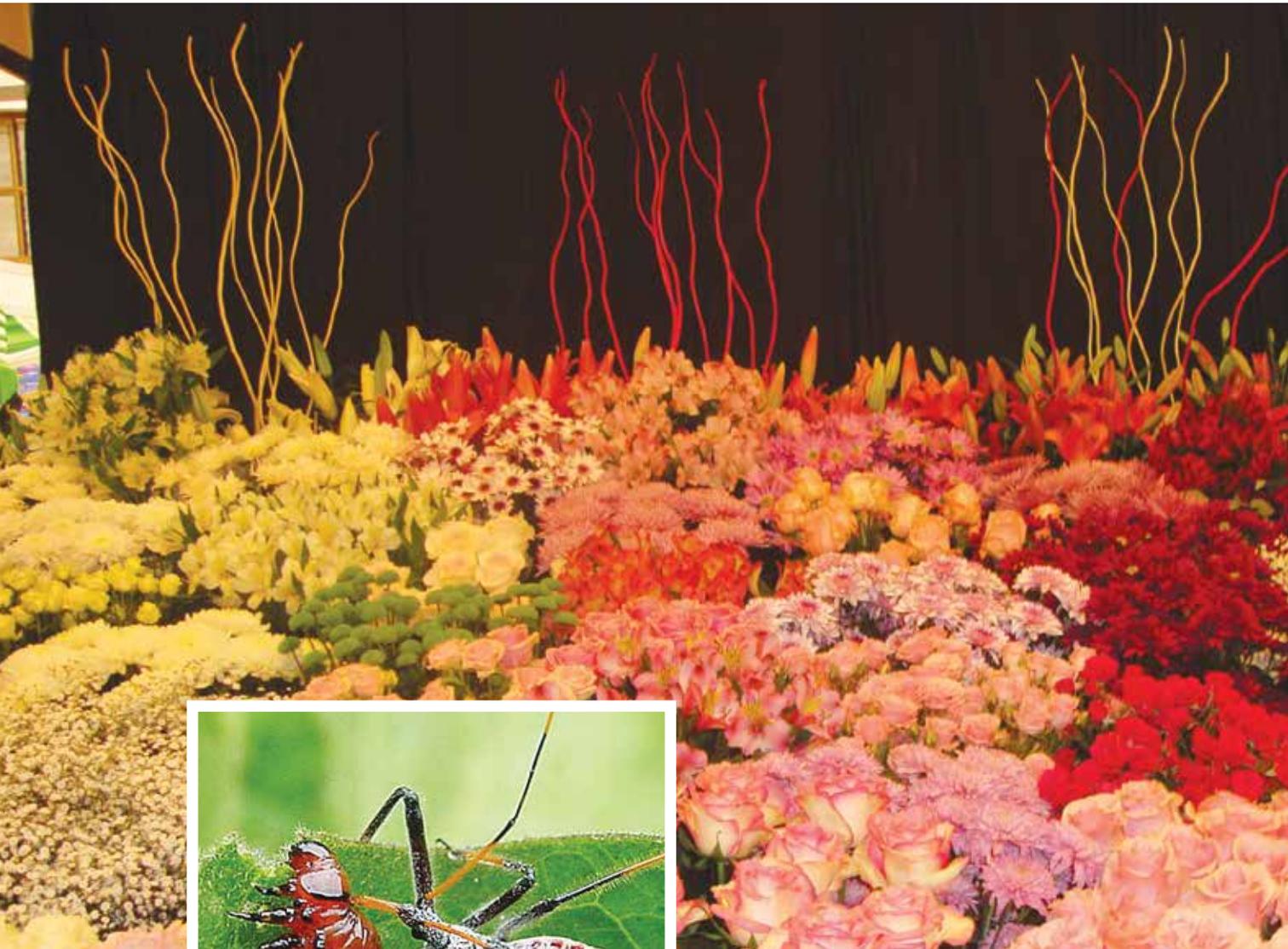
The Allpack Hybrid Flower Box represents a perfect fusion of innovation and sustainability, ensuring that your business is on a path to success. It's time to leave behind outdated methods and embrace this cutting-edge solution that not only protects your products but also takes care of our planet.

In a world where eco-consciousness and efficiency are paramount, the Allpack Hybrid Flower Box shines as a beacon of hope for businesses seeking a more responsible and cost-effective packaging solution. Don't miss out on this opportunity to improve your packaging process and reduce your environmental impact. Make the smart choice for your business and order the Allpack Hybrid Flower Box today. It's time to embrace the future of packaging.

Here's a straightforward step-by-step guide for assembling your All Pack Hybrid Flower box:

1. Begin with the pre-cut flat blank board.
2. Lay the pre-cut material for your Allpack Hybrid Flower box flat on a clean and spacious surface.
3. Lift the long sides of the material to create the basic box shape, ensuring that the printed side faces outward.
4. Utilize the crease folds on the long side flaps to create the corner pillars.
5. Use the long flap on the short side to interlock the corner pillars together, ensuring a snug fit. This forms the main structure of the box. Make sure they are securely connected and properly aligned. You'll hear a satisfying click when the lock notches snap into place.

The Role of Biologicals in Sustainable



Natural Enemy

In the heart of East Africa, Kenya has emerged as a global hub for flower production, earning the country the moniker “The Flower Basket of the World.” With its diverse climate, rich soil, and skilled workforce, Kenya’s flower industry has

various challenges, including the need to embrace sustainable practices that are environmentally friendly and economically viable.

One crucial aspect of sustainable flower production in Kenya is the use of biologicals. These are biological agents,

become a key driver of the nation’s economy. However, as the industry continues to grow, it faces

such as beneficial microorganisms, insects, and other organisms, which play an essential role in maintaining a healthy and balanced ecosystem in flower farms. Insect monitoring is a critical component of integrated pest management programs, ensuring the accurate identification of pests to implement the appropriate control measures. Utilizing insect traps is one method to assess insect prevalence.

In today’s agricultural landscape, there is a growing emphasis on sustainable farming practices and reducing environmental impact. This shift influences agricultural research and the way farming is conducted.

Flower Production



One crucial aspect of sustainable flower production in Kenya is the use of biologicals. These are biological agents, such as beneficial microorganisms, insects, and other organisms, which play an essential role in maintaining a healthy and balanced ecosystem in flower farms. Insect monitoring is a critical component of integrated pest management programs, ensuring the accurate identification of pests to implement the appropriate control measures. Utilizing insect traps is one method to assess insect prevalence. In today's agricultural landscape, there is a growing emphasis on sustainable farming practices and reducing environmental impact. This shift influences agricultural research and the way farming is conducted.

