

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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Schroeders Sell Valleybrook Gardens

Chris Beytes

They sold their Ontario production facility two years ago; now they're exiting the perennial business for good: John and Kelly Schroeder have announced the sale of the original location of Valleybrook Gardens, which they founded 40 years ago in Abbotsford, British Columbia.

The buyer? Josami Holdings, a family-owned company newly incorporated by Joe Abi-Ad, an MBA who for the past four years has been CFO of Brookdale Tree Nursery. He saw this as an opportunity to run his own company.

Said Joe in the press release, "I look forward to continuing the legacy built by the Schroeder family in this well-managed business. The Valleybrook brands have always differentiated themselves from others through their exceptional quality, thus making the company a highly attractive acquisition target. We will continue to provide the highest quality plants and best service to our customers."

Those brands of which Joe speaks include Heritage Perennials, their trademark blue pots, Jeepers Creepers, Backyard Fresh and Rock Stars. Valleybrook will continue to produce them under license from Valleybrook International Ventures, Inc., which will continue to be held by the Schroeder family.

John Schroeder said via email that he was finally selling it all completely because none of his four daughters or their spouses were interested in being the second generation Schroeders in the nursery business. In fact, he added, "From the very beginning, I always intended and expected to sell the business outside of the family as my succession plan."

As for the new owner and why sell now, John answered, "We found a buyer who values what we have built, and who plans to build on that foundation together with our existing staff and management. After 40 years at the helm, this was a perfect opportunity for us to move on to new adventures." **GT**