

Dümmen's New Owner; New USDA Stats; Last Weekend



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COMING UP THIS WEEK:

- Dümmen: New owner, new CEO
- Fresh USDA floriculture stats
- Fall & Winter Crops webinar
- How was last weekend?
- Up in Canada
- Down in the USA
- RIP Jim Stuppy
- Finally ...




NEW FOR 2027

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PROVEN WINNERS

Dümmen Orange update: New owners, new CEO

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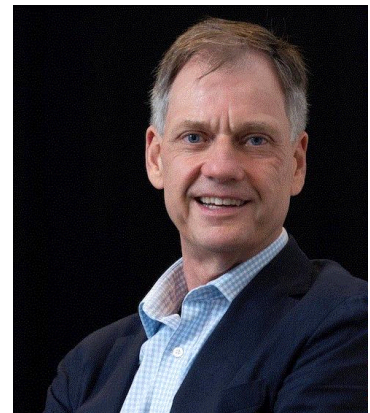
News just crossed my desk that BC Partners, the current majority shareholders of Dutch-German breeding company **Dümmen Orange**, has worked a deal with a group of current lenders to take over the business. The new owner group includes ICG, J.P. Morgan Asset Management, Neuberger Berman, Tresidor and Triton Debt Opportunities. BC Partners will remain a minority investor. They'd been the majority shareholder of the business since 2015, after acquiring the business from the Dümmen family and investor H2 Equity Partners.

Quoting the press release, "As part of the deal, the new owners will provide additional financing to deliver a de-levered and sustainable balance sheet. A substantial injection of new capital will provide a solid financial platform for achieving Dümmen Orange's ambitious objectives in the coming years."

What's that mean? Well, based on my recent conversation with Dümmen Orange COO Perry Wismans about Dümmen's divestiture of some of its recently acquired breeding companies, those "ambitious objectives" means focusing on their core competencies and strategies: breeding high-quality products, ensuring the best production quality of starter material from their farms and focusing on distribution in North America.

To further that goal, Dümmen has appointment Anthony Christiaanse as its new Chief Executive Officer. Anthony succeeds Hugo Noordhoek Hegt, who's held the position since 2019. Hugo will remain a member of the supervisory board.

Anthony joined Dümmen Orange as a member of its Executive Committee in January. Before that, he worked in senior roles for leading international companies such as Unilever, Chiquita, Aviko and Vion. His career in the food and agricultural industry spans more than 30 years.



Additionally, Carola de Bie has been promoted to Chief Financial Officer after serving as Dümmen Orange's Head of Group Control. After five years as CFO, Arjan Kaaks has decided to leave the company and pursue other opportunities.

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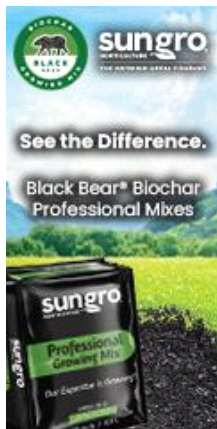
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The latest USDA stats on our industry

Hortistican Dr. Marvin Miller burned the midnight oil (well, almost: it was 11:38 p.m. when he sent it) to produce an almost immediate first-look synopsis of the 2023 Floriculture Crops Summary, released May 16. He graciously shares it with us here. Thanks, Marvin!

A Year of Corrections

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (USDA/NASS) released its Floriculture Crops: 2023 Summary this afternoon and the numbers appear to support the reflective attitudes many expressed last year. Overall, the \$5.882 billion in finished floricultural sales were down about 0.9% from 2022, yet the sales were still 4.0% higher than those recorded in this survey in 2021, the first year this survey covered all 50 states.