I. What Are Biologicals?

Biologicals, in the context of agriculture and horticulture, refer to living organisms or their products that are used to manage pests, diseases, and improve plant health. Unlike chemical pesticides and fertilizers, biologicals are eco-friendly and are based on the principles of harnessing natural ecological processes. **There are three primary categories of biologicals used in flower production in Kenya:**

1. Microbial Biologicals: These are microorganisms such as bacteria, fungi, and viruses that can be used to control plant diseases and enhance nutrient

uptake. Examples include *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt), *Trichoderma* spp., and mycorrhizal fungi.

2. Entomopathogenic Biologicals: These are insects or nematodes that are used to control pest insects. Common examples are ladybugs, parasitoid wasps, and beneficial nematodes.

3. Botanical Biologicals: These are plant extracts or botanical formulations used to repel or deter pests. Neem oil and garlic extract are popular botanical biologicals.

II. The Sustainable Flower Industry in Kenya

Kenya's flower industry has experienced remarkable growth over the years. With its favorable climate and proximity to key international markets, the country has become a major global supplier of cut flowers, particularly roses. However, this growth has brought forth challenges in terms of sustainability.

1. Environmental Concerns: The extensive use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers in flower production can lead to soil and water pollution, as well as harm to non-target organisms.

2. Health and Safety Issues: Pesticide

residues on flowers have raised concerns regarding the health and safety of workers and consumers.

3. Economic Sustainability: The long-term economic sustainability of the industry can be compromised by over-reliance on expensive chemical inputs and unpredictable market fluctuations.

4. Biodiversity Conservation: Intensive flower farming can impact local biodiversity and ecosystem health. It is against this backdrop that the flower industry in Kenya is increasingly turning to biologicals as an integral part of sustainable flower production.

III. The Role of Biologicals in Sustainable Flower Production

Biologicals offer a range of benefits for flower production in Kenya, making them a cornerstone of sustainable practices in the industry:

1. Biological Pest Control: One of the most critical aspects of sustainable flower production is the control of pest insects and diseases. Biologicals like ladybugs, parasitoid wasps, and nematodes can

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be employed to keep pest populations in check. These natural predators and parasites help reduce the need for chemical pesticides, promoting healthier plants and lower environmental impact.

2. Disease Suppression: Microbial biologicals like *Trichoderma* and mycorrhizal fungi can suppress soil-borne diseases, reducing the reliance on fungicides. This not only lowers production costs but also contributes to improved soil health.

3. Nutrient Management: Biologicals, including mycorrhizal fungi and nitrogen-fixing bacteria, enhance nutrient uptake by plants. They help improve soil fertility, reducing the need for synthetic fertilizers. This leads to cost savings for flower producers and reduces the risk of nutrient runoff into water bodies.

4. Resilience to Climate Change: Biologicals can enhance the resilience of flower crops to changing climatic conditions. They help plants better adapt to stress factors like drought, high temperatures, and extreme weather events, reducing crop losses.

5. Reduced Environmental Impact: The use of biologicals in flower production results in fewer harmful chemicals being released into the environment. This helps maintain the ecological balance of the surrounding areas, safeguarding the health of ecosystems.

6. Biodiversity Conservation: By relying on natural predators and beneficial organisms, flower farms can contribute to local biodiversity conservation. These farms provide habitats and food sources for beneficial insects, supporting a more balanced and sustainable ecosystem.

7. Market Advantage: As consumers become more environmentally conscious, flowers produced using biologicals are in high demand in international markets. This can lead to better market access and premium prices for Kenyan flower producers.

IV. Practical Application of Biologicals in Kenyan Flower Farms

Kenyan flower farms have been adopting biologicals as a sustainable alternative to chemical inputs. Here are some practical examples of how biologicals are being applied in the field:

1. Ladybugs for Aphid Control: Aphids are common pests in flower production. Many farms release ladybugs (predatory beetles) to naturally control aphid populations. These ladybugs feed on aphids, reducing the need for chemical insecticides.

2. Beneficial Nematodes for Soil Pest Control: Beneficial nematodes are used to control soil-dwelling pests like root-knot nematodes. These microscopic worms attack and parasitize harmful nematodes, thus protecting the plant's root system.

3. *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) for Caterpillar Control: Bt is a microbial biological that is used to control caterpillar pests. It produces proteins that are toxic to caterpillars but harmless to other organisms. This targeted approach minimizes harm to beneficial insects.

4. *Trichoderma* for Disease Suppression: *Trichoderma*, a beneficial fungus, is used to suppress soil-borne

diseases like *Fusarium* and *Pythium*. It forms symbiotic relationships with plant roots and competes with pathogenic fungi, reducing the incidence of disease.

5. Mycorrhizal Fungi for Nutrient Uptake: Mycorrhizal fungi establish mutualistic relationships with plant roots, enhancing nutrient uptake, particularly phosphorus. These fungi help plants thrive in nutrient-poor soils.



6. Botanical Extracts for Pest Repellent: Botanical biologicals, such as neem oil, are used to deter and repel pests. They can be applied as natural insecticides or



insect repellents, reducing the need for chemical treatments.

7. Composting and Organic Matter

Incorporation: Incorporating organic matter and compost into the soil promotes the growth of beneficial microorganisms and earthworms, improving soil structure and fertility.



V. Challenges and Considerations

While biologicals offer numerous benefits for sustainable flower production in Kenya, there are challenges and considerations to keep in mind:

1. Costs: Some biologicals can be more expensive initially compared to synthetic chemical inputs. However, their long-term benefits in terms of reduced chemical costs and improved crop yields often outweigh the initial investment.

2. Knowledge and Training: Effective use of biologicals requires knowledge and training. Flower producers need to understand the lifecycle of pests, the timing of biological releases, and how to monitor their impact.

3. Compatibility: Biologicals must be compatible with other management practices, such as crop rotation and intercropping. Compatibility ensures the optimal functioning of beneficial organisms.

4. Regulatory Issues: Regulatory frameworks for biologicals may need to be developed or adapted to ensure their safe and effective use in flower production.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation: Regular monitoring of the farm ecosystem is essential to assess the impact of biologicals and make necessary adjustments to the management plan.

