

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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Canadian Orchid Grower Gets MPS-ABC Certificate

Chris Beytes

And not just any MPS-ABC certificate, but the first one issued to a Canadian orchid grower! That distinction goes to CosMic Plants, a specialist in year-round phalaenopsis production in the Niagara Peninsula. CosMic Plants was founded in 2004 by brothers Mike and Neil van Steekelenburg, who emigrated from the Westland of the Netherlands to Canada.

MPS-ABC is a monitoring tool that measures and tracks the sustainability of a production operation based on crop protection agents, fertilizer, energy and water use, and waste.

CosMic started in 2022 with MPS-ABC environmental certification and obtained MPS-A as their first qualification. To do that, they didn't have to change their processes much. Their grower, Mariah Hendriksen, who was tasked with the project to become MPS-certified, had been diligent and meticulous with the data input and staying on track with the growing practices. The company's Integrated Pest Management is 99% chemical free. They use beneficial insects, nematodes and Bt, and control the greenhouse environment in such a way that their plants are strong, and pests and diseases don't thrive. Chemicals are used as a last resort and only for the odd hot-spot treatment. The company also uses natural gas as a heat source for the high-efficiency boilers and the exhaust CO2 is used in the greenhouses to enhance growth.

"CosMic Plants is an example of a company where growing high-quality products are combined with efforts toward a more sustainable production," said Arthij van der Veer, Area Manager at MPS.

For more information on MPS, visit my-mps.com. **GT**