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for worldwide floriculture

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FloraHolland Trade Fair Guide

2013



FloraCulture International is proud to present a twelve page supplement on the forthcoming FloraHolland Trade Fair, which will be held at FloraHolland Aalsmeer, the Netherlands from November 6 to 8. We have produced a supplement themed on stand-out brands, market developments, breeding breakthroughs, young plant production and new product launches. In an environment that is an blend of business and business friendships, the FloraHolland Trade Fair is much more than simply a buying opportunity.

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Colofon

'Concordia res parvae crescunt'



Hedd Alwyn Hughes

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From the editor

by Ron van der Ploeg

Now that autumn has arrived in the Northern Hemisphere, the new European trade show season has got off to a relatively good start with Plantarium, Flowers IPM Moscow, Green is Life, the Four Oaks trade show, FlowersExpo Russia, Flormart and Glee being held at the end of August and the beginning of September.

Having attended a fair number of horticultural trade exhibitions so far this year, I have noticed that attendance varies from 'down' to 'flat'. Except, of course, the German IPM Essen, which was still able to attract 60,000 visitors this year.

I spent quite a while walking up and down the aisles, speaking to exhibitors and visitors. Some of them complained about the exhibitions being 'unchanged', smaller and less attended than in previous years, but overall they were satisfied with the quality of the show traffic and the opportunity to meet customers face-to-face and to write orders. Another opportunity, one which is often overlooked by exhibitors, is the best-of-show award offered at many trade shows.

Not so Rosa Eskelund from the Danish rose breeding company Roses Forever, who took full advantage of the Plantarium trade show and leveraged the Gold Medal win for one of her garden roses into good public relations and media coverage. A few weeks later, Ms Eskelund was beaming again as she made her way to the stage at the Flormart show in Italy. Striking her usual 'thumbs up' pose, she happily accepted yet another coveted European accolade. In an interview, however, she explains that medals, awards and top accolades can be a valuable addition to a company's marketing arsenal, but they are not a replacement for quality work. Page 12.

Speaking of interviews, this month's issue includes a revealing interview with departing FloraHolland CEO Timo Huges. Huges sat down with Jaap Kras, the publisher of FloraCulture International, for a series of talks in August. Huges spoke about the most important thing he was able to accomplish during his time as CEO. He talked about his vision for the flower auction and the fruits of the merger between Bloemenveiling Aalsmeer and FloraHolland that was accomplished on January 1st, 2008. Page 16.

Meanwhile, our own correspondent from Poland, Alicja Cecot had the pleasure to talk to Ushio Sakazaki, a modest breeder from Japan, to whom we owe the Surfinia series and whose passion for plants resulted in many other innovative varieties of ornamental plants. Page 36.

Plenty of innovative new plant varieties could also be found at Warsaw's Green is Life show, which was held from August 30th to September 1st, 2013. The three-day event offered visitors everything they need to grow their nursery stock business. Ideally located at the crossroads between the East and the West, this year's show attracted 16,000 visitors and 250 exhibitors from eleven countries. Page 44.



Ron van der Ploeg, editor
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Miniature roses

Dutch-based BM Roses is taking up the fight against the flooding of Dutch markets with low-cost cut roses from Africa and South America. They chose to diversify into potted miniature roses and have found a secret weapon to seduce consumers across Europe in the creations of Danish rose breeder, Roses Forever.

by Ron van der Ploeg

How to generate maximum profits from mini roses

In a large hall, with plenty of natural daylight, a group of mainly Polish workers keep the stream going. Standing at a conveyor belt, they carefully prepare hundreds of strikingly uniform pot roses. They do the quality check, pack and load the plants onto Danish trolleys. This is being done in Holland's tiny little town of Maasland, but BM's co-owner, Ad van Marrewijk explained that today's run is sold

through the auction to be shipped to supermarkets, garden centres and wholesalers across Europe.

Rose connoisseur

55-year old Ad van Marrewijk is relatively new to pot plant production but knows the cut flower business, especially cut roses, inside out. "We have been in the horticultural business since 1953 and our family's business origins are in growing a wide range of fruit and vegetables, intended for consumption on the domestic market."