6. Resistance Management: There is a risk of pests developing resistance to biologicals, similar to chemical pesticides. Integrated pest management (IPM) strategies should be employed to minimize this risk.

VI. The Way Forward: Integrating Biologicals for Sustainable Flower Production

To further promote the use of biologicals in flower production in Kenya, several strategies and recommendations can be implemented:

1. Education and Training: Training programs should be developed for flower

producers to help them understand the benefits of biologicals and how to effectively use them.

2. Research and Development: Investment in research on biologicals specific to Kenya's flower crops can lead to the development of regionally adapted and cost-effective solutions.

3. Regulatory Support: The government can play a role in facilitating the registration and regulation of biologicals, ensuring their safety and effectiveness.

4. Market Promotion: The flower industry should actively promote the environmental benefits of using biologicals to appeal to environmentally conscious consumers.

5. Collaboration: Collaboration between flower producers, research institutions, and government agencies can lead to a more holistic and effective approach to integrating biologicals into flower production.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation: Regular assessment of the impact of biologicals on flower farms should be conducted to continually optimize their use. Biologicals have emerged as a powerful tool in the pursuit of sustainable flower production in Kenya. These eco-friendly alternatives to chemical pesticides and fertilizers offer numerous advantages, ranging from reduced environmental impact to improved crop resilience. The successful adoption of biologicals in Kenyan flower farms not only benefits the industry but also supports the preservation of biodiversity and ecosystem health. As the global demand for sustainable and eco-conscious products continues to rise, Kenya's flower industry is well-positioned to lead the way in sustainable flower production. By embracing biologicals, flower producers in Kenya can meet the demands of both international markets and environmentally conscious consumers, ensuring the long-term economic and ecological sustainability of the Flower Basket of the World.

Unlocking the Future The Data-Driven

Precision Agriculture Meets Flower Farming

Flower farming, like other agricultural sectors, is experiencing a transformative shift towards data-driven scouting. This approach harnesses the power of technology and data analysis to optimize various aspects of flower cultivation.

Remote Sensing and Imaging: A Bird's Eye View

Key to data-driven scouting in flower farming is the use of advanced technologies, including drones and satellites, which provide high-resolution images of flower fields. This real-time imagery enables farmers to closely monitor crop health, detect diseases, and assess overall plant condition. The result? Timelier, more accurate decisions in the field.

Pest and Disease Management: Targeted Solutions

Effective pest and disease management is paramount in flower farming. Data-driven scouting empowers farmers to collect data on the presence and severity of these threats. Armed with this information, they can implement precise, targeted interventions, reducing the need for broad-spectrum chemical treatments and minimizing the environmental impact.

Climate Monitoring: Staying One Step Ahead of Mother Nature

Weather data is a cornerstone of successful

flower farming. Data-driven scouting allows farmers to monitor weather conditions in real-time, making it possible to adjust irrigation schedules or protect crops during extreme weather events. This proactive approach can save crops and resources.

Crop Health Monitoring: The Key to Optimal Growth

To ensure flower crops reach their full potential, data-driven scouting employs sensors and monitoring equipment. These devices measure variables like soil moisture, nutrient levels, and pH, providing insights into optimal growing conditions. With this data in hand, farmers can fine-tune their fertilization and irrigation practices.

Yield Prediction and Quality Assurance: Data-Driven Certainty

Data-driven scouting also enhances the ability to predict yields and assure product quality. By collecting data on plant growth and development, flower farmers can make accurate predictions about their harvest and ensure the quality of their flowers, benefiting both supply chain planning and market positioning.

Sustainability and Environmental Impact: The Green Advantage

Sustainability is a pressing concern in agriculture, and flower farming is no exception. Data-driven scouting supports environmentally-friendly practices by reducing water and chemical usage, minimizing waste, and promoting eco-friendly methods that benefit both the environment and business sustainability.

Decision Support Systems: From Data to Decisions

Sophisticated data analytics and artificial intelligence process the information collected from various sources. These insights assist flower farmers in making informed decisions, identifying trends, and optimizing their operations. The result?

of Flower Farming: en Revolution



Smarter, more efficient farming practices.

Data Integration and Collaboration: Bridging the Gap

Collaboration between flower farmers, researchers, and technology providers is crucial to the successful implementation of data-driven scouting. Data integration from various sources, including sensors, satellites, and historical records, offers a comprehensive view of the farming environment, empowering stakeholders to

associated with technology adoption, and the need for training and expertise in effectively using data in farming.

work together for a more productive and sustainable future.

Challenges and Considerations: Navigating the Road Ahead

While data-driven scouting offers numerous advantages, challenges must be addressed. These include concerns related to data privacy and security, the initial costs

To wrap it up, the future of scouting in flower farming is undeniably data-driven. By leveraging technology, sensors, and data analytics, flower growers can make more informed decisions, enhance productivity, and ensure the success of their operations while minimizing their environmental impact. Embracing the data-driven revolution is not just a step forward but a leap towards a more efficient, sustainable, and profitable flower farming industry.

Positive Vibes at IFTF Despite the Currently Slow Market

Is it the inflation, is everyone married, or are there just too many flowers on the market? Anyhow, the cut flower market seems to be slower than usual at the moment, and some even find it slower than pre-covid years. This is what we hear when talking to several growers at the IFTF on the first day.

However, vibes and hopes are high as the main holidays, like Christmas, Valentine's Day, and Women's Day, are about to come. Many rose growers are currently preparing for Valentine's Day, and some even already mentioned to be sold out.

Busy

How was day 1? Busy. When asking the exhibitors, they had a great first day, welcoming a lot of international visitors. And this was not a surprise as the number of pre-registered visitors was the highest ever. The show lasted till Friday, November 10.





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Ethiopian Cargo & Logistics Services wins ‘Best Cargo Airline-Africa’ at the Maiden Arabian Cargo Awards

Ethiopian Cargo & Logistics Services, the largest air cargo network operator in Africa, has won the ‘Best Cargo Airline-Africa’ award at the Arabian Cargo Awards, held for the first time in the Cargo category, on October 24 in Dubai, UAE.

Arabian Cargo Awards is a GCC-based platform with a vision to recognize those behind the success of the Cargo & Logistics Industry. It is the region’s first internet voting-based award.

Congratulating the Ethiopian family on winning the award, Ethiopian Airlines Group CEO Mr. Mesfin Tasew said, “We are delighted to win ‘The Best Cargo Airline-

Africa’ award at the first-ever Arabian Cargo Awards. We are also pleased that the value of our contribution to the cargo & logistics business in the region has been recognized. Ethiopian Cargo & Logistics Services is a customer-focused service provider with continuous improvements. Very soon, we will inaugurate a modern e-commerce facility equipped with elevating transfer vehicles and sorting machines.