Segment-by-Segment Sales

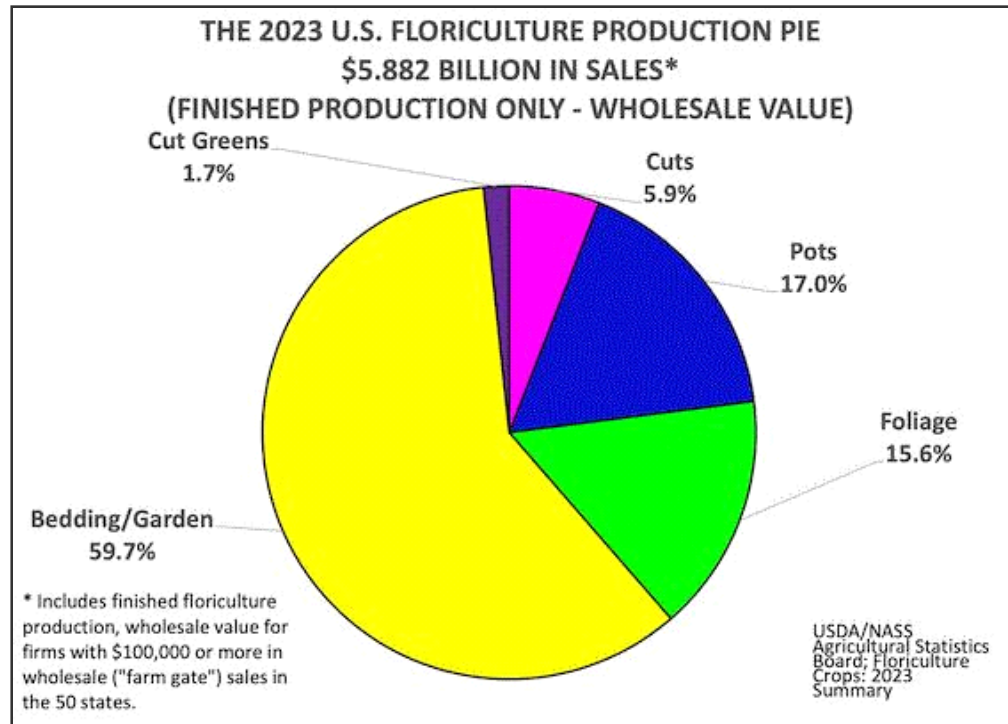
USDA reports on segment-by-segment sales for growers reporting \$100,000 or more in total sales.

Sales of domestically produced cut flowers increased 5.1% from 2022 to 2023, to \$349.98 million; however, the 2023 sales were down about 2.1% from 2021.

Sales in 2023 of cut cultivated greens were down about 3.5% from 2022 to \$97.78 million. Sales of cut greens in 2023 were off 7.3% from 2021.

Sales of potted flowering plants took the steepest year-to-year dive from 2022 to 2023, as sales were off 10.1%, dropping to \$1.002 billion. Compared to 2021, sales of potted flowering plants in 2023 were off 2.8%.

Sales of foliage plants were up 11.2% in 2023 from 2022 to \$918.85 million and these sales are up 21.1% from the 2021 level.



Sales of bedding/garden plants in 2023 were \$3.514 billion, off 1.4% from 2022, but the sales volume still topped the 2021 level by almost 3.3%.

Sales of annuals in 2023 were \$2.476 billion, up 0.3% from 2022, but up 4.5% compared to 2021.

Sales of perennials were \$1.038 billion in 2023, off about 5.0% from 2022, but up 0.6% from 2021. Perennials were 30% of the total bedding/garden plant sales in 2023.

The Floriculture Crops Summary also covers propagative materials. In 2023, growers reported sales of \$513.82 million in propagative materials; these sales were off about 0.1% from 2022, but they were up almost 1.0% from 2021.

Totals

For growers with sales of \$100,000 or more, counting the plant propagative materials, 2023 sales were \$6.396 billion. This was off about 0.9% from the 2022 level, but up 3.78% from 2021.

In 2023, sales of growers with at least \$10,000, but less than \$100,000, were estimated to have been \$294.5 million, up 24.4% from 2022 and up 17.2% from 2021.

In sum, the total estimated sales for all growers in the survey in 2023 were \$6.691 billion, up less

than 0.01% from 2022, but up 4.3% from 2021.

Inflation

All of the above dollar changes from 2021 to 2023 do not take inflation into account. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for all products from December 2021 to December 2022, ran about 6.4% and a year later, from December 2022 to December 2023, inflation was about 3.7%. All told, from December 2021 to December 2023, the CPI rose about 9.7%



Fall and Winter Crops webinar next week

We're headed into the heat of summer, and soon you'll be planting up fall and winter crops. Transitioning from summer to fall can be challenging, as your growing conditions change from bright and dry to cool, dark and wet. Managing your root zone is key and to help you with that we've got a webinar next week on that very topic:

Best Production Practices for Fall and Winter Crops

It's slated for **Wednesday, May 29**, at 1:00 p.m. Eastern/Noon Central.

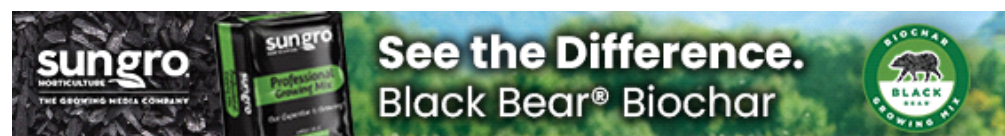
My guest expert will be Stacey Rocklin, grower adviser for Berger Horticulture. Stacey has extensive experience with a wide range of crops, in a range of growing environments, including Kalamazoo Specialty Plants, the Leila Arboretum and Michigan State University, where she earned her BS and MS degrees.



