

FLOWER NEWS 2

February 2007

Newsletter by the Secretariat of the Review Committee FFP

Dear readers:

The creation of this newsletter is to inform you about the latest news in the flower industry around the whole world. Our writers are the members of the Review Committee of FFP and sympathising organisations. Below each article you will find the name of the writer and his/her e-mail address in case you want to know more about the subject.

Enjoy it and don't hesitate to contact us if you have any comment and/or question about this newsletter.

Regards,

Editors

Betsabé Lugo Rodríguez
Secretariat Amsterdam

Sebastian Odanga
Secretariat Nairobi

News from FFP bodies:**Secretariat – Amsterdam**

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🌍 International Flower Coordination

In March 2007 the meeting of the International Flower Coordination is going to take place in Cologne, Germany. A lot of NGOs and Trade Unions will attend the meeting.

Secretariat – Nairobi

The Secretariat of the Review Committee of FFP in Nairobi is under charge of Sebastian Odanga. P.O. box 2378 – 00100, G.P.O. Nairobi, Kenya. Telephone: +254 720 407 184, mobile: +254 720 538 855, e-mails: iuflantic@lantic.net and sirseby@yahoo.com

🌍 Fourth Review Committee meeting

The next meeting of the Review Committee will be in Tanzania at the end of March 2007.

🌍 World Social Forum- WSF Nairobi (20-25 January, 2007)

About 50,000 participants attended the just concluded World Social Forum, WSF, in Nairobi Kenya. The theme of the forum was 'another world is possible'. Discussions and events at the forum ranged from cultural, democracy and good governance, social justice etc. Groups represented included, minority indigenous groups, the disadvantaged groups, trade unions, church organizations, cultural and entertainment groups, youth groups, political groups, etc.

The presence of a large number of trade unions at the World Social Forum, WSF Nairobi pointed to the warming of relations between the unions and NGOs. Recently there has been a trend towards mergers in the Trade unions world,

significantly the merger between the International Free Trade Confederation and World Confederation of Labour in November 2006.

The preparations of the WSF Nairobi manifested a rare unity of the Trade unions and the NGOs. The newly merged International Union Confederation, ITUC, under the banner of 'Decent work' hosted various events in the forum in conjunction with various labour-oriented NGOs. ITUC launched its 'Decent work' campaign in the forum alongside SOLIDAR, Social Alert International and other NGOs, proving that global level unions and NGOs can work together effectively.

Sebastian Odanga, Secretariat of the Review Committee in Nairobi, attended events under the banner of "Decent work", Fair-trade workshops, discussions on Economic Partnership Agreements, two events organized by the DGB Bildungswerk on Flower productions and workers rights and the fair-trade, flower labels and labour rights.

In the event on Fair-trade; consumers powers, flower labels and labour rights, FFP was represented by Martin Siecker (FNV, The Netherlands) who presented a paper on the development of the new initiative. Other labels represented were FLP, max havelaar and the Kenya Flower Council. The papers mainly centered on the codes available in the industry, how they work, their uniqueness and benefits to stakeholders in the industry.

Participants were taken through the history of workers' struggles in Colombia especially the workers in the Flower industry. This was at the event on Flower production and workers right organized by DGB Bildungswerk. The conditions of work both in Kenya and Colombia were extensively discussed in the event.

All in all, the discussions on various topics were very informative and educative. It was an opportunity for establishing networks amongst many players in as many fields as were there. And above all a meeting of minds to exchange ideas.

By Sebastian Odanga: sirseby@yahoo.com

Board

🚩 Board meeting in Aalsmeer, The Netherlands (January 8th , 2007)

Agenda points:

- Approval of the Benchmark and the side letter

Next meeting: February 28th, 2007 in Aalsmeer, the Netherlands

By Regina Dinkla: r.dinkla@fairflowersfairplants.com

FFP office – Honselersdijk

🚩 Pilot projects

The actual projects go very good: Germany are selling FFP flowers and plants; France are selling FFP flowers and they want to start with FFP plants; and UK are selling FFP plants and they want to sell FFP flowers too.