The first company was started by Ad's father, Bram, rose connoisseur and legendary chairman of FloraHolland (formerly known as Bloemenveling Holland), who died in November 1997, aged 67. Like father like son, second generation Ad van Marrewijk also served on FloraHolland's board of directors from 1994 to 2008. And with the same low, but steady voice his father had, Ad carefully chooses his words to explain that his father swapped growing vegetables for cut roses in 1969. "We started with Baccara roses and now, many years, later I can still clearly recall Baccara's long stems, thick thorns and bull heads. Later, 'Sonia', 'Madelon', 'Mercedes' and 'Bianca' also made their entrance into the greenhouse."

Dramatic consequences

When he joined his father's cut rose business in 1980, Ad was pretty convinced he would do this job for the rest of his life. But things turned out differently than expected. "My job as secretary treasurer at FloraHolland involved some international travel. In Africa,

I first spotted only the small-headed roses, the so-called sweetheart roses. Africa's focus on one single market segment was quite reassuring for Dutch rose growers as it gave them the space to grow the large-headed roses. By 2003/2004, however, I saw the first large-headed roses in Africa and was immediately aware of the dramatic consequences this would have for Dutch rose growing. After considering everything very thoroughly, I finally decided to stop growing cut roses. A tough decision, not one made rashly on Sunday afternoon."

The next question was: what to grow now? Ad, "I had always been attracted to growing pot plants. In this area, however, you find soft clay soil, which is a very poor and weak subsoil unsuited for growing on concrete ebb and flood floors. So I had to narrow down my ideas and decided to grow small flowering pot plants on a rolling bench system and opted for growing mini roses in 10.5 and 12cm pots (Ad prefers a soil mix of peat perlite and cocos, a pH of 5.5 and EC reading of 2) and available in a mix of seven colours)."

Greenhouse environment

When asked about what he needed in the way of greenhouses and greenhouse environment to grow quality miniature roses, Ad said that he had to move the central pathway to the side as well as installing new lights and energy curtains. "In 2011, we added a 20,000m² greenhouse complex to the existing 30,000m² greenhouse. All together, the company consists of 5 ha of Venlo-type greenhouses



55-year old Ad van Marrewijk is relatively new to pot plant production but knows the cut flower business, especially cut roses, inside out.



BM Roses grow a strikingly uniform product.

which are 200m wide and 250m long and 5m to the gutter. Modern computer controls, under bench heating to maintain a temperature between 20°C to 23°C day and night in the propagation and growing areas. CO₂ fertilisation, captured from the CHP engine and partly sourced from Shell's OCAP (Organic Carbon dioxide for the Assimilation of Plants) plant in the port of Rotterdam, provides the perfect greenhouse climate. Ad agrees that the light is key in growing high-quality produce. "Light is fundamental in both cut and potted rose growing. Our High Pressure Sodium lamps provide the optimal light level for photosynthesis which lies around 10,000 lux."

Differences

The growing of cut roses and miniature pot roses share many characteristics, but what are the differences? "Less foliage means that pests and diseases can more easily be controlled. This is in contrast with cut roses, where you have to spray while achieving a maximum deposition on the whole plant. Additionally, you can have problems with soil-borne diseases

spreading gradually over the entire company. On a rolling bench system, you can treat the plants much more individually."

The bench system offers an extra benefit as the plants are automatically transported to the packing area to be prepared for shipping. Bench production is obviously easier on the back than bending down to work on the floor. "Practically all the work on crops is done in the packing area", says Ad. "In fact", he adds, "most of our employees seem to actually prefer working in the cooler and shaded packing area to working in an often hot greenhouse environment."

In potted roses, the workload can also be spread more evenly, although Ad still works on Sundays. "Daily checking of the crop is particularly important to avoid flowers being too open when harvested. On Sundays, we pick out the plants that have reached the right stage of development. Overall, the workload over the weekend is much lower than in the olden days where you had to harvest the cut roses bay by bay. Another difference is that with pot roses you have much more access to direct contact with and

feedback from your customers than with cut roses."

Crop cycle

Miniature rose growing consist of five steps. Phase one is propagating by stem cuttings. The bottom of the stem is dipped in hormone rooting powder. After that, four and five cuttings are placed into a 10.5cm and a 12cm pot respectively. For



At BM Roses, the growing of miniature roses is a highly automated business.



