

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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“And the winner is ...”

Chris Beytes

Your scribe and his co-host, German singer Alex Behrens, led the festivities at the 8th International Grower of the Year Award Ceremony, presented by the International Association of Horticultural Producers (AIPH). At the moment this photo was snapped, we were introducing the previous years' winners, which include three businesses from North America: Bylands Nurseries from British Columbia, Canada; Sheridan Nurseries from Ontario, Canada (which won twice, in 2012 and 2013); and Costa Farms of Homestead, Florida—last year's top prize winner.



But the reason 190 industry luminaries from 20 countries gathered at the Colosseum Theatre in Essen, Germany, in January, was to crown the 2017 winner. That honor and the “Gold Rose” trophy went to ... drum roll, please ... Flores el Capiro of Colombia! This innovative cut flower grower is a pioneer in shipping flowers around the world by sea, which was one of the reasons the judges awarded them the top prize. Transit times to places like Japan and Australia can be as long as 30 days and yet their system ensures that customers get the freshest flowers possible.

Flores el Capiro also won the gold prize in the Cut Flower category. Earning gold in the Young Plant category was Graff Kristensen of Denmark; the gold in the Finished Plants and Trees category went to Gui Zhou Miaofu Urban Horticulture Co. of China. (These three gold winners were vying for the Gold Rose.)

AIPH began the International Grower of the Year (IGOTY) Award in 2009. The reason you may not have heard about it until recently is, until 2015, the award was presented at AIPH's annual meeting, which gets little if any press or attention. So in 2015, AIPH decided to go public with the award and host a big banquet in conjunction with the IPM Essen trade show.

Interested in seeing if your business has what it takes to be an IGOTY finalist or winner in 2018? Email Maria Wallin for details about how to enter (maria.wallin@aiph.org). Or go to aiph.org/groweroftheyear and look for the full rules and procedures. Deadline to submit your application is June 30.

Sponsorship opportunities are also available. The 2016 sponsors were FloraCulture International magazine (sister publication to GrowerTalks/Green Profit) and the Royal FloraHolland Flower Auction Cooperative. **GT**