FFP want to start a pilot project in Switzerland but they don't have yet any concrete date.

By Regina Dinkla: r.dinkla@fairflowersfairplants.com

🚩 FFP identification at clock fronts and in supply systems of Dutch auctions. Press release - Honselersdijk, 22 December 2006

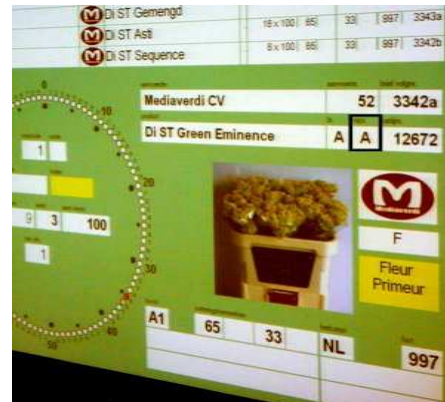
A growing number of producers supplies sustainable produced flowers and plants under the international consumer label Fair Flowers Fair Plants (FFP). At the moment the names of these growers can only be found on the FFP website. As from the 2nd week of January 2007 this will change. As from that date the Dutch flower auctions FloraHolland and Bloemenveiling Aalsmeer will start to indicate the FFP identification on the clock fronts and in the supply systems of Clock and Direct Sales. In this way a large buyers group is informed about the number of FFP producers and about the width of the assortment.

The advantage for the producer is that his product will be recognizable as FFP product during and after the auction process. As the product also will be indicated

as FFP in the electronic systems, FFP traders can meet with the tracing conditions of FFP more easily.

Indication at clock front

For MPS-A certified companies that are member of FFP (and are also MPS Socially Qualified certified) the "A" that is indicated behind the producer name at the clock front, will be replaced by an "F". This will not only be visible at the clock fronts but also in the supply systems of Clock and Direct Sales. This way the trader/exporter will see an "F" at all FFP Accepted producers on the distribution lists, in the electronic transaction data and on the electronic invoices.



Optimal traceability

The FFP product stays recognizable during and after the auction process. This is an important advantage for the producer. However also the FFP trader will profit from this. As the FFP product stays recognizable in the supply systems of the auctions, a trader is automatically able to trace the products in his administration more easily and by that fulfil the FFP conditions. Like that it will be even more attractive for the traders to start buying and selling FFP products.

By Regina Dinkla: r.dinkla@fairflowersfairplants.com

FFP stand in Spring Florist Event in Birmingham, UK on 21-22 January, 2007



FFP stand in IPM Essen, Germany from 25-28 January 2007



🌱 **Now also in Sweden it will be easy to buy good flowers! Press release - 12 February 2007**

Blomsterbranschens Riksorganisation in Sweden now also introduces consumer label for sustainable produced flowers and plants - Fair Flowers Fair Plants.

To Valentines Day consumers in Sweden can also buy flowers now with the guarantee of being produced in a sustainable way that shows respect for both human beings and the environment. They will find these flowers in many Euroflorist- and Interflora-shops as well as in Coop Forum supermarkets and Plantagen garden centres under the label of FFP.

In 100 sales points in Sweden the consumer can look for the FFP label in the shops and there they will find the right flowers. If a sales point, where the consumer normally buys its flowers, does not sell FFP-flowers, the client can ask them to. The FFP-flowers are obtainable on the market and all traders in the market can sell FFP-flowers if they want to.

For questions about the start in Sweden please call the office of Blomsterbranschens Riksorganisation, phone number 0478-42222.

By Regina Dinkla: r.dinkla@fairflowersfairplants.com

🌱 **Valentine's Day – February 14th 2007**

There is an information activity of FFP planned in Austria on February 11 for Valentine's day in the *Bloemengroos* market in Wien. Traders and retailers are going to be there.