The new e-commerce warehouse will be solely dedicated to mail, courier, and e-commerce goods and will handle 150,000 tons yearly. I would like to take this occasion to sincerely express my appreciation to all the stakeholders that

contributed to our continued successes.” Ethiopian Cargo and Logistics Services, one of the major strategic business units within the Ethiopian Airlines Group, currently covers more than 130 international destinations around the world with both belly-hold capacity and 67 dedicated Freighter services deploying more than 140 airplanes, including 15 dedicated freighter aircraft.

Ethiopian Cargo & Logistics Services is a multi-award-winning air cargo service provider; it is to be recalled that Ethiopian Cargo took the crown for two Prestigious Awards at the Air Cargo News Awards 2023 recently, among others.

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Being denied a valuable product

Scientists were jubilant on hearing the news that the French journalists had been cleared. “Great news for science and freedom of speech!” tweeted Channa Prakash, professor of plant molecular genetics at Tuskegee University in the United States. “Let’s call fraud a fraud!” Prakash added: “This fraudulent paper claiming that GMOs cause cancer in rats was used by several countries, including Kenya and India, to ban or halt GM crops. Sèralini should be asked to pay for damages done to farmers in these countries for being denied a valuable product because of his mischief.”

Although the flaws in the original 2012 publication were immediately evident to many scientists and later led to it being retracted by the journal *Food & Chemical Toxicology*, Sèralini’s paper caused enormous media and public furor because



Registrar, Research, Innovation and Outreach at Kenyatta University, said the case was bound to be dismissed and added, “he [Sèralini] should apologize publicly.”

Dr Paul Chege, a Kenyan crop biotechnologist, said Seralini’s paper was a perfect example of flawed science, which is why it was retracted. “However, this paper had a powerful influence on crop biotech policies in the Global South. I am happy that we are turning a corner now and formulating agri-biotech policies based on facts,” Dr Chege added.

context supported by rational regulatory frameworks.”

Delusional conspiracy theories

Speaking to the Alliance for Science, Géraldine Woessner said she felt “relieved” by the judgment of the French court. She noted that while “our witnesses [were] eminent specialists on the issue,” Sèralini had relied on testimony from three people: a professional anti-GMO lawyer, “a specialist on the ecology of penguins with no expertise on the subject,” and a Greens MEP who is “the former boss of Biocoop, an organic food giant.”

Woessner also pointed to the long-term damage left by the Sèralini controversy, which has meant that public research on GMOs “is no longer feasible in France” and has left a media legacy of “delusional conspiracy theories” and mistrust in science “for which we have collectively paid the price, during the Covid crisis.” She added: “Everything remains to be done to repair the enormous societal damages inflicted” by the whole affair.

Dr Oria (PhD) is a LEAD Fellow, Prof Janine Eler Research Group, Biotech Research and Innovation Centre – University of Copenhagen, Denmark.



it contained gory images of rats with gigantic tumors. The Kenyan government proceeded to ban GMO imports, a ban only recently lifted by the Ruto government and now mired in court cases launched in Nairobi by anti-GMO campaign groups.

Perfect example of flawed science

Commenting from Kenya, Professor Richard Oduor, Kenya University Biotech Consortium (Kubico) chair and Acting

Kenya’s Dr Susan Moenga, a biotech researcher at NuCicer who works on chickpeas, said the verdict is welcome, but we must move on. “Going forward, we should build robust science communication to the public so that we do not find ourselves in the same situation as we did ten years ago,” Dr Moenga said. “I am happy that Kenya is taking a leading step in genetic engineering adoption, allowing innovation in our space and

MPS Certified Flowers and Plants for a Better World

MPS will support the Festa dei Nonni in Italy and ask Italian growers - certified by MPS - to sponsor the Festa dei Nonni activities with flowers and plants. MPS's goal with this collaboration is to increase awareness of the importance of sustainability in Italy and to help Italian growers with the transition towards a more sustainable production.

On Grandparents' Day, generations are connected with flowers and plants to combat loneliness and to thank grandfathers and grandmothers for everything they do.

Grandparents Day is about sustainability and emphasizes the importance of long-term relationships and long-term thinking. Grandparent's Day therefore fits in well with the objectives of MPS, which sees it as a duty to pass on a healthy, habitable earth to future generations.

Participation of MPS Italy in Myplant&Garden In 2024, MPS Italy will participate in the Myplant&Garden fair in the wedding flowers stand. There is increasing interest in sustainability in the bridal market.

For wedding planners who are sensitive to this theme, it is an added value to be able to have flowers in the bridal work that have been grown locally in an environmentally friendly

manner. The increasing demand for local flowers in the bridal market is an opportunity for MPS to support Italian growers in the necessary transition to a sustainable cultivation method.

About MPS

MPS is committed to making the global horticulture sector more sustainable. We do this by developing innovative tools and certification schemes that enable companies to make their sustainability efforts transparent and measurable.

MPS standards are internationally accepted and leading in the horticultural sector. We carry out certification through our sister organisation MPS-ECAS. Our office is in the Netherlands, but we operate worldwide:

we have more than 3,500 participants across 52 countries. For more information, visit www.my-mps.com.

*Note to editors:
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Breeders welcome the adoption of the new Explanatory Notes on Essentially Derived Varieties by the UPOV Council

After four years of debate, the UPOV Council, in its 57th Session on 27th October 2023 adopted the new Explanatory Notes (EXN) on Essentially Derived Varieties, which replaced the EXN of 2017.

During the revision process, the worldwide breeders' community was represented by the International Seed Federation (ISF), the International Community of Breeders of Horticultural Varieties (CIOFORA), CropLife International (CLI), Euroseeds, Seed Association of the Americas (SAA), the Asia and Pacific Seed Association (APSA) and the African Seed Trade Association (AFSTA).

The new EXN clarifies that Varieties with a single parent ("mono-parental" varieties) resulting, for example, from mutations, genetic modification or genome editing are per se predominantly derived from their initial variety.

Additionally, there is no upper limit as to the number of differences which may result from the act of derivation. The number of differences between an essentially derived variety (EDV) and the initial variety is therefore not limited

to one or very few differences but may vary considering different methods of derivation.

