

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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Judy Laushman Retiring From ASCFG

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One of the local flower industry's best advocates is retiring this year. Judy Laushman, co-founder and executive director of the Association of Specialty Cut Flower Growers (ASCFG) will retire at the end of 2023 after an impressive 35 years as the association's only executive. She founded it in 1988 with Dr. Allan Armitage. The organization grew out of Dr. Armitage's research on field-grown cut flowers at the University of Georgia. Since then, it has grown to nearly 3,000 members across the U.S., Canada and 19 other countries.

In 35 years, the organization has hosted countless national and regional educational events, both in person and online; sponsored academic and farm-based research; produced the only periodical dedicated to the cut flower industry, The Cut Flower Quarterly; and coordinated the ASCFG Cut Flower Trials under Dr. John Dole's leadership. The ASCFG supports grower grants, scholarships and other programs designed to educate and unite specialty cut flower growers.

Judy, I want to personally thank you for your relentless love and passion for local flowers even before they were in the limelight. You laid a strong foundation for fledging farms like mine to step into this flower renaissance with the tools we need to succeed. Deep in my heart, I know the local flower movement will only continue to grow because of your devotion to the industry. Your successor has massive shoes to fill. Congratulations on your retirement and we wish you the best in your next endeavor. **GT**