Miniature roses

best rooting of the pre cooled cuttings, Ad covers the newly stuck roses with a plastic sheet punched in combination with an acrylic sheet covering. Particular attention should be given to closing the shade curtains in case of intensive sunlight.

Ad continued, "The second phase starts after 14 days when the plastic can be removed and the plants are put into the growing area with full light and temperatures between 20°C and 23°C day and night." Between three to four weeks after sticking, the plants are ready for step three, the first pruning, carried out by an automatic pruning shear. "At this stage, plants are 15cm to 20cm tall and are dramatically cut back to 3-4cm. Shearing will encourage the development of many uniformly blooming flowers and a compact plant habit for the finished pot. Shearing also creates the cutting material for the next generation. "Most of the time, one table produces enough cuttings to fill one bench with saleable prod-



Roses in 12cm pot.



In a large hall, with plenty of natural daylight, a group of mainly Polish workers keep the stream going.

ucts. Shearing is a critical phase, as cuttings need to be carefully sorted by colour, and then watered, packed and cooled. It's one of our best precision workers who is entrusted with this job."

Mini roses in 10.5cm pots are pruned twice while the 12cm specimens are only cut once.

"The 10.5cm pots tend to stretch and the first cut doesn't produce enough cuttings", outlined Ad. Step four involves spacing of the plants which is key to quality. "The 10.5cm pots are spaced once, the 12cm pots twice, with their final spacing being completed four weeks before harvesting. It reduces the risk of yellow leaves at the lower part of the plant. Phase five marks the final harvest and shipping stage."

Roses Forever

A good start is only half the work and that's exactly why BM Roses decide to choose the top quality roses from a Danish breeder.

Ad predicts a rosy future together with the Danes. "We started working together in 2011, when company owner, Rosa Eskelund was

able to grant us the exclusive rights to grow seven of their large-headed varieties in 12cm pots."

Ever since Van Marrewijk tested the Roses Forever varieties, he was blown away by their extremely large flower buds, their bushy, but uniform growth habit and bold colours. Varieties such as 'El Paso', 'Maasland' and 'Estoril' are far superior mini roses and allow BM Roses to differentiate themselves in the marketplace. According to Ad, this is not just a blasé pep talk by the CEO. "What Rosa Eskelund says is true. The white 'Snowball' variety was presented with the Gold Award at the Lottum Rose Festival. It brought us five minutes of fame, increased credibility and contributed greatly towards helping to promote the mini rose business as a whole. Being awarded the Gold Award by an independent jury is proof that we are going to be here tomorrow."

No success without an outstanding variety. "Over the last eight years, Roses Forever have made huge progress", stressed Ad. He added, "Their range of mini roses now include very vibrant colours

with an excellent shelf life. Some varieties tend to stretch somewhat more than others and you'll always have to apply PGRs. But this goes for all mini rose varieties. So far, I have never spotted a mini rose that didn't need PGRs. Naturally compact growing pot roses are therefore one of the top priorities of mini rose breeders."

Rose breeding in her genes

Working with Rosa is a real pleasure. "Judging by her temperament, Rosa is probably more Italian than Danish", Ad joked. He continued, "All joking aside, I reckon Dutch and Danish entrepreneurs are similar in many ways. We are both precise and attach great importance to reliable relationships. As for Rosa, she definitely has rose breeding in her genes, she can't say five words without mentioning roses. I always look forward to my annual visit to her company in Sabro where she produces finished plants for the Scandinavian market. There is some friendly competition but we don't encroach on each other's territory.

Rosa has her own specific customers in Scandinavia and Northern Germany while our company sells through the auction to floral wholesalers who export across Europe. Rosa also organises business trips to meet fellow growers. In Norway, for example, we were offered a behind-the-scenes look at a company growing mini roses. It is always nice to exchange ideas and growing tips."

Beau Monde brand

When BM Roses started growing mini roses in 2007, it launched its own Beau Monde brand.

"The company is co-owned by my business partner, Patrick Barendse.

The first letter of our family name make BM which is also the abbreviation of our Beau Monde brand. Its ultimate goal is to increase sales and income. Being relative newcomers at the auction's pot plant clock we want to attract new buyers to our products and encourage repeat purchases." III



All miniature roses are packed in Beau Monde sleeves that deliver superior brand recognition.