An important clarification in the adopted document is that the differences which result from the act of derivation may also include essential characteristics. This means that in case a predominantly derived variety differs in 1 or more essential characteristics, it does not fall outside the EDV scope of the initial variety that was used in the creation of the derived variety.

The new Explanatory Notes is in line with the understanding of the breeders' community on the principle of EDV. The breeders ask all UPOV members to adapt their national Plant Breeder's Rights legislation to this interpretation of the EDV principle, so that a consistent approach in respect of EDV will be established.

As we welcome the new EXN, we remain fully available to collaborate during the adaptation or updating processes of the national legislations.



There is no upper limit as to the number of differences which may result from the act of derivation. The number of differences between an essentially derived variety (EDV) and the initial variety is therefore not limited to one or very few differences but may vary considering different methods of derivation.

Kenya, Netherlands cooperation in agriculture takes a dive into Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards

By Zablun Oyugi

The Kenya, Netherlands cooperation in agriculture took a dive into Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards (SPS) concerns raised by farmers and exporters during the recently concluded Naivasha Horticultural Fair in Nakuru County.

The initiative is a continuation of the bilateral cooperation in agriculture between Kenya and Netherlands following a bilateral cooperation in the sector the two parties signed in July this year.

According to Bart Pauwels, Agriculture Counsellor at the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands who opened the event, the role of SPS in international trade and agri-business has changed over the past decade from the technical sense to being a competitive instrument in differentiated product market hence the need to give it a proper focus.

“SPS measures are now becoming a strategic tool for developing and differentiating markets, gaining market access, coordinating the quality and safety of the food system, and defining market niches for export products.”

As a result, this is especially crucial as the market for “green” products, such as those that are produced sustainably by addressing their social and environmental dimensions, is growing rapidly.

“With this backdrop, there is need for increased collaboration and sharing of new ideas (cross learning), approaches, and experiences among the sector players in Kenya,” noted Pauwels.

Arising concerns

Some of the arising concerns by farmers

and manufacturers on the use of agro-chemicals are, among others, the long period some of the chemicals used in crop production take to get cleared by the Pest Control Product Board (PCPB) for use in Kenya.

Currently, according to Pest Control Products (Registration) Regulations, 2022 it takes up to about five years for a pesticide to be cleared and registered for use in the country something farmers and manufacturers say is a challenge in production.

However, Sarah Wambugu, Senior Pesticide Registration officer at Pest Control Products Board, said that the long period is caused by the processes from lab tests to farm trials on target crops and pests for a series of seasons to ascertain if effectiveness and probably if it could have harmful effects the users and public should be aware of. “The time fairly is long considering a number of issues and trials the chemicals have to be taken through to ensure they are not only effective owing the intended purpose but also safe for humans and the environment,” said Sarah.

Also, in response to raised question whether the government may consider temporary clearance permit on certain products which have been cleared for use in other markets, say, in Europe where most of Kenyan fresh produce are exported to, the officer said there is such a consideration and soon guidelines towards the same will be out.

BioProtection

African agriculture largely relies heavily on artificial fertilizers and pesticides, whose use has more than doubled in the last four

years. However, some of the pesticides are very toxic and have been banned in the European markets giving rise to many bioprotection approaches such as the use of biopesticides and beneficial insects to control harmful pests and diseases without harming non target organisms.

In fact, the Naivasha Horticultural Fair witnessed a host of manufacturers and dealers in biocontrol products that include Dudutech, a Naivasha-based firm which develops appropriate biological products for full Integrated Crop Management systems.

Giving a presentation on the topic, Abigael Mchana of Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International (CABI) said the not-for-profit international organisation in February 2020 launched CABI BioProtection Portal in Kenya to help farmers on biocontrol mechanisms.

“This portal is the largest open-access database of biological plant protection products. It is dedicated online resource aimed at raising the awareness and uptake of more environmentally friendly biocontrol and biopesticide products by growers and their advisors,” said Abigael.

According to her, using the available information on the portal will boost farmers and exporters access to global markets as there will be less issues with SPS.

Other government regulatory bodies and organisations present included Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Services (KEPHIS), International Biopesticide Manufacturers Association (IBMA), Kenya Flower Council (KFC) and the other private sectors.



How to attract the next generation of employees



A panel of current and recently graduated horticulture students from the HortScholar program offer an inside look into the minds of the next generation of employees
Reports Katie McDaniel

To continue business growth, it is important to attract the next generation of employees. At Cultivate'23, a panel of horticulture students from AmericanHort's HortScholar program explained what they look for in a company when applying for jobs and the best ways to reach their generation.

Healthy company culture

A healthy company culture is important to the younger generation. When students meet recruiters at job fairs, they are evaluating that employee – Are they positive? Are they friendly? Do they listen? Are they helpful? Kaitlin Swiantek, a horticulture master's student at the University of Georgia, explains that she looks for current employees who feel appreciated and encouraged from all levels of employment, whether that's the CEO, a manager or someone working in the lab.

One way a company can communicate its culture to applicants is by having current employees express the company's culture in their own words. A company can list quotes somewhere on the website, on the application or give the applicant the chance to talk directly to a current employee.

Brandan Shur, a master's student at North Carolina State University, shares that he values a company with an open-door policy.

"If someone is interested in your company, let them come behind the scenes and shadow someone, so they can really understand what your company is like and see what the workers are doing," Shur says. "This is a good way to understand a company's culture."

Technology and tools

A company that takes advantage of new technology and tools will attract the younger generation. Taylor DeLand, a second-year student at Ohio State Agricultural Technical Institute, explains that she looks for companies that have automation. "Automation definitely helps with time, especially on these hot summer days when you're running around like a chicken with your head cut off trying to water everything," DeLand says. "Booms help, and automated watering systems that can sensor. If you're running short on time, it's nice to have a boom that you can just set off and water in 10 minutes. If you're doing it by hand, it could take 40 minutes."

"I'm a really big fan of sensors that pair with your phone, and this doesn't have to be a really large infrastructure," Shur says. "It's nice to have when it's 10 at night, and if I'm head grower, I can make sure my plants are okay, whether that's temperature, lighting and see, at least environmentally, that my plants are fine. I think some small sensors go a long way."

Social media and websites

The younger generation uses social media regularly, and they often look for jobs through

platforms such as LinkedIn, Indeed, Facebook and Instagram. Armando Villa-Ignacio, a graduate student in the horticulture and landscape architecture department at Colorado State University, explains that the Meta algorithm will suggest other accounts to follow based on the accounts the user is already following and interacting with. So, even if a person isn't following your company's account, there's a chance your company's account will be suggested into the user's feed if that user already follows and interacts with accounts similar to yours.