By Regina Dinkla: r.dinkla@fairflowersfairplants.com

🌱 **Industry Committee meeting (January 19th, 2007)**

Agenda points:

- Approval of minutes of meeting 24 November
- Working plan
- Website improvements
- Italy + Germany state of play bottleneck regarding decoration greens
- Discussion about bigger involvement with points of sale & starting more pilots (How can we do this to get more results?)
- Involvement consumers (how to stimulate the demand for FFP products)
- Outstanding actions

Next meeting: April 13th, 2007

By Regina Dinkla: r.dinkla@fairflowersfairplants.com

News from Africa:

Tanzania

🌱 **The SAICM (Strategic Approach for International Chemicals Management) process**

One of the goals resulting from The World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD) that was held in Johannesburg in 2002 was the minimization of significant adverse effects of chemicals on human beings and the environment by year 2020. The SAICM, process was then initiated at the first preparatory committee (PrepCom I) that was held in Bangkok Thailand immediately after Forum IV of the Inter-governmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS), November 2003.

Further discussions were held during PrePcom II (February 2004, Nairobi), PrepCom III in Vienna (September 2005) and various regional meetings (two in Africa – Abuja, Nigeria and Sal, Senegal). Finally SAICM was adopted at the first high-level International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM I) held in Dubai February 2006. SAICM comprises of three elements – a high – level political statement i.e. the Dubai Declaration, an Overarching Policy Statement (OPS), and a Global Plan of Action (GPA).

The ICCM endorsed the regional implementation processes and established a Quick Start Programme that is supported by a Trust Fund. Both governments, Trade Unions and Public interest groups are illegible for financing. The QSP is supervised by an Executive Board and applications for funding is done on bi-annual cycles. More information is available at <http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/>

SAICM in Africa and the role of Trade Unions and other Civil Society Organisation

In the first PrepCom SAICM was equated to an elephant whose shape could be defined differently by different blind men depending on the part of the body each had come into contact with! Nothing else could be close to the truth! Most delegates left the meeting without understanding the structure, the modus operandi and the financial mechanisms of SAICM. However, Africa stood up to the challenges!. After PrepCom I in Bangkok 2003, African governments, trade unions and public interest groups started own efforts to make SAICM a reality. In April 2004, TPAWU in collaboration with IUF affiliated unions in Africa, the International POPs (Persistent Organic Pollutants) Elimination Network (IPEN) participating organizations and Pesticide Action Networks organized an international meeting in Arusha Tanzania to discuss the Africa Civil Society position on SAICM. The meeting adopted the Arusha Declaration on SAICM and this was presented in Abuja Nigeria at the first SAICM Regional conference. Delegates to the regional conference supported the civil society and adopted it (with amendments) as the official regional position. This regional position was presented at the 2nd SAICM PrepCom meeting in Nairobi and was adopted as one of the conference working documents. This African Regional position paper influenced and shaped SAICM negotiations in a very significant way both in PrepCom III in Vienna and during ICCM I in Dubai.

FFP process

Flower production requires intensive use of agro-chemicals (mainly pesticides) and water. Due to economic, climatic, and social factors flower production has shifted from developed to developing countries particularly those in Africa and Latin America. The situation in these countries does not guarantee sound management of chemicals and water resources. This realization prompted stakeholders in Europe and Africa to establish the International Code of Conduct (ICC) for the Cut-Flower Industry. This led to establishment of Flower Programmes notably the Flower Label Programme (FLP) and MPS. In order to reduce implementation costs, duplication and operational problems, these two programmes were harmonized in 2006 to establish the Fair Flowers Fair Plants (FFP) programme. FFP is a voluntary programme, whereby a subscribed producer has to undergo social and environmental auditing. Produce from a certified FFP producer are then allocated a market label – the FFP label. For more information about the FFP visit www.fairflowersfairplants.com or contact info@fairflowersfairplants.com

