



Flash Flower's production manager, Mustafa Dokuyucu.

At Flash Flower, customers are left spoiled for choice as the company specialises in 70 different varieties of carnations. "Our range of products include carnations from all leading Spanish, Italian and Dutch carnation breeders which are tested in specific sections of the greenhouse. At this time of year, Flash Flower gears up for the peak sales season with a high demand for red carnations for Christmas and Valentine's Day," said production manager, Mustafa Dokuyucu.

Antalya ranks among Europe's most important carnation production centers and sends over 40 million flowers to some 25 countries ahead of Valentine's Day alone.

The company grows four crops a year with a plant density of 26/m<sup>2</sup>, crop time varies depending on the season from 1 to 1.5 months. The company has its mother stock and rooting station. Soil born pests and diseases present major challenges in the production of carnations and soils must be disinfested before planting a new crop. As the use of methyl bromide has been gradually phased out in Europe, the company now uses metham sodium and basamid to sterilize their sandy soils. Basamid Granular, is a chemical soil sterilizer and a technically feasible and cost-effective chemical alternative to methyl bromide.

Carnation is a very labour-intensive crop and it is interesting to see how Antalya carnation growers address the labour issue by simply employing a family of three or four, running each 5,000 m<sup>2</sup> of production. In turn, the families receive free housing and electricity as well as a salary which is based on the amount of harvested stems. Flash Flower's annual output is around 100 million stems. Over the years, the company had earned different certifications guaranteeing that its carnations and cut greens (20ha!) are produced in an environmentally friendly and socially responsible way. III

# Buongiorno!

by Arturo Croci

## Grandparents' Day Italy

It has been nearly fifteen years since November 1997, when Franco Locatelli, President of the former Unafior, the Italian horticultural union, alongside Valter Pironi, former director of the Minoprio School, Wim van Meeuwen, director of the Dutch Flower Council in Milan and I, the undersigned, officially launched Grandparents' Day in Italy to promote the consumption of plants and flowers and bring more young people into the world of ornamentals.

Grandparents' Day was first introduced in the United States in 1978 during the presidency of Jimmy Carter, proposed by Marian McQuade, a housewife from West Virginia.

In Italy, the first Grandparents' Day was June 13<sup>th</sup> 1998 (the last day of school) and financed by some Italian horticultural companies. It was a competition of poetry and painting depicting plants and flowers. The event ended with incredible results and over 3,000 Italian schools participating. The organisers received more than 3,000 drawings and 2,240 poems. Today, this poetry competition, also dubbed, "A flower for your Grandparents" is the largest in Italy; every year more than 5,000 poems are submitted.

In 2000, one of the driving forces behind Grandparents' Day, Charles Lansdorp and his wife Tania, moved from Holland to Italy. Mrs. Tania Kok-Lansdorp and her daughters founded a dancing school and an artistic musical group called "I Felini" (The Cats) and started promoting Grandparents' Day.

On July 31<sup>st</sup> 2005, the Italian Parliament with Law n. 159 established and recognised the Grandparents' Day on an annual fixed date of October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Since 2005, "I Felini", thanks to the friendship and help of singer and composer, Walter Bassani, have had great success with the song "Tu sarai" performed by Silvia Fusè at the Floating Flower Parade (Varend Corso) in the Netherlands, the "I Felini" song for Children, the Foundation of Francesco Gocchi and at the inauguration of Orto di Fiori. The Grandparents' Day was introduced in Spain, Austria and in other European countries, with the mythical figure of the Guglielmo tree and with it, the Colour your Life campaign.

A dream that began many years ago has finally become a reality, Franco Locatelli, the main creator of Grandparents' Day has died, but his ideas, his work and his enthusiasm, will carry on forever. This year, Cosimo Pagano, the Honorary President of the Committee of Grandparents' Day, organised a major event which took place at Bari's Fiera del Levante, promoting the festival with flowers and plants. In 15 years, more than 300,000 young people have participated in Grandparents' Day with enthusiasm, writing poetry and short stories as well as learning to know and love the flowers and plants.

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