

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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Griffin Buys Syngenta Horticultural Services

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It had been rumored for months, but now it's official: Griffin Greenhouse Supplies has bought Syngenta Horticultural Services (SHS). Based in Lisle, Illinois, SHS is the seed and plant distributor and broker division of Syngenta Lawn & Garden, which of course is a division of Syngenta AG of Basel, Switzerland.

Headquartered in Tewksbury, Massachusetts, Griffin is a leading provider of greenhouse and nursery supplies in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic.

Financial terms of the transaction were not disclosed, but Syngenta reports that SHS's sales were \$96 million in 2011.

According to the press release, "Griffin acquired the SHS business, including distribution and brokerage capabilities and assets affiliated with the Lisle, Illinois, headquarters and Downers Grove, Illinois, facility. The majority of employees based at both locations transferred to Griffin at closing. In addition, Griffin signed a long-term agreement to distribute and broker Syngenta Flowers genetics throughout the United States."

The transaction was signed November 13.

Syngenta executive Keelan Pulliam, a 33-veteran of the chemical industry, will join Griffin to take the helm of the distribution division. His title: Director of Green Goods. *GrowerTalks* spoke with David Morin, Senior Vice President of Marketing for Griffin about Keelan's role.

"He is really going to focus on integrating the two businesses into one operating unit," David said. In August, we reported that Keelan was planning on retiring from Syngenta at the end of 2012.

Griffin already sells green goods, and as implied above, they plan to somehow integrate the two businesses. David says they're in the process of analyzing how they'll do that. But the two will remain separate. "We're going to have a hardgoods and a green goods division, I guess you could say," he says. "We're really excited about this acquisition. We feel it's going to be good for our green goods business and also SHS's green goods business going forward. Our intention is to provide a better value for our customers."

Over the years, you've known it as Vaughan's Seed Company, then Novartis and now Syngenta Horticultural Services. The new name? It will be simply SHS, said David.

This is the second division sale by Syngenta in the past six months; in June they sold growing media division Conrad Fafard to competitor Sun Gro. **GT**