

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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164-Year-Old Bulb Business Closing

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Sixth-generation Royal Van Zanten of Hillegom, the Netherlands, will be closing its doors after 164 continuous years in business. Possibly the oldest business in the international flower bulb market, over the years they expanded into other blooming plants, including alstroemeria, mums, asters, celosia and more. The company received the designation “Royal” as early as 1901, to signify the respect, appreciation and trust of the King of the Netherlands.

Now, the Van Zanten family hasn’t owned the company since 2018; that was the year they sold out to investment firm Nimbus out of a need for financial and operational support in order to modernize and grow, said Sjoukje Heimovaara, their general director at the time. But it was also known that Nimbus invests in companies with the intent to eventually sell. They found that selling as a whole was too complicated, so they divided up the company, creating Van Zanten Breeding (in Rijssenhou) and Van Zanten Flowerbulbs (in Hillegom).

Earlier this year, the lily breeding activities were taken over by Hobaho in Lisse, and as of October 1, the rest of the commercial activities related to lily bulbs in the Netherlands, plus a bulb farm in New Zealand and sales office in Australia, were sold to Onings Holland Flower Bulbs in Poeldijk.

“We are still in talks about the tulip trade and hope to be able to announce the sale of this last business unit in the short term,” they said in the press release. **GT**