

# GROWERTALKS

## GT in Brief

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## Summit Plastic's Norm Belliveau Retiring

*Jennifer Zurko*



Norman Belliveau, President and CEO of Summit Plastic Company and JānorPot, LLC, has retired from Summit Plastic Company after 25 years with the Tallmadge-based manufacturing company.

“Funny, I still remember that first day in '90 when I walked into the building. What an incredible, amazing journey it's been. Going to miss all the interactions, being involved and hands-on. I wish the very best for the company, and for the people who have become a big part of my extended family,” said Norm.

Chuck Snyder, with 20 years at Summit as Vice-President Operations, continues with the company, assuming the responsibilities of Vice-President/General Manager of the newly created Greenhouse Division—Summit/JānorPot, effective January 1, 2016. This change is part of the “Nicely Blended” initiative with Nursery Supplies. Summit Plastic Company, JānorPot, LLC and Nursery Supplies, Inc. are now under the New NSI Holdings, Inc. umbrella led by John Collins, President/CEO, located in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania.

*Pictured: Norm and Deb Belliveau*

Norm got his first plastic industry job at Foster-Grant Company in Massachusetts in 1967, the same year “The Graduate”—a Dustin Hoffman classic—was released. Citing a famous line from the movie, Norm says he got hooked on plastic when he heard, “Plastic, my boy!”

Prior to joining Summit in the spring of 1990, his then 23-year career with Foster-Grant/Sandusky Plastics Company covered finance, material management, national sales positions and product manager for horticulture containers. Work experience varied, from very large, internationally owned companies at corporate offices to positions on-site at the plant level.

The Vaughan Seed Company owned Summit Plastic at the time. Norm's background fit perfectly with the needs of the company as described by John Vaughan, president of the parent company. The hiring of Norm, already known to the industry, served to assure growers of Vaughan's commitment to re-focus on improvements to the container manufacturer.

Rather than mergers, the 1990s introduced "de-mergers"—making stand-alone companies by separating divisions. During this period, Norm, along with plant manager and soon-to-be partner Chuck Snyder, purchased Summit Plastic Company, beginning a new era.

Taking up the new challenges under Norm's stewardship, Summit introduced an impressive list of new product concepts to the horticultural market: Full-line Duo-color offerings, Size-Wise options to maximize space, MarketMates for multiple plant retail sales, RootTutors for improved root development, round thin-walled containers (JānorPot), pictorial printing on round pots and, most recently, the 3D line of products.

In 1999, at the then OFA Short Course, Norm met with two representatives of the Desch Company, a manufacturer in The Netherlands of round, thin-walled containers. A sales agreement was drawn up and instant success led to a joint venture, JānorPot, a named created from the first names of the presidents of the two companies, Jan van der Vliet and Norm Belliveau.

Now well known, the introduction of JānorPot, LLC as the manufacturer and marketer of a comprehensive line of thin-walled thermoformed containers, in partnership with Desch, created a strong, international alliance for sharing and exchanging market, technology and product science. **GT**