Tune in to this free webinar to pick up some excellent tips and tricks for managing your crops' root zones as the seasons change from summer to fall.

[CLICK HERE](#) to sign up!

As always, I'll be your host, so you know it'll be fast-paced, informative and fun!



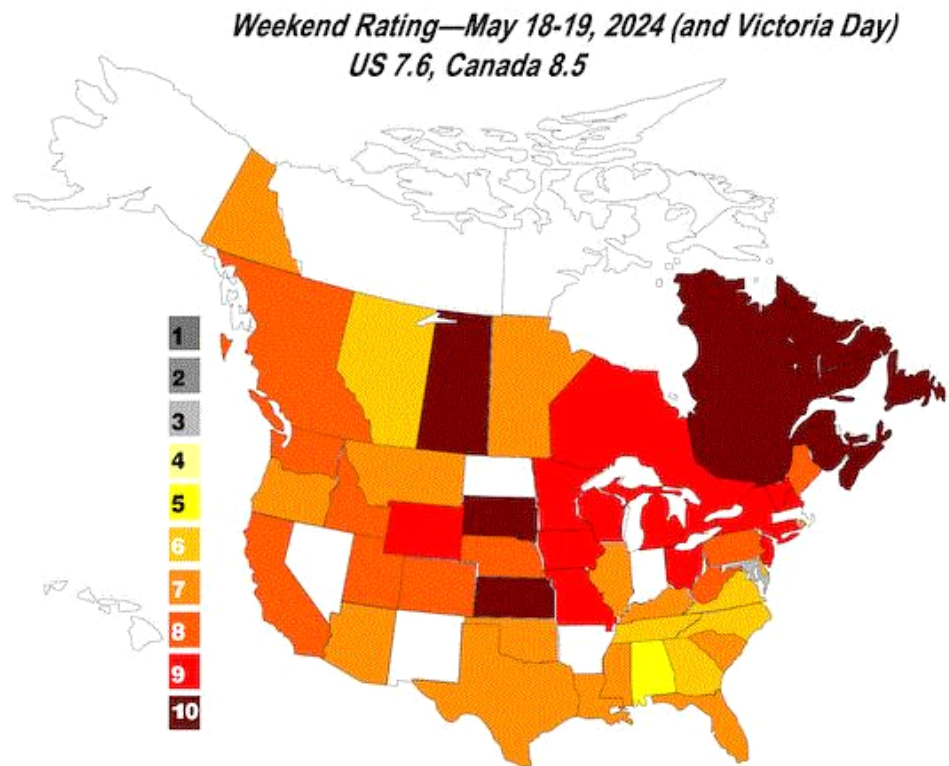
How was Victoria Day Weekend?

For us Americans, May 18-19 was the weekend between Mother's Day and Memorial Day, and while we hope it's a strong continuation of spring, for many it might be a rest period or reset between the big weekends.

But for Canada, May 18-20 was their three-day **Victoria Day** holiday weekend, which can be the biggest of their season. Well, for instance, the average score for Victoria Day Weekend is 8.5 over the past 12 years. The lowest score I've seen in that time is 7.6 (2013). The highest was 9.5 (2020, the first pandemic year). Whereas in the U.S., the average is 7.7, with scores as low as 6.6 (2017).

This year? It was **8.5 in Canada** (dead on average) and **7.6 in the U.S.** (0.1 below average)—an absolutely average third weekend of May. Fine, but not nearly as good as last year, which was 9.2 in Canada and 8.4 in the U.S. Many of you commented on that.

Here's the map:



That's based on 119 scores from 42 states and nine provinces (finally, the Yukon weighed in!).

You sent in 26 perfect 10s, or 22%. Another 14 of you (12%) scored your weekend a very good 9. So fully a third of you had what I would say was a solid or even great weekend. A few of you mentioned breaking records, but it was nothing like Mother's Day for most of you.

On the flipside, 15 of you (13%) scored it 6 or below—seven of you were at 3 or 4, eight of you were at 5 or 6. So it was a mixed bag, for sure, but the positive outweighed the negative.

Abe VanWingerden said it for all of us: "Weather, weather, weather is the main issue ... Consumer is there and product is right, but Mother Nature needs to cooperate."



