

# GROWERTALKS

## GT in Brief

5/29/2014

## Color Point to Buy Mid-American Growers

*Chris Beytes*

Color Point LLC of Paris, Kentucky, is planning to take over Mid-American Growers of Granville, Illinois. What's interesting is that both are VanWingerden operations: Color Point is owned by Art and Ken VanWingerden, the younger brothers of Nick VanWingerden, owner of Mid-American. (Note: The last names are spelled as one word, as they prefer.)

*GrowerTalks* reached out to Art and Ken for comment, but due to a confidentiality agreement they were only able to provide the following official statement:

Color Point and Mid-American Growers have signed a letter of intent for Color Point to purchase Mid-American Growers. The familial ties between the owners of Color Point and Mid-American Growers made it possible for Color Point to step in and assist Mid-American during a time of significant change in the industry, which has impacted the company. Color Point has taken over the day-to-day management of Mid-American Growers, and merging of the two organizations will start with the closing of the purchase, to be completed as soon as possible.

We do know that the two businesses have been closely tied in recent years (beyond blood relations, that is), with Mid-American doing a fair bit of contract growing for Color Point. Proximity-wise, they are just over 400 miles apart, giving them a considerable swath of reach across the Ohio Valley and Midwest.

There's a lot of history at Mid-American Growers. Founded in 1971 as Van Wingerden Inc., it was one of the first greenhouses built by family patriarch Aart Van Wingerden after he arrived from Holland. As was to become his practice, he sold it to two of his sons, Nick and Arie, and moved on to build another operation. In 1978, Arie sold his shares to Nick and moved to Pennsylvania, where he built his own greenhouse range and eventually launched Cherry Creek Systems (now based in Colorado).

Art and Ken, owners of Color Point and the youngest of Aart and Cora Van Wingerden's 16 children, operated Floral Plant Growers in Maryland and Delaware before selling the business to investors in 1996. For a short time they were involved in the greenhouse industry in New Zealand, even while opening a new greenhouse operation in Kentucky, Color Point, before settling back here to focus on that business. **GT**