The link between FFP and SAICM

Both SAICM and the Fair Flowers Fair Plants (FFP) are concerned about impact of chemical pesticides on human health and environmental. SAICM calls for minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment by year 2020 while the International Code of Conduct (ICC) for the cut-flower industry on which the FFP is based requires flower producers to protect the health of workers and the environment from hazardous chemicals. Moreover, SAICM and FFP share similar approaches in achieving sound management of chemicals. SAICM calls for a multi-stakeholder approach in achieving the sound management of chemicals while the FFP is a collaborative international effort between trade unions and their associations, public interest organizations, flower producers and their associations, workers and communities. Within their mandates, the two

programmes share common principles e.g. the precautionary principle, the right to information, the substitution principle and the polluter pays principle.

✚ The role of Trade Unions and Public interest groups in FFP and SAICM

The FFP provides for observer status to local Trade Unions and Non – Governmental Organisations. Therefore the first responsibility for an interested and relevant Trade Union and / or NGO is to acquaint itself with the FFP auditing standards and procedures. Such a trade union or NGO must then consult its respective representative in the Governing Body or Steering Committee to acquire official recognition.

On its part, SAICM recognizes the important role that trade unions and public interest groups play in sound management of chemicals. Through its Quick Start Programme (QSP) Trust Fund, trade unions and public interest groups are illegible for funding after satisfying laid down conditions. A good example is the Tanzania Plantation and Agricultural Workers Union (an affiliate of IUF) who qualified as a recipient in the first round of application.

In conclusion, partners in the FFP can utilize opportunities available within SAICM to realize the objectives of the International Code of Conduct while at the same time assist in achieving the WSSD and SAICM goal of minimizing the significant adverse effects of chemicals on human health and the environment by year 2020.

By Yahya Khamis Msangi: aishamaulid@hotmail.com

Kenya, Ethiopia

No news

News from North America:

United States

✚ Information journey for February 14th 2007

The International Labour Rights Fund is organizing a speaking tour with Beatriz Fuentes, a Colombian flower worker and Sintrasplendor union leader, in Washington, DC for the week of February 14. With events aimed at NGO partners, Congressional representatives, and consumers, we hope to raise awareness about working conditions in the cut flower industry and encourage changes in free trade agreements and consumer practices.

Betty Fuentes will also be presenting a workshop at the United Students for Fair Trade conference in Boston, and joining ILRF's Wal-Mart worker tour in Oregon and Washington state.

Nora will be moving from Ecuador back to ILRF's Washington DC office in early February, but will continue to coordinate our flower campaign activities from there.

By Nora Ferm: nora.ferm@ilrf.org

News from Latin America:

Colombia

🌸 Petals and thorns of a global business

Next February 14th in the whole world and mainly in the United States, the day of San Valentine is celebrated. By this time, million roses - the flowers that more commercialize in the world carnations, alstroemerias and pompones are cut and wrap by thousand of workers in plantations of Latin America, Asia and Africa, to be given like symbol of love in the United States, Europe, Japan and other countries.

In recognition to this work, from 2002 the February 14th is celebrated in Colombia as the International Day of the Workers of Flowers. An initiative of Cactus Corporation.

During these years, around 20 organizations and networks in Colombia and other countries, producers as well as consumers, have promoted the new sense of the date of the 14 of February. In 2007, Colombia, Ecuador, England, Holland, Austria, The United States, Kenya and Sri Lanka, will make reflection and reconnaissance on the labour conditions of the workers on the floriculture for the export.

Colombia is the second world-wide exporter of flowers after Holland, and its main market is the United States. Of 223,163 tons of flowers that are cut, 182.649 are taken to that destiny, near 84% of its annual production, to be sell in days as San Valentine. In 2005, the Colombian Exporter Association of Flowers, it registered USD 870 million in exports.

In spite of the commercial success, Colombia, where 111,000 people work in the flowers, it shares with Ecuador, Kenya, Sri Lanka and other producing countries of Latin America, Asia and Africa, precarious labour conditions, that they do not contribute to improve the conditions of life of whom generate the wealth.