"Honestly, some of us might still use Facebook, but most of us use Instagram," Villa-Ignacio says. "If your company posts consistently, posts great content and posts 'Hey, we're looking to hire,' you'd be surprised at the amount of people that will see that and apply." "It's like Facebook reads your mind," DeLand says. "If you

like one plant thing or company, it will give you 20.”

DeLand grew up in a small town, and from her experience it's hard to find small- to medium-sized nursery and greenhouse companies that are hiring because most companies that size are not on the internet. “It would be nice if some of those smaller and medium sized companies could get their information out on Indeed and LinkedIn because I know they're hiring. It's just too hard to find.”

Seed Your Future is another platform students are using to find jobs. Students are already going to the website to find scholarships and other programs, so companies will have good exposure targeting the next generation of employees. “I would definitely recommend that website to every company because the school systems are really trying to partner with Seed Your Future,” Shur says. “There's not a month that goes by that I don't hear about Seed Your Future. They're doing a good job visiting schools, and it's a good place to put out applications and find students.”

The students on the panel also expressed that they value meeting members of a company in person, and often after making that in-person connection, students will visit the company's website and social media channels to learn more and reach out about job openings.

“If your company visits agricultural institutes or universities and gives an hour-long lecture, there are 30-50 students that



are going to fall in love with you and really want to learn more about your company,” Shur says.

Pay transparency and benefits

Another important factor is pay transparency. Villa-Ignacio explains that most of the people in his generation will not apply



or even look at an application if the pay range isn't listed.

“When I'm looking at an application online, I like to see pay transparency,” says Hamilton Crockett, a master's student pursuing a degree in plant pathology at Louisiana State University. “Most companies and employers already have the idea of the range they're willing to pay for the position, and providing a range for that person looking at the application will not only save them time but also save the employer's time.” It's important for companies to showcase its benefits that go beyond the standard healthcare, dental, vision and 401(k). Most companies will have those standard benefits, so what does your company offer that makes it stand out from others? Crockett explains that she will most likely work in a lab, so she looks for benefits such as stand-up desks or an area to walk and stretch her legs.

Invests in their employees

Regan Draeger, a recent graduate of The Ohio State University, where she obtained her Bachelor of Science degree in sustainable plant systems with a specialization in horticulture, explains that her generation is constantly looking for a company that's going to invest in their employees, whether that's paying for them to go to conferences, educational workshops or developing a program that funds further education degrees.

“We're looking for something that shows the company is truly interested in developing us as a person,” Draeger says.

Dutch company opens cold store with

BCSK's Jean-Pierre Dekker: "High demand for professional storage in Kenya"

On Saturday, October 21, Noah and Lois Dekker officially opened Beemsterboer Coldstore Services Kenya's (BCSK) new cold store in Nairobi. That saw this Dutch family's fourth generation cut the ribbon.

Besides these new premises in Nairobi, BCS has been storing perishable goods at two sites in the Netherlands since 1955. "I've lived and worked in Kenya for more than 20 years," says Jean Pierre Dekker, who used to run a rose nursery in Kenya, among other things, and knows the local market well.

"In early 2017, at an AGM, we got the idea of investigating whether building a cold storage facility in Nairobi was a promising prospect. It was, but then, the pandemic struck, making construction very difficult. But now, after a longer-than-expected process, we're proud of the completed cold store. Having both my parents at the opening is the icing on the cake."

BCS Kenya management received a Delft-blue plate depicting Beemsterboer Coldstore Services' founder, J.P. Beemsterboer. "People like our family, staff, a few key clients, shipping company representatives, and we celebrated the occasion. After the various



BCSK shareholder Antoine Dekker inspects the stored fruits



Peter with a client



At the opening ceremony: Beemsterboer Coldstore Services Kenya's Bram (2nd generation), Lois and Noah Dekker (4th generation)



Anique Dekker

space for 4.000 pallets in Nairobi



The 3rd and 4th generation with CEO Peter Muindi looking on



BCS Kenya management received a Delft- blue plate depicting Beemsterboer Coldstore Services founder J.P Beemsterboer



Peter with Noah and Lois

speeches, my children could officially open the facility by pushing aside the Dutch and Kenyan flags, revealing text on a gold plaque,” says Jean Pierre proudly.

BCS Kenya’s new cold store in Nairobi has space for 4,000 pallets. “It’s been running for 18 months, and we’ve sorted out all the teething problems. Now, it’s full speed ahead! Building this facility ensures we reduce fresh fruits and vegetable food waste by up to 30%.”

BSCK shareholder Antoine Dekker inspects the stored fruit. The new cold store primarily holds fruit imported from across the globe. It is also a hub for Kenyan avocados exported in containers to the Netherlands and other European countries. Ice cream and meat for the local market are stored there.

“You keep pioneering in Nairobi, and if you think you’re entering a smooth-running city, you’ll never move forward. People aren’t very familiar with the idea of cold storage either. Yet, this part of Africa offers plenty of potential. Many large companies are looking for professional storage. We’ll soon see if we can roll out this concept elsewhere in East Africa,” Jean Pierre concludes.

At the opening ceremony: Beemsterboer Cold Store Services Kenya’s Bram (2nd generation), Lois, and Noah Dekker (4th generation).

Peter with Noah and Lois.

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Noah Dekker chatting with staff

Partnering to Cultivate Sustainability Across the Global Floral Industry

The American Floral Endowment Becomes Newest Member of the Floriculture Sustainability Initiative

The American Floral Endowment (AFE) has become the newest Associate Member of the Floriculture Sustainability Initiative (FSI). This partnership unites AFE, a prominent US-based floriculture funding nonprofit, with FSI, an esteemed international nonprofit with a focus on sustainability.

Through AFE's membership with FSI, this new partnership will strengthen the floriculture industry through collaboration, sharing experiences, and broadened perspectives.

"Sustainability is hugely impactful and affects floriculture globally. By joining forces, we are expanding the impact and effectiveness of both of our initiatives and programs," stated AFE's Executive Director Debi Chedester, CAE.

AFE is an autonomous organization with a clear vision supporting a strong, unified floriculture community fostering industry innovation and growth to better connect people to flowers and plants in everyday life.

Founded in 1961, the Endowment programs support and fund innovative research, educational grants, internships, and scholarships. These programs support growth and advancement for all segments of the floral industry.

