

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

4/25/2013

Horti Fair 2013 Cancelled, IFTF Launches IHTF

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GrowerTalks received word that Horti Fair, the Dutch flower and technology trade show that takes place every fall in Amsterdam, has been cancelled for this year. The reason given in the press release was “financial and operational objections” that made a 2013 event “impossible to realize.”

Horti Fair made the news in December when organizers announced a move from Amsterdam’s RAI exhibition center to the FloraHolland auction building in nearby Aalsmeer. Horti Fair’s size and attendance had dwindled considerably since its heydays of early 2000, leaving it too small to effectively utilize the massive and expensive RAI, hence the move.

FloraHolland has been holding its own event, the FloraHolland Trade Fair, at the same time as Horti Fair for quite a few years. It features local growers and some breeders, and attracts a large number of Horti Fair attendees without conflicting with Horti Fair.

The press release explained that, while initial reaction to Horti Fair’s move to FloraHolland was positive, the fact that the technical displays of Horti Fair would have to be accommodated at an “external location” (the same location as IFTF, the International Floriculture Trade Fair, according to a Dutch trade magazine), met with criticism.

“All in all, this made the Horti Fair management decide against the idea of the international trade fair taking place at the Flora Holland site in Aalsmeer,” said the release.

Jaap Kras, friend of *GrowerTalks* and publisher of sister magazine *FloraCulture International*, has been serving on a working group with representatives of Horti Fair, FloraHolland and IFTF. The goal was to find a way to bring all three events under one roof, at one time, for the good of all. He and the Auction and IFTF reps felt they were on track to do that, which is why they viewed the sudden cancellation as an “unexpected, dramatic decision.”

IFTF was launched in Holland in 2010 in response to dissatisfied Horti Fair flower exhibitors. It’s run by HPP Exhibitions, which is owned by Dick van Raamsdonk.

Knowing all those greenhouse and equipment exhibitors from Horti Fair no longer had a place to exhibit their wares, he opened up an unused half of his exhibition area to them and is calling the new event IHTF—International Horticulture Trade Fair.

Both shows will take place on the fairgrounds of Expo Haarlemmermeer in Vijfhuizen, the Netherlands, just a quick ride from Aalsmeer and the annual FloraHolland Trade Fair. IFTF and IHTF will run Wednesday through Friday, November 6-8.

“This is an important step into the direction of one big trade fair in Holland for Horticulture, lifting the industry to its next level by growing towards a World Horticultural Trade Fair,” said Dick in a press release. “Many in the industry have been wanting to bring the different trade fairs together at one location for some time. This opportunity is an excellent chance to achieve that goal.”

And as for 2014 and beyond, the Horti Fair organizers say only that, “The Horti Fair will be considering how its objective can still be met successfully, which is and will remain unchanged: strengthening and extending the Dutch and international position of the horticultural sector.”

However, those in the know in Holland believe Horti Fair is over. **GT**