In Colombia, during 10 years of work in the sector, the Corporation Cactus, along with the Union National School and other municipal and international organizations have found that the professional risks derived from the exhibition to pesticides and the repetitive movements and prolonged positions, along with the labour instability, the lack of guarantees for the exercise of the union freedom and the discriminatory practices against the women workers, they are characteristic of the work in the floriculture.

In the work of legal consultant's office that makes Cactus with workers of flowers of several municipalities, the main reasons for the 600 consultations taken care have been: breach in the payment of contributions to the social security, of wages and liquidations, dismissals and unjust sanctions, not recognized professional diseases like such, and generalized discriminatory practices as the request of pregnancy tests and the dismissal of intermediary workers. The contribution of the workers in the sector are not reflected in these conditions.

The 14 of February: International day of the workers of flowers looks for make that contribution visible, to sensitize the public opinion and to promote better conditions of life for workers of flowers, through recognition of its labour rights.

For that reason in Colombia will be festivals, special programs of radio and days of consciousness-raising in universities, churches and schools. In many languages and from many latitudes the message for consumers, mass media, social organizations of the different countries, from the workers of the flowers, will be:

We are more important that thousands of together flowers

14 DE FEBRERO
DÍA DE LAS TRABAJADORAS
Y TRABAJADORES DE FLORES



*"Somos más importantes
que miles de flores juntas"*

	THE NETHERLANDS	COLOMBIA	KENIA	ECUADOR
AREA	5.478 has.	6.953 has.	2.180 has.	4.500 has.
WORKERS	50.000	111.000 (2006) (60% women)	60.000 (65% women)	61.755(2006) (60% women)
MARKETS	Germany: 29% UK: 18% France: 15% Italia: 6%	USA and Canada: 84% European Union: 9% Others: 7%	The Netherlands UK EU	USA: 66% The Netherlands, Rusia, Canada, Germany, Italia, Spain.
MONTHLY WAGES	USD1.792 (2005)	USD194 (2007)	USD30 aprox. (2005)	USD160 (2006)
EXPORTS	€2,4 billones (2004)	USD870 million (2005)	USD120 million	USD368.990 million (2006)

Original in Spanish by Angélica Chaparro: comunicaciones@cactus.org.co

Ecuador, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras

No news

News from Asia:

China

🚩 After shoes also cheap roses will come from China

By located the flower industry far away from the more prosperous costal provinces the Chinese government hopes to create millions of jobs for impoverished agricultural workers. This way the gap between the city and the redundant farmers should become smaller.

On the huge flower farms in the province of Yunnan workers earn 25 dollar a month. In the vast greenhouses they cut roses. In big sheds the roses are stripped of their thorns by hand and wrapped. Without thorns the roses weights less and more can be sent within a cardboard box. This means less freight costs in the plane.

Recently a permanent export contract with the USA has been signed. Also on the European auctions Chinese roses will be sold. And in spite of the international fame Holland build up with its tulips, there exist also in that country a demand for cheap Chinese roses.

That Yunnan is focusing on rose production is easy to explain. Per kilo roses have a high price and are easily transported over long distances without getting damaged. Carnations are strong as well, but their price by kilo is less. Tulips are expensive as well, but they also need quite some space for transportation, which make freight costs by air rather expensive. Lilies are also doing well in the market, but get easily damaged. For this reason China has started to export lilies to markets in the vicinity, like Singapore.

The airfreight costs 30 dollar cents a rose, roses without thorns and leafs the price is a little bit less. In comparison: a farm in Yunnan sells its flowers for 4 to 16 cents per stem. The backward countryside of Yunnan suddenly became a big supplier for the flower markets. Yunnan has become a junction for China. It limits to Burma, Vietnam, Laos and Tibet.

