

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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Bay City Flower Company to Close

Chris Beytes



Bay City Flower Company of Half Moon Bay, California, is closing after 110 years in business. Bay City's Hana Bay Flowers brand has been a staple in grocery store floral departments across America for generations.

An official statement from the company, signed by fourth-generation owner Harrison Higaki, went out to customers. His first two paragraphs read:

"After four generations and 110 glorious years in floriculture, we at Bay City Flower Company have decided that the time has come for us to stop selling our flowers. The last day shipping our finished products

will be 11/10/19.

"While there are many reasons for this decision, the essential one is that it has become increasingly difficult to compete nationally while operating in the costliest place in the nation to run a flower farm."

Harrison continued that they're making arrangements with other "reputable growers" to help customers find future plants, especially for the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. He concluded with this:

"While we are sad to share this news with you, at the same time, we celebrate the multitude of accomplishments we, in partnership with you have achieved over these many years. We truly could not have done it without you.

"Our hearts are filled with joy and gratitude for the many individuals and companies that have journeyed together with us over these many years. We are particularly grateful to those that have been with us over multiple generations.

"We wish to extend to you a sincere & heartfelt 'Thank you!'"

Harrison's family has a long history with GrowerTalks; Vic Ball was friends with Harrison's dad, Harry. Harry's father, Nobuo, who founded Higaki Nursery in 1910, was interred in North Dakota during World War II. The family was forced to leave the business, but a fellow grower leased it and kept it going until they were able to return.

We reached out to the company for a comment on the decision. Lisa Higaki, Harrison's daughter, replied when asked if they'd given any thought to moving the business to a less expensive state: "We did not consider that possibility."

What will become of the facilities? Will you try to sell the business? Or sell the land to developers? Replied Lisa, "Our focus right now is on winding down the operations and closing. While we have had discussions on possible uses for the property, no decision has been made and we are focusing on the November 10th closing for finished blooming and 2/29/20 for growing on dormant hydrangeas. Currently, we are busy fulfilling our finished sales commitments with retailers for Christmas and through October 2020 by selling our pre-finished flowering plants or dormant hydrangeas for finishing in 2020."

In other words, the Higaki family is still all about taking care of the customer. **GT**