

# GROWERTALKS

## GT in Brief

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### Hoffmann Family of Companies to Acquire Heimos Greenhouses

*Chris Beytes*

Hoffmann Family of Companies (HF Companies), a family owned private equity firm based in the United States, announced it has entered into a definitive letter of intent to purchase N.G. Heimos Greenhouses (Heimos), one of the nation's largest poinsettia growers and preeminent greenhouses. The planned closing is set for June 2025.

David Hoffmann, Founder and Chairman of HF Companies, stated: "We are pleased to announce that Bernie [Heimos] will remain as Chief Executive Officer. All Heimos employees and family members will remain with the company, ensuring the continuity of their strong and effective leadership. Their invaluable expertise will significantly benefit our vertically integrated agricultural businesses nationwide."

"We are thrilled to join this outstanding family of companies," said Bernie Heimos, President of Heimos. "As a family business, our values and mission are deeply rooted in our heritage. This partnership offers a unique opportunity to align with another family that shares our dedication to excellence, integrity and community. Together, we will continue to deliver exceptional products and services while nurturing a culture that prioritizes our employees and customers."

Over the past 70-plus years, Heimos has experienced incredible growth. Founded in 1952 with a focus on geraniums and poinsettias, the company expanded to meet increasing demands, adding spring annuals and perennials in 1976 and constructing a modern greenhouse in Millstadt, Illinois, in 1983. By 1998, the greenhouse space surpassed 1.5 million sq. ft., and today, the company boasts one of the largest greenhouse configurations in America, spanning over 400 acres and two states (Missouri and Illinois).

This news follows HF Companies' recent acquisition of Bay Area Herbs & Specialties in San Francisco, contributing to Hoffmann's diverse portfolio, which spans over 5,000 acres and includes herbs, wine, fresh plants, flowers, golf products and dairy products.

Geoff Hoffmann, Co-CEO of HF Companies, commented: "Investing in agricultural ventures not only supports local farmers, but also spurs economic growth and job creation within the community. We are delighted about this agreement with Heimos and look forward to our next chapter of growth together."

Greg Hoffmann, Co-CEO alongside Geoff, added: "HF Companies has a significant presence in the Greater St.

Louis area, and Heimos is a true gem in our backyard, spanning both Missouri and Illinois. We are proud to invest in family owned businesses and Heimos aligns perfectly with our values.”

### **Who is the Hoffmann Family of Companies?**

Headquartered in Naples, Florida, the Hoffmann Family of Companies first came on my radar when they acquired American Farms in 2022. Run by billionaire David Hoffmann and his sons Geoff and Greg, the company has acquired an interesting portfolio of agricultural-based companies—if you consider golf courses and wineries agricultural. They’ve also got floral companies, herbs, a big topiary producer in Florida, Topiary Creations (which grew the six bougainvillea planted in part of my garden) and many more, in Florida, Illinois, Missouri, California and Mexico. They’re also into aviation and transportation, financial services, hospitality, manufacturing, marine, media and marketing, and real estate.

A big part of their M.O. seems to be letting existing management teams stay in place. That’ll be the case with Heimos above, and it’s been the case with American Farms. Jim Pugh, Director of Horticulture for the big Naples bedding plant nursery, said this about his experience with Hoffmann thus far:

“I would think the Heimos family members should be thrilled with the purchase of their business by HFC. I don’t know much about Heimos’ operations, as the last time I visited their facility was in ’75 (that was last century!). We have certainly been satisfied with their purchase of AMF. Alex (Salazar) and Christine (Raber) have essentially retired, but I’ve elected to remain in an advisory role for the foreseeable future (as long as my health holds up and I am enjoying myself). John Hardiman (Managing Director) certainly has his hands full!

“As for how Hoffmann is as a ‘nursery owner,’ I would have to say they are vigilant of their acquisition, but essentially employ a ‘hands off’ managerial style. We have our quarterly Zoom meetings to review financials, business trends and forecasts, but other than a brief occasional visit, there is little interaction between us and their team. Their goal is not to operate any particular business’ day-to-day operations, but to manage their acquisitions and assets. Seems to be a good working model for everyone.” **GT**