

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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In Memoriam: Jan Hoek

Chris Beytes

Jan Hoek, a successful chrysanthemum breeder who founded Royalty Administration International, passed away on October 25. He was 87.

The Dutch breeder developed and marketed several chrysanthemum varieties—including Inga, Eleonora and Anastasia—that remain popular today. But more importantly for the plant industry, he played a vital role in the development of breeders' rights, protection and enforcement.

After graduating from the Dutch vocational school Handelsdagschool, Jan worked a year at the Paul Ecke Ranch in California. After returning to the Netherlands, he went to work at his father's nursery to focus on chrysanthemum breeding. In 1984, his father left the company and Jan continued under the name Hoek Breeding, where he developed several iconic chrysanthemum varieties.

As a breeder and grower, he recognized the importance of physical checks at nurseries on the propagation of varieties protected by plant breeders' rights. This prompted him to start Royalty Administration International (RAI) with his sister, Nellie, also in 1984. Today, it's a global organization with offices in Europe, North and South America, and Japan, and is the market leader in the enforcement of plant breeders' rights. For years, Nellie was the face of the business.

In 2007, he ended his work in breeding to focus on RAI. Deliflor Chrysanten took over Hoek Breeding's assortment.

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