

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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Ball Partners with AGA Agro for Southeast Asia

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Ball Horticultural Company is expanding its presence in Southern Asia (home to some 2.4 billion people, they say) by partnering with AGA Agro, a breeder, producer and distributor of garland marigolds, as well as a distributor of ornamental and cut flower seeds and plugs. Ball wouldn't disclose the nature of the partnership other than to say they had bought a percentage of the company. Founded in 2013, AGA Agro is headquartered in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and operates breeding, seed production, seed distribution, plug production and flower trialing locations.

The partnership will provide AGA access to the vast floriculture offerings of Ball and will lead to the expansion of its product assortment, including entry into new product categories, such as indoor flowering plants and vegetative flower varieties.

In addition, the partnership will result in rapid development of new garland marigold genetics for the region by combining AGA's existing breeding with Ball's ability to apply advanced breeding technology to the category.

What are garland marigolds? In some countries of the region, they're grown specifically to string together into garlands to be used for cultural celebrations and decoration; some grow them as potted plants and some use the flowers as offerings.

Soraya Jaranyanon, founder and managing director of AGA, will remain a major shareholder and managing director; her management team will also stay in place.

"My team is the best at what they do," she said. "By partnering with Ball, we will be able to fulfill our goal of becoming the leading supplier of a diverse range of floriculture plant products across the region." **GT**