



Fresh Floral Trends: SCS Pushing Sustainable Petals for Retailers Oct 5, 2009

Retailers seeking to enhance their sustainable footprint can now add fresh flowers to the mix via a new certified sustainably grown VeriFlora Preferred Retailer Program. Having gained widespread recognition in the cut flower, potted plant and material input sectors, more than 1 billion stems of cut flowers and 300 million potted plants have earned VeriFlora certification by program administrator Scientific Certification Systems (SCS) since 2005.

VeriFlora's certified eco-friendly products meet rigorous standards that protect the environment, support the needs of farmers, farm workers, their families and the community, and promote the highest delivered product quality throughout the distribution chain, relays Michael Keyes, certification manager for the Emeryville, Calif.-based SCS. "The VeriFlora Preferred Retail Program provides a new opportunity for retailers who want to proactively demonstrate their commitment to sustainability and differentiate their floral business or garden center."

Under the program, SCS trains retail staff about the environmental, social and quality requirements that must be met by growers and handlers of certified flowers and plants. Once this training is completed, stores are advised in the implementation of quality control measures such as cold-chain management, guided in proper labeling, supplied with merchandising materials, and listed on the VeriFlora Web site.

With hundreds of varieties of certified flowers and ornamental plants, participating retailers obviously have many choices, foremost of which is quality. Thus, consumers seeking products that have been produced in an environmentally and socially responsible manner still want to be sure that these products meet their quality expectations, says Keyes. As such, he adds, the certified-sustainable VeriFlora program can help customers "close the loop on quality."

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