

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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Beekenkamp, Dümmer Orange “Explore Closer Collaboration”

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That’s the vague way in which the press release presented the info that two of Europe’s largest flower breeding companies may be hooking up or partnering in some way, shape or fashion. They’re in talks to “explore opportunities for a closer partnership in marketing and sales, R&D and production,” and, in fact, An Beekenkamp and Anthony Christiaanse, the respective CEOs of Beekenkamp Group and Dümmer Orange, have signed a letter of intent to that end.

“The breeding industry for flowers and plants is at a pivotal moment, where collaboration can drive innovation and efficiency,” said An in the press release. “Strategically, we want to grow by acquisitions. We believe that a partnership between Beekenkamp Group and Dümmer Orange can create significant value for our companies and our customers.”

Anthony added, “Deepening the partnership with Beekenkamp Group presents a tremendous opportunity to better leverage the considerable strengths of both companies. By sharing our knowledge and experience, we can respond to market demands more effectively and serve our customers worldwide more efficiently.”

To get more clarity, we reached out to Sirekit Mol, head of commercial operations for Beekenkamp. While she admitted the release was vague, she said its intent was to “avoid speculation” as leaders of the two companies visit each other’s locations.

“We are really in the exploring stage at the moment,” Sirekit said. “... trying to visit each other, looking at different locations, the work of different departments ... so they are basically still getting to know each other in that aspect.”

She said the phrase “potential collaboration” is because nothing is set yet and anything can happen.

“It’s really because they believe collaborating and sharing knowledge are definitely essential for the long-term.”

Another possible hint Sirekit offered: “Beekenkamp would like to stay a family business,” as Beekenkamp is a family business and Dümmer Orange has not been a family business since the Dümmer family sold their remaining shares to new private equity owners in 2015.

As for a time frame for this exploration, Sirekit could only say there isn’t one.

To recap the players in this drama, Beekenkamp Group is a Dutch family-owned company active in plants (both vegetables and ornamentals), packaging, and R&D for ornamentals and chrysanthemums (through their division Deliflor). Dümmer Orange is a leading breeder of cut flowers, potted plants, bedding plants and calla lilies.

The two already have a history of partnering, namely in the rooting of chrysanthemums for Europe. And the sales brokerage firms McHutchison and Vaughan's Horticulture are part of Dümmer Orange, too, so if and when there's an acquisition, Beekenkamp will get those as well. **GT**