The area is an important trail for heroine traders. The government hopes that the farmers looks upon the flower trade as an alternative for drugs dealing and will do everything to stimulate the flower trade.

"Within fifteen years we will be the biggest flower producer of Asia. And perhaps the biggest of the world, with exception of the Netherlands", says Li Gang of the flower association, an institution related to the province authority.

To achieve this the government invested heavily. Beijing spend per year 200 billion dollar on infrastructure in the rural areas. Broad bridges, international airfields and highways with six lanes has to support the industry. The flower industry for Beijing is of such an importance that there exist tax free loans to construct a greenhouse. Cooled trucks are available free of charges for collective farms or can be purchased with huge discounts. This way less flowers will fade during transportation, Li explains.

The approach is similar to what happened in other Chinese provinces. There already different kinds of industry has been realized for the production of for example shoes, electronic equipment and cars.

The support which the Chinese flower producers receive, is a thorn in the eyes of other countries. According to international regulations government subsidies to cover costs of suppliers and traders are not allowed.

By Keith Bradsher, The New York Times, Publication date: 2006-10-18

Sri Lanka, India, Thailand, Vietnam

No news

News from Europe:

Netherlands

🇳🇱 Meeting between Kees Hoek, Nathalie van Haren and Ranil Senanayake in Amsterdam, The Netherlands (November 29, 2006)

The meeting was to talk about the small holders and non timber forest products. It was like a preparation for the next RC meeting on small holders and what we could learn from other certification schemes with regard to small holders.

By Kees Hoek: keeshoek@olaa.nl

🇳🇱 Visit of Sarah Loose of the Centre Jefferson, EUA (January 12th, 2007)

Kees Hoek and Nathalie van Haren had a talk with Sarah Loose from the USA, province Oregon and Washington, Jefferson Centre. This organisation is actively involved in the campaign to improve environmental and social standards for people working in the Salas (green leave often used as fillers in bouquets) Problems over there sounded familiar to the once we know from Europe and elsewhere. The Jefferson Centre is interested to follow FFP and they want to receive the newsletter.

By Kees Hoek: keeshoek@olaa.nl

🇳🇱 Valentine's Day, The Hague, The Netherlands (February 14th 2007)

A meeting will be organised in which all stake holders in the Netherlands are invited to participate. The idea is to get to know the various initiatives in the Netherlands with regard to flowers. To make a SWOT analyses of the strong points and weak points of the various initiatives. And to look how to cooperate or enforce the various initiatives in future. This will be our contribution to Valentine's day.

By Kees Hoek: keeshoek@olaa.nl

Another vision on global sustainability

Both ENDS exists 21 year. During the Both ENDS anniversary at 9 March 2007, we want to show that Civil Society Organisations in the South are fighting with a lot of spirit and vision against injustice and environmental degradation. Their ideas on sustainability is very instructive for people in the North. During the day we will have plentiful opportunity to exchange ideas, discuss sustainable development and to get to know each other.

By Natalie van Haren: nh@bothends.org

Flower from Kenya for Valentine's Day in The Netherlands

Nathalie van Haren contributed in the elaboration of a short film about the flowers coming from Kenya to The Netherlands to be sell in special days as San Valentine. You can see the film in his original version in Dutch in <http://www.wereldbuurt.nl/>

Original version in Dutch by Natalie van Haren: nh@bothends.org

Belgium

Valentine's Day

On Valentine's Day, the Flemish flower campaign will start officially. Passengers at the main train station in Gent will receive a fair rose with a wish card to give to a beloved one. They also can leave Valentine wishes. At the same day the campaign website will be launched.

By Jan Bastiaens from FIAN-Belgium: jan@fian.be

Germany, Switzerland

No news

"HAVE A VERY NICE VALENTINE'S DAY"

Dear Writers:

The next deadline to send your news is on **April 1st , 2007**. Don't forget it, this newsletter is for you!!

Thanks,
Betsabé Lugo and Sebastian Odanga
Editors