

MyPlant&Garden



THE CREAM OF THE ORNAMENTAL CROP IN THE WORLD'S MOST FASHIONABLE CITY

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Italy's most influential commercial ornamental horticulture event occurred in Milan between 22-24 February 2023, featuring 655 exhibitors on a show floor spanning 45,000m². More than 23,000 unique attendees experienced a state-of-the-art showcase of flowers, houseplants, annuals, trees, shrubs, agtech, machinery, and everything in between. Organiser V Srl Group has hailed the 2023 edition of MyPlant&Garden as one of the best in its brief history, reporting record attendance numbers.

MyPlant&Garden was established in 2015 by a consortium of 'hortipreneurs', including Floricoltura Pisapia, Florpagano, Florsistemi, Nicoli, Organizzazione Orlandelli, Vigo Gerolamo and Vivai d'Adda Gianpietro, who were tired and disappointed with Padua's iconic Flormart show which at that time was losing its lustre. The idea was to celebrate and showcase the best of Italian ornamental horticulture. The gargantuan 5.5ha exhibition centre Fiera Milano Rho continues to be the venue of choice for this show that has gone from strength to strength. Milan and horticultural trade exhibitions are familiar; between 1988 and 1999, the international horticultural trade exhibition Miflor was held annually in Italy's second-largest city.

A QUICK LOOK AT THE STATS

When people think about Italian plants, they usually imagine their food and beverage products, such as wine, olive oil, and pesto. They may need to realise that an incredibly extensive range of ornamentals is also a big part of Italian agriculture.

The most recent statistics, provided by farmer's research centre ISMEA, Italian statistics office ISTAT, TDM, AIPH, Flormart and ANVE, show 29,000 agricultural holdings in the country dedicate themselves to the production of freshly-cut flowers, houseplants, bedding plants, patio plants and nursery stock products. That same data reveals that there is 19,486ha dedicated to commercial ornamental horticulture with a farmgate value totalling €2.8 billion (1.3 billion for cut flowers and potted plants and 1.5 billion for nursery stock products).

Ornamental horticulture in Italy comprises many small to medium-sized family-run businesses, so there's a risk of underestimating its size. Considering that the global production value of ornamentals is approximately \$90 billion, Italy's flower and plant sector is considerably more significant than most people think.

Key facts regarding export values and export destinations, provided by Italy's national association of nursery stock exporters ANVE, indicate that last year the nation's export value of ornamentals was €1.1 billion (Italy's agriculture exports amounted to a total of €7.8 billion, ornamentals make up 14 per cent of that figure), making Italy the

world's third largest exporter of flowers and plants after the Netherlands and Colombia. The main markets are the Netherlands, Germany, and France. Italy's production stretches 1,500 km, from the Alps in the North to the Hyblaean Mountains in the extreme south. Toscana (30 per cent), Liguria (14 per cent), Sicily (9.6 per cent), Lombardy (8.9 per cent), Lazio (6 per cent), Puglia (5.7 per cent), Emilia-Romagna (4.7 per cent), Veneto (4 per cent) and Piedmont (2.8 per cent) rank among the epicentres of ornamentals production. The country's northern and western regions (39 per cent) and its southern regions are the cut flower, cut foliage and potted plant heartlands. At the same time, nursery stock production concentrates in the central regions, with Tuscany (Pistoia) occupying pride of place. The country has a variety of climates and soils that allow cut flowers, potted foliage and flowering plants, alpine plants, acidophil plants, conifers and broad-leaved trees, potted herbs, cut foliage, evergreen and deciduous trees, shrubs, bedding plants, bulbs, orchids, and indoor/outdoor tropics to grow.

PHYTOWEB

ANVE President Luigi Pagliani, a Cupressus and Quercus grower from Perugia, is 'cautiously optimistic' about the year ahead. There have been some positives for all the negative consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic. Pagliani cites the massive boom in home gardening when the world entered a lockdown, eco-conscious consumerism, and the mega tree



ANVE President Luigi Pagliani.

planting efforts worldwide to mitigate climate change. He says, "During the pandemic, demand was up 30-36 per cent compared to the pre-Covid year of 2019. The only problem was that the demand exceeded the offer in some product categories, such as avenue trees and hedge plants. Growers had to drain their stocks. As a result, some growers lost ten per cent in 2022 compared with 2021. This shortage will be solved quickly for hedges, especially Photinia and Prunus laurocerasus. It will take longer for avenue trees."