Victoria Day in Canada

V is for Victory in Canada, where their three-day spring holiday weekend matched the 12-year average, a strong score of 8.5 out of 10. Not as strong as last year's 9.2, but it was much better than 2022's 7.7.

Quebec sent in three scores, all perfect 10s. Ontario, a big province with various climates, scored 9.0 with eight scores—four 10s, a 9, two 8s and a 7. British Columbia was a bit less stellar, at 8.1 from four scores. And good old Nunavut finally weighed in (well, via DeVry Greenhouses, which ships plants the long 24-hour haul up to them). Spring has just barely started there, so 7 is a good score. Here are a few Canadian notes:

Ontario (10). "Our best may long weekend ever!"—*Maryann Vandermeer, Vandermeer Nursery*

British Columbia (7.5). "Cool weather, wet, some sunny breaks. In other words, a typical Victoria Day long weekend in BC."—*Pamela Pilling, Canadian Tire*

British Columbia (10). "Excellent sales with only a brief pause in our hour-long downpour on Saturday. Interesting how strong perennial and shrub sales in all sizes of pots are during bedding plant season."—*John Derrick, Elk Lake Garden Center*

Ontario (12 (which I rounded down to 10)). "We really are speaking for most of a week here. The traffic we had midweek was what we would've expected on a weekend and they just kept coming! They were shopping with a purpose—what a week! We are closed Sunday and open on the holiday Monday, which was a little slower. In short, transactions and dollars outdid the last two years (same timeframe) by a decent margin!"—*Joanna Steckle, Steckle's*

Ontario (9). "We had a great weekend. The weather was fantastic, so I expected a better weekend than last year. We were only slightly higher and that's why I don't give it a 10! We are a beach town and temperatures were reaching 27C so lots of people were at the beach. We are still very happy with last weekend's sales though."—*Anita VanAdrichem, Westland Greenhouses*

Alberta (7). "Cold and rainy with a risk of frost. The inexperienced gardeners were shopping, while it seems the seasoned veterans are waiting for warmer weather."—*Kristen Busse, greengate Garden Centers*

Ontario (8). "It's been a great season—we haven't had a frost since May 1. And the forecast is not showing any to come (thumbs up and fist bump emoji)."—*Linda Cozyn, Cozyn's Garden Gallery*

Saskatchewan (10). "It's been a 10 since May 9, with only four days worse than last year—the nights when it dropped to 2 or 3C, with frost warnings. We did notice that the customers are buying smaller amounts and planning on making multiple trips."—*Lucille Bouvier, Plant Ranch Regina*

Lastly, here are three from Jack Rozendaal, executive VP at DeVry Greenhouses Ltd. based in British Columbia:

British Columbia (7). "We experienced a great early start, but the last 14 days has been wet and cool. We were down 20% for the biggest weekend of the year. Today (Monday) is going to be a good day."

Alberta (3). "8C (46F) as a high, raining in Edmonton, forest fires in Fort McMurray and frost this morning in some areas. That sums up what is supposed to be the busiest weekend of the year. Spring has not yet started in Alberta. The good news—we are expecting a very strong upcoming

weekend, along with strong June sales. Gardeners in Alberta are SO READY for spring to start! Let's delight them with flowers!"

Yukon (7). "The weekend was better than last week. We are down 20% vs. last year, but expect to make up ground with the weather warming up."



Meanwhile, down in the U.S. ...

Some random notes from high scorers and low:

Washington (10). "We are on our sixth record-breaking week, Chris! Last week being the biggest so far, likely due to IGCs restocking, and this week trailing right behind it. This is on the wholesale side of the spectrum."—*Alex Ramos, Walla Walla Nursery Co.*

Ohio (10). "We're definitely over the peak, but still good traffic coming through despite the heat and humidity."—*Kim Grant, Strait Gate Greenhouses*

Colorado (9). "Parking lot is overflowing. Finally, a truly exceptional weekend."—*Gene Pielin, Gulley Greenhouse*

Connecticut/Northeast (8). "Still a struggle for sunlight through the weekends in the NE region. Sunday was the better day for weather; however, Saturday was better for sales. Friday-Sunday topped last year, so overall a solid May weekend, giving us momentum for the upcoming holiday weekend."—*Chris Hallene, Casertano Farms*

Vermont (10). "We sell to a summer lake home area and the season just started for us this weekend. But it was a record-breaker!"—*Dick Chase, West Shore Farm*

South Dakota (10+). "Stunning, Staggering or Stupefying, they all fit! Very, very busy—pretty much a repeat of Mother's Day! Couldn't ask for more ... well, maybe a little more rest, but that will come when the season slows. No signs of it slowing yet, and with Memorial Day this next weekend, hoping for another repeat."—*Tim L. Sime, Jolly Lane Greenhouse*

