



Italy – A Beautiful Week: Reconnecting through Fairly and Sustainably Produced Flowers

We celebrated Grandparents Day on 2 October: this year being so unique the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Rome was resolved to give a very special twist to the celebrations, and, in collaboration with the Felini Foundation, the Comitato Festa dei Nonni (Grandparents Day Committee), Fairtrade Italy, Federfiori and the fair Myplant & Garden, decided to honour our elderly with a promotional campaign spanning from 23 September to 9 October and including the Week against Loneliness.

It is now time to look back at the activities which took place in Italy in this period.

The 2020 Grandparents Day Promotional Campaign – Sustainability and Solidarity

With the appearance of COVID-19 in our lives, sustainability is becoming even more central in our choices as human beings and as consumers, together with the awareness that everything and everyone is connected, and that each choice we make has an impact on the Planet, ourselves, and our fellow humans. This, paired with the need to reconnect with our elderly and give them back a sense of belonging in these times of social distancing, was at the core of the 2020 promotional campaign, where solidarity and connection between the different generations through sustainably produced flowers and plants were central throughout.

The Webinar: A sustainable Floriculture to Reshape the Future

So, we kicked off the promotional campaign of Grandparents Day and the Week against Loneliness on 23 September with the webinar “Una floricultura sostenibile per ridisegnare il futuro” (A sustainable Floriculture to Reshape the Future), organised in collaboration with the fair Myplant & Garden, Fairtrade Italy and the Felini Foundation: in front of a very attentive virtual audience our Ambassador and

guest speakers outlined a renewed approach to the customer where sustainability and social responsibility are central, and where good practices such as shortening the production and supply chain, door to door deliveries, fresh flower subscription services and, above all, fairly produced flowers, all contribute to soothing both customers and the troubles the horticultural sector is experiencing at the moment.

We had the chance to see how personal attention is crucial to our wellbeing and especially that of the elderly, how this can be so simply and beautifully conveyed through the language of flowers, and how we must and can reinvent ways to bring this beauty where is needed.



Beeld: Marguerite Sipman

The Florists for our Children and Elderly: the Workshops

Throughout Grandparents Day (2 October) and the Week against Loneliness many activities, especially in the form of workshops, took place throughout Italy,, supported by local authorities, volunteer associations, the Grandparents Day Committee, the Felini Foundation, Fairtrade Italy, the Dutch and Italian growers who provided flowers and plants, and last but not least Federfiori, the National Florists association which recruited many enthusiastic flower shop owners.

In Rome, Turin, Novara and other cities, the restrictions due to COVID-19 did not stop our eager florists, only challenged them to find alternative ways to teach

children in total safety how to make beautiful arrangements with Fairtrade flowers to donate to (their) grandparents or elderly people.

In some cases the workshop activities were brought to retirement homes, where the guests made use of their creativity to decorate plants. And we did not forget to spread our project with all means possible: we used all the social media channels at our disposal, publishing news and updates on all the activities, and our agricultural advisor Marguerite Sipman participated in a program on a local TV station where she was [interviewed](#) to explain the promotional campaign and the philosophy behind it.

Beauty for the Soul: Hold on to the Feeling

It was a beautiful week: the energy and commitment of children, florists, experts, volunteers associations, trade associations and local authorities alike contributed to give relief and solace to our elderly, and gave nourishment to the souls of all those involved. Let's hold on to this feeling for this year to come, awaiting another beautiful and special Grandparents Day.