The Floriculture Sustainability Initiative is a market-driven initiative that brings together members of the international floriculture sector. They share the goal of finding more sustainable solutions for farmers, their workers, and families, for the environment, and for the future of the sector.

In 2013, FSI was established as an independent international non-profit association under Belgian law. Goals for 2025 include focus on the following three pillars – responsible production & trade, responsible conduct, and integrated reporting.

Jeroen Oudheusden, FSI Executive Officer, "Collaboration is crucial in our worldwide industry. By joining forces with AFE, we can share learnings, best practice and come up with innovative solutions, ensuring that people now and in the future can enjoy flowers and plants in their daily lives and find jobs in our sector that are both exciting and meaningful."

FSI and AFE are already strategically working together to support additional sustainability education as AFE gears up to launch their highly anticipated Sustainabloom program later this year.

Sustainabloom represents a collaborative effort that brings together like-minded floral industry organizations and experts from both industry and academia, developing actionable plans, practical guides, and an array of resources tailored to all segments of the floral industry.

Jointly, AFE and FSI, are proud to announce this exciting partnership and together will invest in the future of floral, creating a stronger, more sustainable industry.



United Selections and Icon Selections Forge Commercial Partnership in Africa

In a significant development for the African flower market, two prominent names in the floral industry, United Selections, and Icon Selections, have officially solidified their partnership. The commercial collaboration aims to bring a diverse range of Chrysanthemums to Africa, ultimately benefiting growers across the continent.

United Selections, a renowned rose breeder in the global flower industry, is set to represent Icon Selections, a Chrysanthemum breeder known for its exceptional varieties (bred under 12/12 circumstances), in executing commercial activities across Africa. This alliance is set to bolster the availability of Chrysanthemums for the African growers.

Icon Selections will establish a selection-showhouse to emphasize their commitment to this partnership, showcasing their extensive collection of captivating cut Chrysanthemum varieties. In addition, a propagation area will be set up to cater to trial requests, all of which will be conveniently located at United Selections' primary facilities in Nakuru, Kenya.



The agreement was cemented with a handshake between Jan Haaksman, the Managing Director of Icon Selection, and Jelle Posthumus, the CEO of United Selections.

The official seal on this agreement was placed during the recent Profutura event held in Bogota, Colombia. The agreement was cemented with a handshake between Jan Haaksman, the Managing Director of Icon Selection, and Jelle Posthumus, the CEO of United Selections. This momentous occasion marks the beginning of a promising collaboration expected to have a far-reaching impact on the availability of a wide range of chrysanthemum varieties.

Jan Haaksman, Managing Director of Icon Selections, added, "We are excited to work with United Selections, a trusted name in the industry. Together, we will introduce a new level of diversity and innovation to the African flower market."

For more information, please visit Icon Selections or contact the respective companies directly.

*Jelle Posthumus
jposthumus@
unitedselections.com*

Jelle Posthumus, CEO of United Selections, expressed his optimism about the partnership, stating, "This collaboration allows us to expand our offering and provide our customers with access to a broader spectrum of products, in that case Chrysanthemums, meeting the ever-evolving demands of the African flower market."

Chrysanthemum varieties



“Sustainability is a journey and a prerequisite for consumer confidence”

Anne van der Wal recently took on the role of sustainability manager at the Flower Council of Holland in order to close the gap between the sector and consumers. She has noticed that many businesses already invest significantly in the sustainability of the sector. However, it appears to be difficult to effectively inform and reach consumers about these efforts. Anne wants to offer support in this regard on behalf of the Flower Council of Holland, so that consumers also learn about the sector's sustainability-related plans.

Flower Council of Holland as link between consumers and the sector

“Fortunately, the sector is very open and willing to work together, which is not only conducive to this process, but also necessary to reach consumers. Businesses also recognize the need to implement company-oriented changes in order to meet changing social expectations.

The Flower Council of Holland plays a unique role in this as a link between consumers and the sector. Our consumer campaigns and communications can explain the efforts being made by the sector when it comes to sustainability, while we can use newly obtained consumer insights to inform and support professionals in the sector,” says Anne van der Wal.

Consumer sentiment survey

To obtain these consumer insights, Van der Wal frequently conducts studies on behalf of the Flower Council of Holland. These consumer insights offer an insight into knowledge about the sustainability of the sector. A follow-up survey to the 2022 survey was carried out recently, with a distinction once again being made between flowers, house plants and outdoor plants. This was done at the request of the sector.

The topics highlighted in the follow-up survey were:

1. Packaging
2. Sustainability labels
3. The effect of flower and plant-related communication on the consumers' image of the sector



Anne van der Wal
sustainability manager
at the Flower Council of Holland

A summary of the results and specific insights obtained in each country will be available in the near future.

Roundtable sessions with professionals

Besides consumer sentiment, the sentiment of business professionals is also gauged continuously. To do so diligently, various roundtable sessions were recently organised with growers. During these sessions, discussion took place about the impact of sustainability on society and entrepreneurship.

The Flower Council of Holland wants to use these sessions to share consumer insights so that professionals are assisted with their business operations. Anne explains, “First and foremost, we want to help professionals share and understand consumer priorities, so that they can apply these findings to their own operations. As for the exact details, we are in continuous dialogue with the sector, especially growers and traders.”

International workshops

We will be organising international workshops after the summer, where the most important consumer insights will be presented to business professionals. According to Van der Wal, it is important for such knowledge-sharing and dialogue to take place continuously: “At the end of the day, sustainability is a shared journey and a prerequisite for consumer confidence.”

Driven by a will to create value

Fully aligned with our promise to make a difference, this determination is conveyed through two clearly defined axes. First, there is our commitment toward our clients to deliver value to them that makes a difference and to support them actively in their development. Then, there is our capacity to innovate, which accelerated in 1983 through our first structured Innovation, Research and Development (IR&D) efforts.



In 2023, not only are we celebrating being 100 years young, but also 40 years of ongoing IR&D efforts and investments dedicated to new products. This is one of the driving factors behind Premier Tech's sustained growth, which is also at the very origin of our business diversification which began in 1990.

— In 2023, not only are we celebrating being 100 years young, but also 40 years of ongoing IR&D efforts and investments dedicated to new products.

Without the vision of leveraging

biotechnology as a way to make our horticultural offering stand out, without the commitment toward enhancing health and safety in our plants and increasing efficiency, and without the strong determination to find new ways to use peat moss, Premier Tech would not be the leader it is today in its various business sectors.