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

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Miniature roses

Roses Forever is one of Europe's emerging top licensors in roses representing the renowned Roses Forever (mini roses), Infinity (mini roses), Plant'n'Relax (garden roses) and Roses Forever Bouquet (cut roses) brands.

Rosa Eskelund has a passion for roses

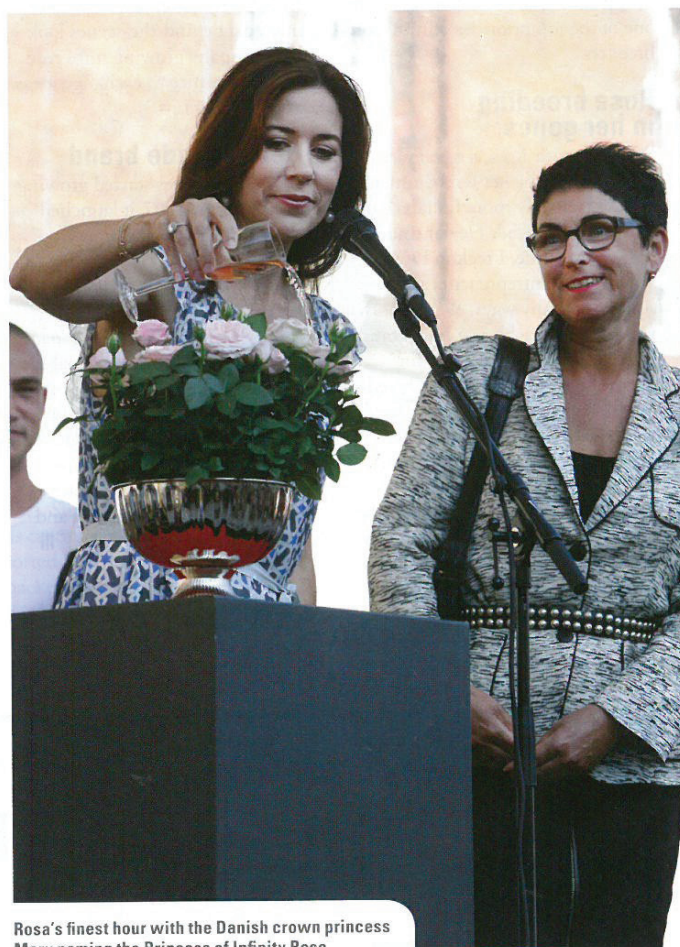
Rosa Eskelund is beaming as she and her husband Harley make their way to the stage at the Flormart show in Italy where the 2013 Oroflor and Flormagazine Awards were handed out. Striking her usual thumbs up pose, she happily accepts yet another coveted European accolade.

Sabro

Danish rose breeder and supplier Roses Forever is run by husband and wife team, Harley and Rosa Eskelund who founded the company in Sabro, near Aarhus in 1988. Rosa Eskelund, "We have grown mini roses for many years and in the beginning had some difficulties to obtain the newest varieties due to existing licensing agreements between breeders and growers. So we decided to breed our own varieties. Naturally, my passion for roses was also one of the key elements to start my own breeding division. My name is Rosa and I live up to the name I was given. I've always wanted to be a rose professional, and can't imagine being anything else."

Tried and tested

Today, Sabro-based Rosa ApS has a weekly output of 130,000 finished pots from early Spring to September



Rosa's finest hour with the Danish crown princess Mary naming the Princess of Infinity Rose.

by Ron van der Ploeg



Plant'n'Relax - labels in a modern look

and is, next to breeding, a vital part of Roses Forever's activities. "Being one of Europe's leading mini rose producers, we understand the product inside out and my husband Harley and son Anders travel a lot to provide valuable crop support. Customers are offered a grower's manual and training can be tailored as an in-house programme at our own nursery to address the specific issues of miniature pot rose grow-

ing. Sabro is also the place where Roses Forever thoroughly tests all new varieties before they go on the market", said Rosa.