Minnesota (7). "Down about 6% compared to the same weekend last year. Weather was fine; it's possible that the prior weekend was SO big that we had to come back to reality a little."—*Derek Lynde, Lynde Greenhouse*

Virginia (6). "We had a slow week and were hoping for a great Saturday to help even the score with last year. However, Saturday was drizzly all day and sales were lackluster. But hopefully all this rain will help keep the busy season going a little bit longer."—*Duane Weaver, Milmont Greenhouses*

Wyoming (9). "Great sales Friday and Saturday, fairly good Sunday. The numbers say they were a 10 compared to recent years, but it just didn't feel like it, so I settled on a 9."—*Jeff Jones, Great Gardens*

Ohio (9). “Not bad. Actually, pretty good. We sold a lot of plants and no one got hurt.”—*Chris Baker, Baker’s Acres*

Montana (8). “Not quite the feeding frenzy of the Mother’s Day Weekend, but hey, a lot of the good stuff is gone!”—*Debbie Lorenzo, Clinton Farms*

New York (8). “Saturday was overcast, but no rain, yet sales were lacking. Sunday proved much better, with mostly sunny skies. Still, nothing to write home about this spring. Sales are still trailing last spring by 15%, which gets even worse when you factor in inflation.”—*Jim Boxberger, Monticello Farm Home & Garden*

Illinois (6). “After a record-breaking Mother’s Day Weekend, the temps heated up and sales cooled off. It was not a bad weekend, but just a bit less than anticipated. Customers are really starting to look for bargains, so we are being strategic about markdowns or specials to help bring them in and fill up their carts.”—*Candi Scheuermann, Green View Companies*

And a reader from North Carolina gave it a 5, saying: “Another lousy Saturday here in western North Carolina. Can’t seem to catch a break this year. Sales were less than half of the same weekend last year. I would give it a 5 and I’m being generous. Too much inventory left and little demand. The whole spring needs a do-over.”

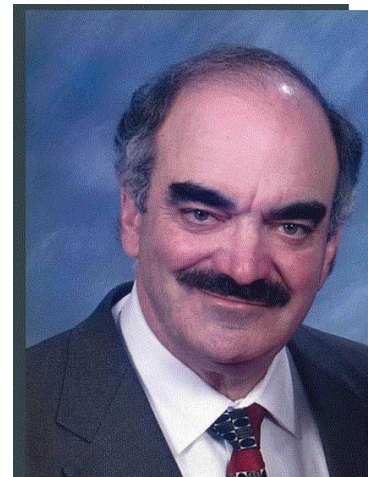


In memoriam: Jim Stuppy

I’m sorry to have to report the passing of a greenhouse manufacturing icon: James (Jim) C. Stuppy of the well-known, 151-year-old business [Stuppy Inc.](#) of Kansas City, Missouri. Jim died peacefully on Sunday, May 19. He was 79.

Born April 15, 1945, to George L. Stuppy and Helen G. Stuppy, Jim grew up in St. Joe, graduated from Christian Brother High School in 1963. He attended Creighton University, where he met Sue Tracy; they were married on August 17, 1968. He furthered his education at Oklahoma State University, where he earned a master’s degree in economics. Jim also served in the United States Navy, reaching the rank of lieutenant.

Jim and Sue moved to Kansas City, where he joined Stuppy, Inc. in 1971 as the fourth-generation owner of the wholesale floral and greenhouse company. He became president and CEO in 1975. At the time, Stuppy was still growing flowers, as well as wholesaling them; Jim got them out of growing to focus strictly on wholesale floral distribution and greenhouse manufacturing. His son Matt, the fifth-generation of the family business, sold off the wholesale flower business due to major changes in the flower distribution market.



Jim is survived by his wife of 55 years, Sue; children, Matt (Kristen), Frank (Kelley), John (Stephanie) and Angela (Humberto); and 12 grandchildren.



Finally ...

Being a member of the press, I get a lot of boxes of plant samples. Most arrive just fine; some arrive like this:



Luckily, the contents were fine.

My biggest challenge now, other than delivery drivers who don't know which way is up, is the seasons: Most of the samples I get are spring annuals and perennials, sent out in mid- to late-May, the peak gardening season. In Orlando it's 90F and full-blown summer; we did our annual

gardening months ago.

I guess it'll be a good test of heat tolerance!

Feel free to email me at beytes@growertalks.com if you have ideas, comments or questions.

See you next time!



Chris Beytes
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