Pagliani admits that the economic outlook for ornamental horticulture in Italy varies from segment to segment. Rising commodity prices, Russia's war against Ukraine, inflation and declining consumer confidence are weighing on the sector as a whole. Still, cut flower and houseplant growers are clearly under more strain as they need to heat their greenhouses.

When asked about the biggest challenges the sector faces right now, he mentions labour shortage, the difficulties in acquiring new land, and plant health.

Today exports represent between 15-20 per cent per year of all Italian flower,



Bustling aisles at this year's MyPlant & Garden show in Milan.

plant, and nursery stock sales. Billions of plants move annually within the borderless internal market of the EU and third markets. The sites of their production and destination are countless. New devastating pests, however, do not stop at the customs border, which is why plant health is under threat globally, and regulations, statutory controls, and plant health regimes are becoming stricter and stricter.

At MyPlant, ANVE, in association with the Italian Trade Agency (ITA), launched a new plant health portal, www.phytoweb.it. This ambitious project helps users understand and stay updated on constantly changing and complex export and import requirements for plants within the EU and third countries.

It was launched at MyPlant on Wednesday, 22 February, with ANVE's Phytoweb project manager, Edoardo Sciutti, demonstrating the portal's functionalities. ANVE's initiative was greeted with enthusiasm, especially from the following, including Roberto Luongo (Director General of ICE), Gianluca Buemi (councillor at the Italian association for agronomists CONAF), and Federico Simone (representing CNPAPAL, Italy's home for agricultural knowledge).

Phytoweb.it is for the seasoned plant exporter, importer and grower venturing abroad for the first time. The portal offers the possibility to consult all the phytosanitary regulations quickly and easily for every destination and origin.

The system is user-friendly and swift and offers a search engine that generates fact sheets on the following topics: Species, Plant Material, Destination, and Harmful Organisms. In an absolute first, the portal offers industry professionals a tool to create a pest management plan online to mitigate the risks of infestation by quarantine and non-quarantine pests. This portal section also allows users to create digital plant passports, which can be mailed to customers abroad.

MORE CAUTIOUS AND CHOOSIER BEDDING PLANT CUSTOMERS

Gruppo Padana in northern Italy addresses the growing concern over the effects of plant protection products on the environment and human health. The nursery grows

approximately 100 million young plants per year with 'respect for the planet'. Its environmentally friendly approach means that an optimum blend of beneficial moulds, bacteria, vitamins, and biocontrol agents replaces chemicals to the extent of what is possible.

Giorgio and Paolo Gazzola founded Gruppo Padana in 1988 when they took over their father Albino's 8,500m² nursery. Since then, the business has grown by leaps and bounds, operating from different sites in Paese and Gaarine, both near Treviso. Their combined greenhouse space spans 350,000m², and they produce a wide range of plug plants - raised by seed or cuttings - for professional bedding plant growers in Italy and abroad. Exports make up 50 per cent of their business.

At MyPlant, surrounded by massive displays of plant material, the company's German-speaking sales rep Mario Rigatti recalls how last year's hot temperatures and drought (which still continues) began as early as May - usually the busiest time of the year for the gardening industry and when around 75 per cent of the plants are sold. The weather forced growers to scrap their perishable crops. Furthermore, in the Spring of 2022, the ending of Covid-19 restrictions signalled the movement of people picking up travelling and holidaying instead of turning massively to horticulture as they did in the first two years of the global health crisis. "Our customers have become more cautious and choosier," says Rigatti, who has recently seen more split orders from

growers who want to take an option on additional plant batches later in the season.

The news of the moment is 'Top Tunia', the blooming result of the company's first steps into the world of plant breeding. Gruppo Padana launched this new line of early and abundantly flowering Petunias five years ago, and it now includes more than 20 varieties. Tapping into the worldwide local-for-local trend, Gruppo Padana joined forces with Italy's national garden centre association, the Associazione Italiana Centri Giardinaggio (AICG) - which hosted its 11th national conference at MyPlant&Garden - to launch a new brand campaign centred on local.

Together they offered Italian customers a line of 12 'Top Tunias' in a rainbow of colours, highlighting them as a prime example of locally grown and sourced plants and a token of appreciation to local businesses and their workers. More breeding work from Gruppo Padana, notably in early flowering, compact *Lantana Lantastic* for high-density planting and large-flowered *Portulaca Kokorita*, is in the pipeline.

