

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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In Memoriam: Ted Biernacki

Chris Beytes



Ted Biernacki, the founder and namesake of Ted's Greenhouse in Tinley Park, Illinois, passed away January 16 at the age of 91. The family kept the news quiet for personal reasons, but said we could let the industry know.

You might call Ted the last of a breed—a vegetable farmer who started into the flower and garden center business during its infancy after World War II. He grew up on the family's produce farm in Michigan, which he called "16 acres of hard work" in a 2014 interview with Illinois Farmer Today.

Pictured: Laurie Beytes with Ted Biernacki in 2017.

In 1948, when he took over the family business, he decided to get out of produce and get into greenhouse flowers and plants. He did a stint with the Marines in the early '50s, then in 1958 sold the Michigan business and bought 11 acres in the Chicago suburbs, which he and his son Dan grew into the Ted's Greenhouse of today.

Ted "retired" in 1995, but could always be found around the greenhouse, dispensing advice and wisdom to customers. **GT**