

# GROWERTALKS

## GT in Brief

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### Ball Enters Joint Venture with Mexican Distributor

*Chris Beytes*

Ball Horticultural Company has entered into a joint venture with one of Mexico's leading seed and young plant distributors, Flores y Plantas de Calidad. The two companies have already been business partners for 20 years; this new 50/50 partnership "solidifies their commitment to each other's success, growth and innovation," according to the press release.

Flores y Plantas de Calidad is part of Grupo AKIKO, a leading distributor in Mexico whose founding goes back to 1990 when Akiko Basurto began representing two Dutch companies selling bulbs and seedlings into the Mexican market. Today, Grupo AKIKO has three separate legal entities: Flores y Plantas (a distribution company handling pot and bedding plant inputs), Interbulbos (specializing in bulbs) and SEM Plants (a sales agency servicing grower customers in Mexico City). Ball's deal is just with Flores y Plantas.

"For decades, Ball has enjoyed a strong relationship with Grupo AKIKO as the leading distributor in Mexico and we believe in the growth of the Mexican horticulture market," said Susannah Ball in a statement. "As a neighbor with access to existing supply channels, plus with their dedication to the industry, joining with AKIKO is a positive next step in our ongoing partnership."

"Our vision has always been to provide the highest-quality products with the best technical information to serve our clients," says Claudia Lee, on behalf of Grupo AKIKO, which serves ornamental growers in more than 15 states of Mexico. "Our customers will ultimately reap the benefits of this partnership and we look forward to more collaboration between our two strong companies." **GT**