WHEN LIFE GIVES YOU LEMONS

Vito Giambò, owner and general manager of Sicily-based Giambò Piante, was happy to encounter the same 'bel movimento' (good traffic) at MyPlant as he had at IPM Essen. Giambò explains the business essentials, "On a combined poly-roofed greenhouse area of 22 ha, we grow around 1.5 million ornamental citrus and 100,000 ornamental olives per year in pot sizes 12cm to 75 and everything in between. We sell up to 90 per cent of our plants to garden centres,

Left to right:
Mario Rigatti
and Paola Gazzola
of Gruppo Padana.





Vito Giambò, owner and general manager of Sicily-based Giambò Pianta.

supermarkets, discounters and DIY stores."

He adds that the period between January and May marks the company's peak season, where nearly every day, a long line of trucks park on the roadsides of Furnari, an otherwise sleepy town with 4,000 inhabitants, 40kms west of Messina. The truck drivers wait their turn to load the 'fruity cargo' before returning to Germany and Scandinavia. Giambò Pianta's broad assortment includes many different types of ornamental citrus. "In lemon alone, we boast 20 varieties, in oranges 17, while there's also an exciting collection of lime trees."

Giambò Pianta is an environmentally conscious company using biocontrol agents for crop protection and pots of recycled plastic, and it's looking into ways to reduce the use of peat. It has earned MPS FruitandVegetables and GlobalG.A.P. GRASP certification for its efforts.

Growing ornamental citrus is not a job for the faint-hearted or, as Giambò puts it, 'the success in growing starts with the right rootstock (Citrus macrophylla, Citrus volkameriana, Citrange troyer) and it also starts with the 60 people within our team – they are our biggest success."

For the production of healthy rootstock, the company has banded together

with a group of growers who, on the western part of the island (Marsala), raise the different rootstocks from seed. After one year, the scions are joined to the rootstock via grafting. Two months later, the protection paper bag can be removed, and the plants move into the greenhouse to finish them. The entire process from seed to fruit-bearing indoor citrus tree ready for sale takes three years. Asked about the biggest achievements since the company's foundation in 2000, Giambò references his success in further miniaturising ornamental citrus. In 2006, the company announced the arrival of a mini citrus tree in a 14cm pot. Seventeen years later, the company succeeded in taming citrus in a 12cm pot, ideal for retail sales with quick turnarounds.

HAPPY HOUSEPLANT GROWER

Antonio Pisapia of Floricoltura Pisapia, one of the seven co-founders of MyPlant&Garden, told *FCI* that they were happy with the quality of the show's visitors.

Floricoltura Pisapia is a family-run plant business founded by the now 76-year-old Lucio Pisapia, known for his flat cap but, above all, for being a self-made horticultural entrepreneur. In the 1960s, Pisapia senior started small as an ambulant plant vendor, visiting his clients in the province of Salerno driving in his quintessentially Italian three-wheeler, Ape.

In 1973, he founded his company and grew it into what it is today: a 6.5-ha indoor plant grower operating from



Left to right: Antonio and Luciano Pisapia.

two sites in Eboli and Sant'Antonio di Pontecagnano. The company specialises in predominantly green foliage plants such as Philodendron, Scindapsus, Dracaena, Nephrolepis and other trailing houseplants, and Hydrangeas. The most significant chunk of their plant sales is in the domestic market, particularly in the northern part of the country.

Export sales make up around eight per cent of the turnover. Clients abroad include French garden centres and Dutch growers.

In determining the current market needs, Pisapia believes it is essential to avoid what the Dutch are good at: mass production of a more standardised plant assortment in smaller pot sizes. "We would like to differentiate ourselves with bigger pot sizes from 19cm to 40/ and 50cm. Moreover, we always look for something less mainstream regarding plant shape, foliage patterns and colours."

To combat the rising energy prices, Floricoltura Pisapia switched from methane to LPG to heat their greenhouses. Adjusting their heating system proved relatively easy, while the cost savings are significant as LPG is three times less expensive. They also heat part of the greenhouses using (not so sustainable) biomass.

