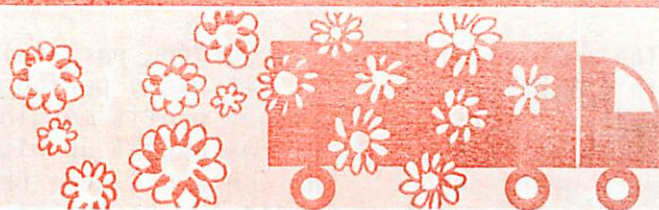


Flower Growing & Marketing



November 1984

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Survey of Industry

Attached to this newsletter is a separate page entitled, "Survey Of Industry." If you are a grower (flowers or potted plants) please, please, PLEASE take the time to jot something on the survey sheet (it won't take more than five minutes, unless you're confused) and put the sheet in an envelope and mail it to:

Seward T. Besemer
Farm Advisor Office
Bldg. 4, 5555 Overland Ave.
San Diego, CA 92123

The reason for this survey is to get an updated idea of what your problems and the industry's problems are so that we in Cooperative Extension can plan effective educational and research programs for your maximum benefit. Thanks for cooperating.

Los Angeles Flower Market Tour

Your San Diego County Flower Association, Education and Research Committee, has organized a tour to visit the Los Angeles Flower Market. The date is Wednesday, December 5.

A bus will leave from Thornton-Blue Pacific, 364 Second St., Encinitas (park your car way down the street) at 0400 (4 a.m.). Get tickets at \$25.00 per person from Marilu at 753-5727. The Los Angeles Flower Market is interesting to visit. Our tour includes both sides of the street and discussions with several wholesalers. Be there!

The European Floral Market Situation

I visited Holland October 1-3, 1984. I re-visited the flower auction at Aalsmeer (VBA) and also at Rijnsburg (FLORA). I talked with the auction directors and also several researchers in the research station at Aalsmeer.

The general situation in Europe, particularly Holland, has been similar to the U.S.A. in the past five years. It was a period of many changes and adjustments in the industry. Very slim or minus profit margins were commonplace among glasshouse growers. Increase in production area caught up with a leveling demand. Items such as gerberas were overproduced. The consumers were being squeezed a bit by inflation of their currencies and wage holdings. Prices of many floral items in the auctions were lower, but now prices are beginning to firm up again as production is adjusting to demand. The local Dutch market did increase about eight percent the past year.

The current Dutch philosophy is that the local European market is "filled up" at the moment for floral items. It will never be neglected. But the Dutch are working intensely on the export market, especially on the affluent countries such as the U.S.A., Japan, Great Britain and some of the oil producers in the Arabia peninsula.

While Dutch glasshouse area remains stable, overall production is increasing due to improved efficiencies. Cut flowers and foliage plants are in a stable situation with no increases in demand. Blooming pot plants have a strong demand. Cacti and succulents are experiencing no growth in demand or perhaps a slight decline. Many traditional outdoor landscape plants, particularly conifers, are now being used as indoor houseplants.

The Aalsmeer auction continues to do about 40 percent of the total sales of the 12 floral auctions in Holland, with the Westland Auction a very close second in sales (832 million Dutch guilders and 757 million respectively). Each of the auctions, as well as number three (FLORA at Rijnsburg) is expanding in area and modernizing rapidly.

The ten leading cut flowers and ten leading pot plants at the Dutch auctions and their sales in millions of guilders are as follows:

<u>Cut Flowers</u>			<u>Pot Plants</u>		
	<u>1982</u>	<u>1983</u>		<u>1982</u>	<u>1983</u>
1. Rose	421	452	Begonia	28	29
2. Chrysanthemum	308	338	Ficus	24	26
3. Carnation	222	231	Bromeliads	23	25
4. Tulip	141	155	Dracaena	18	24
5. Gerbera	128	139	Azalea	21	22
6. Freesia	127	135	Saintpaulia	19	20
7. Lily	104	113	Yucca	19	20
8. Cymbidium	61	76	Poinsettia	19	20
9. Gypsophila	49	57	Dieffenbachia	17	18
10. Iris	45	47	Cyclamen	16	16

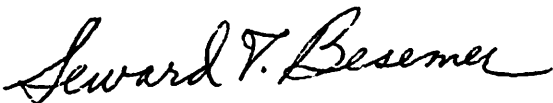
The emphasis in Holland today is on higher productivity per unit. How are the Dutch doing it?

- 1) Roller benches are used widely for pot plants. These increase production by 25 to 30 percent.
- 2) Better varieties. Goals are for varieties that produce more at cool temperatures and low winter light. I saw carnation breeding toward plants with all basic foliage at the grown level with tall stems coming all from the bottom requiring only one layer of support mesh as with chrysanthemums. This can also be labor saving.

- 3) Better climate control which means better thermostats, better placement of thermostats, use of computers to control all energy and climate factors for better plant growth and quality.
- 4) Faster rotation of crops includes a variety of factors such as climate control, better varieties, use of plugs, uniformity, mechanical harvest, etc.
- 5) Better disease and pest control reducing losses, improving quality, use of pulse fogs, sterile substrates (such as rockwool), etc.
- 6) Better water. Many growers are desalinizing their irrigation water, recycling and using reservoirs extensively to save rainwater for irrigation or blending.
- 7) Post harvest research has been expanded rapidly, not only on cut flowers but all pot plants as well.
- 8) Economic research is also done to compare prices and demand and to maximize growers profits.

These are all things we should be doing to a higher degree in the U.S.A. The floral industry had a chance with FLORABOARD to collect more funds and have a better organized effort to get these kinds of research accomplished. What a shame that the American growers can't get organized!

Sincerely,



Seward T. Besemer
Farm Advisor

STB:GP

P.S. Don't forget the survey attached!!