

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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Congrats to Metrolina—They're an IGOTY Finalist!

Chris Beytes

A hearty congratulations and good luck to Metrolina Greenhouses of Huntersville, North Carolina, for making the finals of the AIPH International Grower of the Year Award (IGOTY).

Metrolina is one of the country's largest greenhouse operations—perhaps the largest single-site bedding plant business in the country (maybe the world!)—with about 200 acres of greenhouses. You also know co-owner Abe VanWingerden is a long-time *GrowerTalks* columnist and contributor. The only other U.S. operation to win the coveted IGOTY Gold Rose is Costa Farms in 2016.

As for the IGOTYs, they identify and celebrate the best of the best young plant, finished plant and nursery/tree operations from around the world. They're organized by the International Association of Horticultural Producers (AIPH). Since 2016, the award has been presented during IPM Essen, but with that show's cancellation, the 2022 awards will be presented during GreenTech Amsterdam, the new horticulture technology event in the Netherlands. The date will be June 14.

Along with Metrolina, eight other finalists have been announced:

- Brookdale Treeland Nurseries Limited, Canada
- Bunnik Group Bv., Netherlands
- Jens Meyer Jungpflanzen, Germany
- Luxaflor Roses, Zimbabwe
- Matina Flowers S.A.S, Colombia
- Prim'rose (SCA Clementine), Morocco
- Sitio Kolibri, Brazil
- Wagagai Limited, Uganda

The IGOTY Awards consists of four categories: Finished Plants and Trees, Cut Flowers and Bulbs, Young Plants, and Sustainability. Within each category, bronze, silver and gold awards will be presented. To top off the evening, one of the gold winners will be crowned the "AIPH International Grower of the Year 2022" and receive the "Gold Rose."

As a bonus, this year AIPH has also partnered with the Costa Rica-based digital and physical content and connections company Jungle Talks for the inaugural “Young International Grower of the Year” Award. It’s open to participants of Jungle Talks’ Pro Manager Mastercourse, each of whom will have a chance to pitch themselves to the jury during the event.

The IGOTY 2022 Awards are supported by headline sponsor Royal FloraHolland, founding partner FloraCulture International, sapphire sponsor Expo 2021 Hatay, ruby sponsor GlobalGap, pearl sponsor Freddie’s Flowers, and awards partners CIOPORA and World Horti Center. **GT**