

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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Syngenta Buys Floranova

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Explaining that it will serve to enhance their presence in emerging markets, Syngenta Flowers has announced that it's buying UK flower breeder Floranova, a respected flower and home garden vegetable seed breeder with a broad portfolio and customers in more than 50 countries.

Floranova, based in Foxley, Norfolk, England, about 130 miles northeast of London, will continue to operate as an independent company.

Michael Kester, Head of Flowers, Syngenta, said in a press release that "Floranova's complementary seeds cover some important gaps in Syngenta's portfolio and brings flower seed crops like pelargonium, petunia, begonia and a distinctive product line of patio vegetables." (The deal includes Floranova's Vegetalis vegetable seed division.)

Founded in 1978 by breeder Mike Hough, and for a while owned by Lord Sainsbury of the Sainsbury's supermarket chain, Floranova's broad portfolio and international presence will be important in fast-growing markets, such as China and India, says the release. In 2017, Floranova generated high single digit million USD sales with a broad customer base ranging from the U.S. and Europe to the Middle East and Asia.

"Our intent is to maintain and leverage the Floranova brand in a dual brand concept," Michael says. "Both Syngenta and Floranova will continue to operate as independent companies, with their own distribution and differentiated portfolio. This provides exciting new opportunities to strengthen our overall presence in the global flowers market," he added.

Jeff Colegrave, the outgoing Chairman of Floranova, has owned the business since 2005. His father, David, started Colegrave Seeds in 1962. Jeff took over Colegrave after David's death in 1992. He sold the business to Ball Horticultural Company in 2001.

Said Jeff of the sale, "I am proud of the achievements of Floranova during the period of my ownership; there has been exciting development and growth, particularly in the Asian markets. The acquisition of Floranova by Syngenta is excellent news for all stakeholders and will mean Floranova will be stronger and better placed to face the challenges in a highly competitive marketplace." **GT**