

Media Release

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Dos Gringos Certified Sustainable under Independent VeriFlora Program

Floral Company Backs its Different by Design™ Label with Demonstrated Environmental and Social Responsibility

Emeryville, CA – Dos Gringos, an integrated flower grower, bouquet maker, and shipper of floral products is the latest California-based floral company to successfully earn the nationally recognized VeriFlora® Certified Sustainably Grown label. The certification, conducted by Scientific Certification Systems, confirms that Dos Gringos meets high standards of environmental sustainability, social responsibility and product quality throughout its operations.



“The creative side of floral is one element, but it’s gratifying to see the sustainability objectives that many of us have worked towards integrated in the VeriFlora program,” said world-renowned floral bouquet designer and educator René van Rems, who initiates and steers plans for production at Dos Gringos. For nine years, as Director of Promotion of the California Cut Flower Commission, van Rems pushed for adoption of sustainability practices within the industry. “Leading producers in the world are taking responsibility, and taking action

speaks louder than words.”

Jason Levin, President of Dos Gringos, agreed. “The audit conducted by Dr. Michael Keyes in July was not only thorough, but quite productive for us as well. We’re big fans of learning things that will help us be a better company, so we were eager to keep improving. We are proud to carry the VeriFlora seal.”

Quality control is a key component of VeriFlora certification, and cold-chain management practices are required for floral handlers of certified VeriFlora product. Under the certification process, SCS verifies that plants are stored and transported under proper temperature conditions, with traceability, and that plant health and hygiene are protected. During its certification audit of Dos Gringos, SCS found that Dos Gringos’ fresh-cut flowers and foliage are hand-selected and inspected at three different levels, then cooled overnight before being custom-packed. The company’s automated temperature-controlled production and storage areas, wet-pack automation lines and direct cold-load shipping all contribute to the production and delivery of quality flowers that look beautiful and last longer.



According to Joan Saunders, Manager of Executive Services at Dos Gringos, “Our new VeriFlora Certified Bouquet Collection is really starting to resonate with customers and retailers. Our clients were asking for this, and now we have custom-printed sleeves for the certified flowers.”

Dos Gringos product quality depends on a close working relationship with the company's contract growers. The company built weekly scorecards to review with partner farms. Every location is now scoring extremely high, testimony to enthusiastic participation, teamwork, and attention to detail.

The company's headquarters building in Vista, California was custom built, including a state-of-the-art underground green waste-removal and recycling system. Grates in the floor in the production and logistics areas allow 1,400 tons of plant debris to be collected by way of a conveyor belt running one foot below the floor that moves the greens to an outside green-waste bin. The bin is picked up bi-weekly and taken to the city of Vista's municipal compost site. While adding to the community soil supply, it also helps to reduce ethylene, the byproduct of decaying foliage, which decreases healthy plant life.

The VeriFlora Certification Program also promotes a healthy, equitable workplace, and good community relations. Employing about 150 people, Dos Gringos was ranked in the top 35 out of 840 nominations as "One of the Best Places to Work" by *The Wall Street Journal* in 2007. Dos Gringos' Levin also started a nationwide program, Helping Kids Bloom®; since 2004, the program has raised over \$25,000 for children's charities, supporting character-building activities such as summer camps.

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About Dos Gringos – Dos Gringos is an innovative contract grower, hand-made bouquet assembler and shipper of fresh-cut flowers, foliage, and botanicals. The company offers a wide variety of flowers and foliage for the wholesale industry, a growing retail market and several internet suppliers. For more information: <http://www.dosgringos.com> or call 760-477-7999.

About Scientific Certification Systems (SCS) - SCS is a leading third-party provider of certification, auditing and testing services, and standards, founded in 1984. Its programs recognize accomplishments in agricultural production, food processing and handling, forestry, fisheries, flowers and plants, energy, green building, manufacturing, and retail. VeriFlora certification is available to farmers and everyone in the supply chain, including shippers, distributors, bouquet makers and retailers. For more information: www.scscertified.com or call 510-452-8000.