This entrepreneurial spirit and our ambition to build — which rely on our commitment to leverage our competencies, knowledge base and assets — are the governing factors that led to our diversification over the years. This entrepreneurial spirit and our ambition to build are the governing



Creating value, which defines and drives Premier Tech's entrepreneurial spirit and ambition to build, is at the heart of our journey since our beginnings in 1923.

factors that led to our diversification over the years.

These elements, along with a systematic and rigorous strategic planning approach, worked together and fuelled our organic and external growth, making Premier Tech the multinational company it is today. That is how we now offer innovative technological solutions across five verticals.



Premiere in anniversary year: IPM ESSEN and FDF announce “Best Practice Award” for the first time

IPM ESSEN is innovative and the starting point for new things in the green industry. The world's leading trade fair for horticulture will prove this for the 40th time from January 23 to 26, 2024. Messe Essen and the German Federal Association of Florists (Fachverband deutscher Floristen e. V. - Bundesverband - FDF) are taking the anniversary year as an opportunity to announce the “Best Practice Award” for the first time. A jury of experts will evaluate products for the floricultural trade in eight categories. The winners will be selected on the basis of their high practical relevance and sales potential. The awards ceremony will take place on the first day of the trade show.

“Together with our long-standing partner, the FDF, we have the goal of strengthening the exhibition area floristry at IPM ESSEN. With the new ‘Best Practice Award’, we put the focus on sales-boosting and practice-oriented products. The retail industry will thus receive valuable orientation and the participating companies will be more visible,” explains Andrea Hölker, Project Manager of IPM ESSEN.

The “Best Practice Award” is a non-material marketing prize and is awarded in the following eight categories: Design & Trend; Price-Performance; Technology & Tools in Florist Practice; Accessories & Gifts; Deco Indoor; Deco Outdoor; Sustainability; and “The Floral Container.” During the trade fair, all participating products will be presented in one area in Hall 5. The official honouring of the award-winning companies will take place in Hall 5 on the presentation area at 5 pm on the first day of the fair.

Empowering Dreams Through Flowers in the Flower Business

The Story of Mary Waithera

By Win-Win Strategy

In the scenic countryside of a small village, Mary Waithera, a 20-year-old entrepreneur, has blossomed into a trailblazer by venturing into a business that has deep-rooted family ties. Her determination, guided by the wisdom of her grandmother, has transformed a simple flower plantation into a thriving enterprise, providing employment opportunities and hope for the future.

Mary's story begins with her grandmother, the nurturing force behind her ambitions. A seasoned flower cultivator, her grandmother's green thumb paved the way for prosperity. Witnessing the success and financial stability that came from flower farming, Mary found inspiration in the garden's beauty and the promise of economic growth. Seeing the fruits of her grandmother's labor, she realized that the toil of working the land was always rewarded, and this instilled in her a sense of purpose.

While still in school, she would often leave early to assist in the flower harvests, recognizing the lucrative potential of the endeavor. Her dreams took shape, and upon completing her education in 2021, she saved diligently from her job at a road construction site to make her vision a reality. In June of the same year, Mary embarked on her entrepreneurial journey, diving headfirst into flower farming. With her grandmother's guidance, the duo prepared the land for planting, working tirelessly for two weeks to ready the soil. Although initially inexperienced, Mary was determined to make her mark in the industry.

The turning point came when Wilmar, a flower distribution company, entered their village. Intrigued by a new flower species her grandmother had planted, Mary sought to explore the possibilities further. Connecting with Wilmar opened new doors, granting her access to valuable knowledge and resources. As with



any venture, challenges presented themselves.

The foremost hurdle was securing adequate capital to start the business. Additionally, climate change emerged as a pressing issue, as the flowers Mary cultivated required significant water, making dry seasons particularly problematic. Rising living costs and the steady price of flowers, fixed since her grandmother's time at KES 10, further added to the challenges.

However, Mary's passion for her work remained unyielding. She found immense joy in witnessing the fruits of her labor each day, knowing that

she was earning a livelihood without the need to borrow money. Additionally, flower farming kept her busy, a stark contrast to the idleness that plagues many youths in her community.

Looking toward the future, Mary envisions expanding her flower business on a grand scale, empowering her to offer employment opportunities to others. Her aspirations are deeply rooted in her desire to bring prosperity and growth to her community. With her grandmother's legacy guiding her every step, Mary is determined to create a flourishing enterprise that not only nurtures the land but also the dreams of those around her.

Courtesy : women.org /win-win strategies

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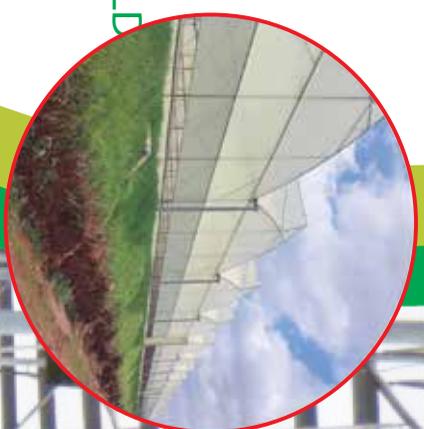
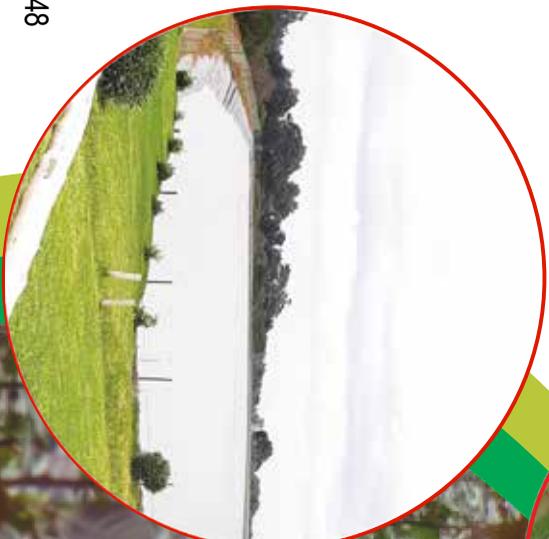
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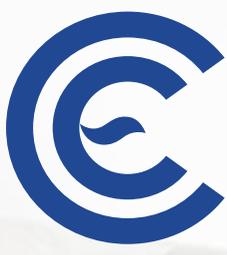
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