Meanwhile, Pisapia is confident that the demand for houseplants in Italy will continue to be resilient for the foreseeable future. He says, "Product availability continues to be an issue in some categories. Facing sky-high commodity prices, smaller producers of houseplants have reduced their crop numbers or stopped production altogether, which makes our room on the market even bigger. Nevertheless, we don't want to sit on our laurels, and we will continue to follow the path of innovation."

As one of MyPlant's co-founders, we asked Pisapia about the absence at the show of the big names from Pistoia. Citing as one of the reasons, he mentioned the fantastic IPM Essen show, which wrapped up in Germany only a few weeks ago and in which participated the leading Pistoian plant nurseries. Also, there is an issue with timing as the retail-focused plant nurseries from Pistoia sustain that the end of February is too late for their type of business.

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION

Rising to international stardom is Flor-Export, a hundred-strong member cut flower and cut foliage cooperative from Viareggio. Their work recently 'bloomed on the silver screen', serving as the backdrop for a new crime movie *Klem*, by Dutch film director Frank Ketelaar. Flor-Export's Ilaria Bertolucci explained that filming happened on a flower farm amid Tuscany's rolling hills and at the cooperative's rotunda-shaped headquarters in Viareggio. The latter served as a setting for a brutal fight scene, with actors kicking over dozens of trolleys laden with flowers. Naturally, the filmmakers compensated for the flowers destroyed during the actors' battle.

Fifteen cut flowers and cut foliage growers founded the cooperative in 1966 as an alternative to the local flower wholesale market in Viareggio, one of the major cities in Versilia, the area right along the Tuscan coast on the north-western edge of the province of Lucca.

Back in the 1960s, floriculture was once one of the pillars of Viareggio's industry. A series of booms and busts followed, albeit less important economically, it is still alive and



Ilaria Bertolucci, Sauro Angeli and Emanuele Francesconi staffed Flor-Export's stand.

Carles Jubany Fontanillas, recipient of Italy's prestigious Silver Carnation Award.



kicking. Flor-Export, for example, is expanding its footprint by adapting to a new market and user expectations, partly helped by the gardening and home decorating boom during the pandemic.

In 2021, at the height of the pandemic, it reported €4.5 million in sales, the coop's most significant annual revenue ever.

Export sales account for 15 per cent of the cooperative's turnover, with GlobalG.A.P.-certified cut foliage such as Ruscus, Eucalyptus and Myrtus among the top-selling products abroad. Sauro Angeli joined Flor-Export as a managing director in 2016 and says that the run-up to All Saint's Day (*I morti*) is one of the busiest times of the year, with nearly a million disbudded and spray Chrysanthemums changing hands. Lisianthus and Statice are also among the flagship products, which are typically given more time to grow than counter crops in the industrial, highly automated Dutch greenhouses.

In Lisianthus, for example, growers have two crop cycles per year, whereas the Dutch peers have up to five flushes. The less intensive and more organically flower farming – the members of Flor-Export sustain – result in quality flowers with sturdy stems, long shelf life and bold, non-fading colours. These quality criteria are much appreciated by the cooperative's customer base, which at home is mainly made up of floral wholesalers in northern Italy. Cut foliage predominantly finds its way to Dutch and UK-based flower factories, which use them as fillers in bouquets destined for UK supermarkets.

In commenting on the cooperative's

participation in MyPlant, Bertolucci says, "I think that Myplant is increasingly becoming important year after year as it allows us to meet international customers and breeders face to face. What's more, MyPlant serves as a unique bridge between florists and growers to exchange ideas and information about trends, new colours, flower shapes and more. "This meeting between wedding planners, florists and growers is crucial for us as a cooperative. MyPlant helps the European industry acquaint with flowers and cut foliage made in Italy which are readily available in the right season."

SILVER CARNATION AWARD

Among MyPlant's top attractions is the Flower District in Hall 16, the best place to find the full range of freshly cut flowers. Growers, wholesalers, florists, and floristry suppliers brought out their best, most exciting new flowers during the many floral design shows by a host of the 'floral and famous in floristry'. Creating the right amount of buzz was FLOOS, touted as the world's first 100 per cent online and monthly updated library of professional floral recipes, with floral designers explaining how to create technically advanced floral compositions, step-by-step, with videos and photos.