Bumper years

The company has had two bumper years at trade shows, rose festivals and competitions across Europe. "We've done better than ever in 2012 and 2013", Rosa Eskelund said proudly. She continued, "We're



Commenting on her passion for roses, Rosa Eskelund said, "I've always wanted to be a rose professional, and can't imagine being anything else."

thrilled, delighted and grateful to have had such a positive response from the industry. Awards such as this prove we are on the right track and we use them to promote our business in different ways. We send out press releases to the national and international press, include the news of the award in our newsletters and use the award logo in our catalogue."

The 'Our Last Summer' rose from the extensive line of Plant 'n' Relax garden roses won a gold medal at the nursery stock trade fair, Plantarium in Boskoop, the Netherlands and at Italy's leading horticultural trade exhibition Flormart in Padova, Italy. Danish actress, Ghita Norby named the same rose after an Abba song in late July. At the 2012 IPM Essen show, the virgin white Infinity rose and the Edible Roses brand were awarded the Gold Medal for the Best Indoor Plant and Best Marketing Concept respectively.

In fact, their success has been so notable that the Danish crown princess Mary, named one of the company's latest breeding breakthroughs, the soft pink 'Princess of Infinity' at the opening of Denmark's Odense Flower Festival on 15 August 2012. At this year's Rose Festival in Lottum, the Netherlands, the Dutch rose grower, Ad van

Marrewijk took home a gold medal for the white 'Snowball' variety, also a creation of Roses Forever.

Quality work

Medals, awards, top accolades and honourable mentions can be a valuable addition to a company's marketing arsenal, but Rosa Eskelund stressed that they are not a replacement for quality work.

"The idea is to deliver superior quality and mind-blowing beauty. We want to deliver that not just to growers and the retail shelves but to the consumer's home. Our Infinity mini rose for example really stands out as an extremely saleable crop with a good shelf life. With its extremely large flowers it has the 'wow' factor and within a garden centre it will immediately catch the eye of the gardening public."

Eskelund said that strong colours, fragrance, bud size, overall looks and suitability for various pot sizes are important criteria to double check during the breeding process. She added, "Garden roses and miniature pot roses share many characteristics, however, the breeding focus is different. In terms of petals, garden roses should be self-cleaning, while the ultimate miniature pot rose has a uniform growth

What growers say about Roses Forever

"I think Roses Forever have an excellent taste when it comes to rose breeding. Colours, shape, size, everything seems to fit perfectly."

Makoto Onishi, grower of mini roses in Japan

"In terms of production, Rosa's roses bear masses of flowers and produce extremely large flowers that really make a difference. We continue to receive great feedback from the market."

Erik Rosnes, Finstad Produksjon, grower of mini roses in Norway



Miniature roses

habit and only sheds its petals after a very long time. Furthermore, mini roses should be suited for high density production in an automated greenhouse environment."

Meanwhile, Roses Forever is gaining momentum due to a growing international customer base. "In Japan, for example, growers, retailers and

consumers are fond of the Infinity rose. They especially love the story behind the rose and the crown princess being the patroness. In Norway and the Netherlands, we pride ourselves on having our roses grown by the countries best growers. Speaking about growers, at this year's Plantarium we met a cut rose grower from South America, who

was interested in adding varieties of our Roses Forever Bouquet line to his product range. Following years of hundred thousand of crossing I have now a beautiful line of cut roses including spray roses, tea hybrids, intermediate roses, classic roses and trendy varieties. And there are still waiting plenty of new introductions down the pipeline." III

Top Quality roses

Roses Forever has created a unique range of value and quality roses that surprises the highest of standards.

Roses Forever

- Mini roses on own roots
- Strong colours
- Large flowers
- Series suited for different pot sizes, ranging from 6 -29cm pots
- Suitable for both short crop cycles (9-12 weeks) and longer crop cycles (26 weeks).

Infinity Rose

- New extravagant line
- Mini roses on own roots
- Extra-large flowers
- Extra-long shelf life
- Suitable for a wide range of pot sizes

Plant 'n'Relax

- Revolutionary new line of garden roses
- For budding
- Ideal for container production
- Exclusive marketing materials including logos, banners and labels.
- A number of varieties are also suited for growing on own roots.

Roses Forever Bouquet

- Cut roses
- Including varieties with Bourbon-shaped flowers
- Spectacular flower shapes
- Vivid colours
- Excellent vase life



Roses Forever



Princess of Infinity



Roses Forever Bouquet