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Farmers' West Flowers & Bouquets, Inc. Earns VeriFlora[®] Certification

Carpinteria, CA, November 13, 2008. Farmer's West Flowers & Bouquets, a premier grower and shipper of fresh cut flowers, greens and bouquets, has been independently certified under the VeriFlora Certified Sustainably Grown Program. The certification, conducted by Scientific Certification Systems (SCS), confirms that Farmers' West meets VeriFlora's high standards for environmental sustainability, social responsibility and product quality.

"Farmers' West promotes sustainable agriculture not only for the environment today, but for the future of our children and the world we will leave behind," says Wilja Happé, company owner. "As a grower and as a mother, it is important to me that Farmers' West continues to stand at the forefront of making this world a greener place. I also appreciate that the VeriFlora certification process emphasizes product quality and social responsibility as well as environmental sustainability."

Will Stewart, General Manager of Farmers' West described some of the company's initiatives that were reviewed by SCS as part of its VeriFlora certification assessment. "Recycling, conservation and innovation are at the heart of our 'Green as it Grows' program," he said. "One aspect of the program emphasizes reducing chemical use on our farms and ultimately our carbon footprint. Using steam to sterilize soil, IPM (integrated pest management) programs, specialized crop rotation cycles, and organic fertilizer together with effective micro-organisms has helped Farmers' West effectively reach some of these goals."

Farmers' West is committed to conserving water and helping protect local ocean estuaries. It uses drain water from hydroponically grown Gerberas as a nutrient and water source for our other crop, and reduces runoff using sediment and drainage ponds which have created small wildlife sanctuaries. Recycling of all green waste products into compost helps

develop rich, healthy soil that slows water and nutrient runoff. “I am so proud of how our company has addressed water issues” said Wilja Happé . “We all enjoy our local beaches. We all have children that swim and surf. It is important to us to keep our fields green AND our oceans blue.”

Farmer’s West is consistently looking for new solutions and innovations that will add value and improve quality. “Our latest program includes testing the vase life of all of our flower varieties to determine the best post harvest treatment options,” said Will Stewart. He explained that the information Farmers’ West receives from its testing will ultimately result in customers receiving flowers that have been given the absolute best, scientifically proven post-harvest treatment to ensure the best quality and the longest possible vase life.

“The VeriFlora Certification is proof of our commitment to quality,” said Maximino Santillan, CEO of Farmers’ West. Farmers’ West has four growing locations on the Central Coast of California with over 1.5 million square feet of cut flower production. Its nursery has covered, climate controlled production as well as 30,000 square feet of cooler and freezer storage which ensures proper “Cold Chain” protocol. In addition, Farmers’ West has strict quality control procedures for each stage of its production from bulb selection to shipping.

Farmers’ West specializes in Dutch flower varieties such as lilies, tulips, dahlia, and gerbera as well as California specialty cut flower varieties. Farmers’ West has a fully staffed marketing and promotions department and is especially known for its hand- tied, spiral woven European bouquet lines.

About Scientific Certification Systems (SCS) – Certification for a Sustainable World™
SCS has been providing global leadership in third-party environmental, sustainability, and food quality certification, auditing, testing and standards development for over 25 years. SCS's programs span a wide cross-section of the economy, recognizing accomplishments in the fields of green building, product manufacturing, forestry, retail, agricultural production, fisheries, energy, and food processing and handling. For more information about VeriFlora and SCS, visit www.veriflora.com or call 510-452-8000.

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Farmers’ West, Carpinteria CA



Hydroponically Grown Gerberas



Post Harvest Treatment Testing