Third-generation florist, Carles Jubany Fontanillas from San Celoni (Greater Barcelona) was named best Spanish flower arranger in 2018. He founded Floos in 2015 as an online instruction tutorial platform, collaborating with more than 30 of the world's top florists. Floos-associated florists include big

names such as Per Benjamin (Sweden), Nicolaus Peters (Germany), Alex Choi (South Korea), Joseph Massie (UK), Mark Pampling (Australia), Rudy Casati (Italy), Soren van Laer (Belgium), Daniel Santamaria (Spain), and naturally, Jubany Fontanillas himself.

At MyPlant, Rosario Alfino, president of the Italian Florist Association Federfiori and owner of Aliflora, a flower shop at Catania's high-end street Via Trieste, presented Jubany Fontanillas with Italy's coveted Silver Carnation Award in recognition of his digital entrepreneurship and for increasing global access to high-quality flower arranging.

Now in its 49th year, the Silver Carnation Awards is an initiative of the Cultural Association of Flowers of Giarre and Mount Etna with the support of Catania's Chamber of Commerce. Its statutory rules stipulate that the glitzy award ceremony must always occur in its homeland of Sicily. The accolade recognises excellence and innovation in business management, floriculture, floral design, journalism, medicine, public governance, art, entertainment, and charity. Jubany Fontanillas was awarded in the floral design category. He is one of only five people to receive a Silver Carnation honour outside Sicily, with the late Ester Boschetti (Italian Rose Society), Carlo Scarchilli (Fiera di Roma), Egon Gallinis (Messe Essen) and Pope Francis preceding him.

Over the past decades, more than 400 Garofano d'Argento awards have been presented to people who have significantly contributed to the Italian and international flower industry. The list of award winners includes Robert F. Zurel, Wim van Meeuwen, Jan Petiet, Pierre Barandou, Nancy Laws, Egon Galinnis, Jochen Henneke, Jaap Kras, Ron van der Ploeg, Nobel Prize winner Francesco Bruno Gnisci, Ester Nunziata, Charles Lansdorp, Arturo Croci, Marta Pizano, Alicia Namesny.

Federfiori's Alfino stresses that the award's founder, the late Dr Carlo Cali, and the organising team genuinely deserve credit for helping Sicilian businesses to grow and promote the beauty of the island of Sicily. He quickly adds that Cali's daughter Carmelita continues to play an essential role in the event.

WEDDING FLOWERS SPECTACLE

Another highlight at MyPlant's Flower



Charles Lansdorp and Dini Holtrop. (Below) Dini Holtrop had designed and arranged a table display for a wedding party. She incorporated small and giant spherical spray rose bouquets in ornate cut glass vases and shallow bowls.

district was the 'wedding flowers' themed Dutch pavilion built by Charles Lansdorp and his team with the support of the Dutch Embassy in Rome and the Consulate General in Milan. Visitors marvelled at the sumptuous display of Corelli, the brand name for Takii's spectacular series of Lisianthus with double, fringed petals.

Dini Holtrop, named best Dutch flower arranger in 2014, had designed and arranged a table display for a wedding party incorporating small and giant spherical spray rose bouquets placed in ornate cut glass vases and shallow bowls. The spray roses sponsored by the World of Spray Roses, a conglomerate of globally operating spray rose growers with a combined production area spanning 1,500ha in the Netherlands, Kenya, Ethiopia, Colombia, Ecuador, and China, provided an explosion of colour. This blossoming alliance grows more than one billion spray roses in many colours mirrored in more than 200 varieties.

The Dutch pavilion hosted a series of wedding-themed floral design shows by Holtrop, who also made her way to the Flower District's main stage on Thursday, 23 February, with a floral

design show focused on sustainable floral design. On this occasion, the floral design Holtrop's assistant, Bert Kuiper, arrived on a cargo bike decked with flowers and a message encouraging arrangers to be environmentally friendly and work to reduce their carbon footprint.

Decorum member and Lisianthus grower Big Sun had his moment of fame with their newest line of Big Sun Lisianthus being placed in the limelight. Hofland Freesia, also a member of the grower's alliance Decorum, showcased its cut Kalanchoe as a strikingly unique feature flower in wedding bouquets. Italy is a trendy choice for destination weddings, with castles, villas, abbeys, and picturesque villages being well-loved venues. [In October 2021, FCI magazine, supported by the International Association of Horticultural Producers \(AIPH\), Bloom's Academy and Flower Academy Italy, brought together an impressive line-up of expert international industry speakers on the wedding flowers market.](#)

Taking part was Simona Polli, the chief editor of two of Italy's leading wedding magazines, *The Real Wedding* and *Sposa*

White, where she explained that weddings and flowers in Italy are big spending affairs with couples easily spending from 3,000 euros up to 500,000 on flowers, including bridal bouquets, boutonnieres, table pieces, archways, and venue installations. The sumptuous floral displays in the Dutch stand at MyPlant were also for the benefit of a fashion shoot for Polli's magazines.

