

As the only show of its kind, the second edition of the Aviv Show took place at the Aviv headquarters in the Emmek Heffer industrial park from 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> June, 2013.

## Floral innovations and niche products at 2<sup>nd</sup> Aviv Show

Probably the best time to come to a show is just a few hours before the official opening. A sneak preview offers the chance to take a quiet stroll around while soaking up some pre show atmosphere. It also allows you to assess the show in terms of professionalism. How well-organised is it? How well-prepared are its exhibitors and how much thought and effort did they put into their displays?

### Lush green oasis

It was surprising to see how the organisers, with a keen eye for detail, turned a dark packaging area into a lush green oasis.

The concept is crystal clear and based on cost-effective stands that are more or less identical to each other. Exhibitors (see box) occupy a certain amount of floor space with a table and a few chairs, separated from their neighbours by walls made of cardboard Aviv boxes. It's a no frills show from which the non-essential features have been removed to keep the price low.

by Eyal Policar



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Professional growers were given free entry to the event and coffee and dinner were also free of charge. The Aviv show provided them with the ultimate one stop source for all horticultural needs: all of the hottest new varieties for 2013, top-notch learning opportunities and in-demand keynote speakers.

### Educational programme

The new general manager of Israel's Ministry of Agriculture, Mr Rami Cohen energised his audience by saying that he will do his utmost regarding the three key issues that are currently affecting the horticultural industry. He stressed that the country will not fall apart if

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## Exhibitors listing

Participants in the 2013 Aviv Show included: Armada, Isaacson Flowers, Bartels Stek, BI, Bloomz, Gafni Farms, Combinations, Danziger, Green Works International, Hilverda Kooij, Hishtil, Mizpor, Moshe Herman, Neta Quality Seeds, Nitzan Nir Nursery, Pollack Group, Yodfat, Agora, Barendsen, Bloemengroothandel Hollemans, Bumeldeal, Bloomways, Celdomy, Stiltorg Logistic Russia, Hamifleurs, Hilverda De Boer, JP Hogewoning, WK Heyl jr., Fleurametz, Florapunt, Floristencenter, Holland Indoor Plant, Van Vliet Flower Group, Salaba, Van Dijk, Valentins, Euroveiling, FloraHolland, VGB, Plantion, Veiling Rhein-Maas, Shaham, Israel Ministry of Agriculture, Mop Zafon and Mopdarom.



The Aviv event offered both exhibitors and attendees the perfect opportunity to network.

10,000 more foreign workers were to be given work permits in the agricultural sector.

Mr Cohen went on to say that the price of water for farmers should be reasonable. And new farmers should also be given access to new land and a well-oiled infrastructure. He promised that his Ministry will reserve 100 million shekel (\$28 million) to reinvigorate the country's agriculture. I asked him for an interview in six months to see where he stands because in order to achieve what he promises, he will have to withdraw some government decisions, which will not be an easy task.

The Pravda-style speech of Flora-Holland's Secretary, Ms Marielle Ammerlaan was uninspiring and contained a series of non-committal statements such as "what does the

consumer want" or "we should create an international commercial platform". To me, it's really unclear in which direction the auction's business strategy is heading and what the auction's future will look like. The presented facts and figures were from 2010 and didn't really address the Israeli grower. I doubt whether it provided the growers with useful tips in terms of business orientation.

### Enthusiastic entrepreneurs

I sat down with flower buyers Willem Pim Biewenga from Bloomways and Bob VandenBroecke from Floristcentre, working at cash and carry stores in the Rhein-Maas area and the Lille (Belgium) area respectively. The most innovative buyer I met was Ralf Peter Brohl from Valentines. Valentines buy readymade bouquets directly from growers to sell on line to the end customer. He told me they have set daily, weekly and monthly sales' targets for their bouquets. As soon as sales fall, they upgrade their ad on Google to a higher placement for a few hours. Brohl's enthusiasm was contagious and he was clearly delighted to meet farmers and tour their company after the show. I was especially keen to see young new farmers as they provide the necessary new blood needed in the industry while ensuring continuity for the international customers. And luckily I found plenty of promising new entrepreneurs such as the Dvir family (see photo) Rotem, Orly, Mayaan, and Yael from Kfar Hes



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Meanwhile, I did my best to collect some reliable figures regarding the number of growers, acreage and crops, but this turned out to be too complicated. It seems that there are opposing views and although it is clear that each grower must find his niche market it seems there is a lot of reticence.

Moshe Peretz, the CEO of Aviv deserves a special mention as he was the one who dreamed of putting Israel's flower industry in the spotlight and through this show, his dream has become reality. Small, neat, compact, friendly and flower focused, that's what the Aviv show is all about. Hopefully, it will continue for many years to come. III



Top-notch learning opportunities.