

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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BloomStudios: Cut Flower Collaboration for a New Audience

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Ball just launched an exciting new business unit with a cool name and even more interesting mission. BloomStudios is a fresh approach to the cut flower market rooted in collaboration and driven by emerging trends and market shifts. We caught up with the new unit's General Manager Scott Rusch who has a background in cut flowers that goes all the way back to college and recent experience leading the global product team at PanAmerican Seed.

After soliciting hundreds of potential names from Ball employees around the globe, the team voted for BloomStudios.

"We thought about how we are going to operate and identified similarities with film studios like Amazon Studios, Pixar and Sony. Those media studios collaborate with directors, screenwriters, actors, production companies, lighting experts, distribution and more. They put out content that everyone can enjoy," Scott explains. "We chose the name BloomStudios to signify our team's approach to bringing our content—beautiful cut flowers—to the world."

"We'll collaborate with breeders; seed, vegetative and tissue culture production companies; distributors; growers; postharvest researchers; wholesalers; designers; and retailers to get the best content to the end consumer."

And BloomStudios' product mix out of the gate is quite impressive, with previous introductions like Amazon Dianthus and Potomac Snapdragons, as well as newcomers like Flare Lisianthus. The team is excited to bring these top series to a whole new audience of growers. The market, he feels, is ready for continued growth, especially with the current boom in indoor foliage and tropicals.

"We've been following a global trend towards urbanization for a few years. People are moving into homes, condos and buildings with very small yards, if any, and just about no room to garden," Scott says. "We've been investigating the indoor market more and more, and the main products that make sense for indoors are potted plants and cut flowers."

Another trend that helped Ball decide to launch BloomStudios is the movement toward local and hyperlocal supply. Today's shoppers seem more interested than ever in products produced and sold locally. Helping growers of any size supply their own communities with beautiful cut flowers is a key goal for BloomStudios and Scott feels strongly that there will be demand for such products.

“Macro trends show North American consumers are getting more interested in local supply. People want to know that the products they buy have fewer air miles than they do. They want to know that they’re supporting a local business that’s producing products in a sustainable way and that it’s good for their community,” he says. “This is true of food and it is carrying over to other consumer goods. We see that the trend is impacting flowers and plants, as well.”

Where does Scott see BloomStudios going in the next couple years? Certainly not sitting still!

“We’re going to focus 2020 on generating awareness of the new team and effort in cut flowers. We have some great products to promote and start trialing with growers,” he says. “We’re also working toward establishing partnerships with growers for trialing.” BloomStudios has joined ASCFG and will be speaking at its upcoming conferences in 2020, Scott adds.

In addition, BloomStudios plans to complete a new cut flower research lab in Santa Paula, California, in 2020 and expand trialing resources there. In 2021, the team is looking at more trialing and breeding space in Holland. Scott says all of this is geared towards improving the products BloomStudios can develop for growers and generating the best technical advice to ensure their success.

Hear more about BloomStudios with Scott Rusch on Ball Seed’s STEM Greenhouse Podcast Episode 42

“Welcome to BloomStudios.” Find all episodes at www.ballseed.com/STEMPodcast and subscribe on any podcast player. **GT**