A PRICKLY SUCCESS

It is safe to say that AG San Remo's stand was the most photographed at MyPlant.

Resembling the lower part of a water wheel in appearance, the giant display was a nod to the dynamic and booming cacti and succulent market, deriving mainly from a continuing pent-up demand and a continuous search for 'something new and something different'.

AG is the acronym for Asseretto and Garibaldi, a husband and wife team from San Remo who bred and grew carnations. That is, until 1976 when they sowed their first batch of 4,000 cacti and realised the crop's economic potential.

Fast forward to 2023, the MPS-certified company has 3ha of greenhouses and 1ha of field production at Via Armea in San Remo, the same street on which the city's iconic flower market is located. The fourth-generation plant nursery is owned and run by Anna Maria Asseretto and offers an extensive selection of small, medium-sized and large cacti



Anna Maria Asseretto of AG San Remo.

Germano Lorenzetto and Elena Falone.



and succulent plants, including a range of specimen cacti and gift planters. They grow the largest chunk of plants themselves but also work exclusively with a group of nearby growers who supply plants to complete the offer. The business attributes almost 70 per cent of its turnover to income from exports, with its customer base predominantly concentrated in France, the Netherlands, and Denmark. At the turn of the millennium, AG significantly expanded its business by adding a landscape contracting and garden maintenance service.

HEADY AROMAS AND HIGH DEMAND

At the Myplant stand, Elena Falone gushes in fluent English. "We've been swamped here, so lots of new leads and hopefully new customers."

Falone works for the herb and patio plant nursery Lorenzetto from Albenga, one of the horticultural heartlands of Italy.

The Albenga Plain is formed by a vast delta and is the Italian Riviera's only natural flat area on the 'Ponente' (eastern) side. Over the past few years, the production of flowers and plants has dramatically increased here. At the same time, in other areas nearby, such as Sanremo, ornamental horticulture faces important challenges due to logistical problems and higher land prices.

The Albenga plain is blessed with a benign microclimate as mountains surround it to the north, protecting it from cold winds. The Ligurian sea moderates winter temperatures, and days of frost are rare. "All this results in strong, sturdy herbs with a full, heady aroma," says Falone crushing a branch of *Rosmarinus officinalis* between her fingers to prove her point. The third-generation plant nursery Lorenzetto has deep roots in

floriculture, producing cut flowers and tropical houseplants, and later, by the end of the 1980s, swapping these for potted herbs, a wide range of Lavandula, Daisies (in pot, hanging basket or as a mini tree), seasonal flowering pot plants such as Cyclamen, Poinsettia, Dianthus, Dipladenia and Calla, plus a collection of Mediterranean plants including ornamental Citrus, Nerium oleander and Passiflora.

Asked about the company's core products, Falone mentions Rosmarinus, Lavender, adding that there is no business case for the quintessential Italian basil. "The plant is too easy to grow, plus it does not withstand long-haul transport very well. And everyone can sow basil."

Lorenzetto sells a sizeable amount of its plants to the Danish cooperative GASA from Odense, with GASA's purchasing staff visiting the company at least three times during the selling season. The newest product is Eat-Bio herbs in 100 per cent biodegradable rice hull (reinforced with starch) pots in which plants are repotted before shipping. Falone says it is biodegradable in six to 12 months, and demand for Eat-Bio comes mainly from Scandinavia and the Czech Republic.

The company currently ships around 40 per cent of its herbs in bio pots. According to the news agency ADN Kronos, the production of pot plants in Albenga represents 20 per cent of the Italian market, with 120 million plants per year. Besides the Italian market, the plants are reaching the consumers of Central and Northern Europe, and recently also those of Eastern Europe. The essential products are daisies (12 million plants), Cyclamen (5 million), rosemary (30 million), lavender (20 million) and sage (5 million). However, the assortment is now wider, especially for flowering pot plants.