

24-28 MAY 2011

DUTCH LILY DAYS

COLLECTIVE TRIALS

More info www.dutchlilydays.com

Lilies

The world's largest lily assortment will be under the spotlight at the Dutch Lily Days, the joint Open Days hosted by fifteen of the largest lily companies and set for May 24-28, 2011.

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Premiere of a unique event: Dutch Lily Days

Let's get just one thing clear first. The world famous lily show at Holland's Keukenhof has always been and will continue to be a breathtaking showcase for consumers. Over the last years, however, the timing of the show at the beginning of May has created a bit of a headache for industry professionals. "Don't get me wrong", stresses co-organiser of the Dutch Lily Days Hans Onings, "the Keukenhof Lily Show itself is just perfect, but to participate in the Open Days—until last year, always coinciding with the Keukenhof show - really turned out to be a daunting task for hybridisers and bulb suppliers."

First impression

You can make only a first impression once. Being unable to have all their flowers timely in bloom, lily breeders and suppliers expressed a

growing discontent with the dates of the annual Open Days. As it turns out, even under the perfect conditions of a professional Dutch greenhouse operation, where crops are scheduled from day to day, nature cannot always be tamed. Hans explains, "the bulbs of some groups of Liliium such as Oriental lilies are harvested in November and December. The pre cooling and freezing treatments at the bulb supplier take normally 6 to 8 weeks. As a result some oriental lilies can not be planted before mid February. Considering the 100 to 120 days needed for forcing, you can imagine how difficult it was to have all the lots in full bloom."

Premier event

The Dutch Lily Days is set to become a premier event for anyone involved in lilies; from hybridisers and bulb farmers to bulb suppliers and cut lily and potted lily growers. "The Keukenhof Show will continue to address the general public which will be presented with today's current commercial varieties, while the Dutch Lily Days will also focus on the latest breeding breakthroughs", says Hans, "our own Open Days, for example, offers the bulb farmer an excellent opportunity to identify his strong and weak points as from all lot numbers that bulb farmers deliver, 30 bulbs are selected and planted in the testing greenhouse. With more than 3,200 lot numbers in all sizes of over 500 different varieties, the Open Days offer a comprehensive overview of the developments in today's lily assortment."

The perfect lily

Onings has been serving its customers since the 50s but concludes that even after all those years the perfect lily for forcing doesn't yet

exist. "Just ask the grower and you'll discover there is still a demand for an improved white oriental or white OT lily with more upward facing flowers. However, when evaluating the past, we shouldn't forget that the lily industry as a whole has made huge progress when it comes to shapes, sizes and colours. But things can always be done better and that's exactly what the Dutch Lily Days event is all about." With their 'own' lily event, the organisers are vowed to a real industry event. "The Dutch Lily Days is meant for industry peers only with a strong focus on product development," says Hans. "The event is unique in that the participating companies offer their national and international customers the possibility to see a broad selection of varieties by visiting different companies." With 95% of the lilies originating from Dutch breeding companies, Holland is the major indicator of what is really going on in commercial lily growing and therefore the organisers expect many Dutch bulb farmers and flower growers along with visitors from across Europe, but also from countries such as Japan, China, Taiwan and North and South American countries. The fifteen companies behind the Dutch Lily Days are: Van den Bos Flowerbulbs, Bor Flowerbulbs, De Jong Lelies, Lily Company, Mak Breeding, Marklily, Onings Holland Flowerbulbs, The Originals, C. Steenvoorden, G.A. Verdegaa, Gebr. Vletter & Den Haan, VWS Export - Import of Flowerbulbs, World Breeding, Zabo Plant and Van Zanten Flowerbulbs. |||

Dutch Lily Days, free entrance, from May 24 to 28, 2011

*For further information:
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