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# IGCA E-News

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## Season's Greetings from our IGCA President

It's hard to believe that it's less than one month until Christmas!

When I think about our IGCA family at this time of year, I think it's amazing how our different climates around the world have us all experiencing such a different Christmas.



For those in the northern hemisphere, the days are getting colder, it's soup season again and time for jackets, beanies, and gloves! Whilst on the other hand, the southern hemisphere are starting to enjoy warmer sunnier days, with salads, broad brimmed hats and sunscreen!

I think it's important to take the time to reflect on the year that it has been – the obstacles, challenges, and difficulties we have all faced, and the achievements and successes that have been created because of the pandemic. I am hopeful that our wonderful horticultural industry brings joy to many, with fertile soils, clean air, flourishing plants and making happy + healthy lives in 2022!

From 'down under' here in Australia, I wish you, your family, and your friends a wonderful festive season, and I can not wait to connect with you when we come

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With merriment and gratitude,  
Karen (Kaz).

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## Update from Australia

by Leigh Siebler



Hello everyone,  
Since I last wrote Covid has been causing havoc for parts of Australia including NSW and particularly Melbourne garden centres. However, high double vaccination rates now see us all open and trading well.

My gut feeling as we head into Summer (December), after missing much of Spring, is that garden centres will be busy right through to Autumn and beyond. The determining factor, as always, will be weather.

Yes, now all retail, hospitality, leisure etc is open, then garden centres have more competition BUT, customers voted with their feet last year to garden as therapy (Garden Releaf) and that should happen again. At the moment interstate travel is restricted to some states and overseas travel is very restricted.

Supplies from overseas, gifts, hardware etc are under huge pressure around the world but our suppliers have done an amazing job to keep shelves stocked fairly well. Plant suppliers too have been amazing. Relationships between retailers and suppliers have never been more important.

GCA has gained new members over the last 12 months but regrettably we have not been able to hold physical events, online ones only. However, I have visited 15 members in Victoria over the last weeks since we were able to travel locally and am still visiting more. It is wonderful to be in garden centres again in the real world.

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Our web page, [www.gardenreleaf.com.au](http://www.gardenreleaf.com.au) has had a big makeover and so have our social Media pages. Garden Releaf Day will be Sunday March 27, 2022.

We are looking forward to being able to travel overseas again and pass on our best wishes to the IGCA family around the world.

Warm regards, Leigh Siebler, Manager, Garden Centres of Australia

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## Feedback from Canada

*by Rebecca Doutré*

In October, Robin Godfrey, Victor Santacruz and Rebecca Doutré visited ten garden centres in Montreal and Québec City, Québec in preparation for the 2024 IGCA Congress in Canada.



Québec is a unique area of the country, with French being the main language spoke, and this area has very European feeling especially in Quebec City.

The garden centres we visited were impressive - we saw large Christmas displays, unique features including butterfly releases and conservatories, quality plant material, as well as indoor and outdoor restaurants. Additionally, there are plans to open a few new garden centres prior to our arrival in 2024 - construction has already begun. We are excited to host Congress in 2024 and showcase a new area of our country to IGCA delegates.

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We wish everyone a safe, healthy and happy holidays and we look forward to a busy December at our garden centres across Canada, and wish the same for our friends around the world.

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## Update from Czech Republic

*by Michal Ferencik*

We can say that 2021 was successful with the sales and favour of our customers for our products. Despite the increase of prices which I guess is similar in other countries.



The advantage for the next year is not to become a non-essential product for our customers because of all the rising prices.

In our group we finally launched new e-learning system, which we are now filling with information and testing the set-up of all the exams. The platform is also able to be filled with individual company data and individual tests.

We wish you a Merry Christmas and we are looking forward to meet you all again in Holland.

With best regards, Michal Ferencík

Garden centre Ferencík, Czech garden centre association, Czech Republic

## News from Germany

The German garden centers continue to have a good to very good year. Sales at Advent and Christmas are back in line with the trend of the past 10 months. After initial concerns about the availability of Christmas items, most shipments now seem to have arrived at the dealers at the ports.

However, we continue to assume that the shortage of goods, combined with significantly higher prices, will affect sales in the garden centers in the coming season. The high inflation of over 4.5% is likely to lead to consumer reluctance to buy.

Unfortunately, our garden centers were unable to acquire more customers during the Corona period; the existing customers just bought a lot more. Therefore the broad basis is lacking in order not to be affected by inflation. Of course, we hope that things will turn out differently in the end and that we will be able to achieve success again!

The Association of German Garden Centers itself was able to undertake two important projects this year. We have brought together a network of companies that want to work more closely together in the field of training young people. A codex was jointly developed, which every company will have to adhere to in order to receive the "Excellent Training Company" award. In addition, we will improve the training opportunities in our industry in the network.

In our second project we deal with the topic of sustainability. Together with a service provider from Germany, we are developing a concept for garden centers with which each company can design its own sustainability strategy. The starting shot has been given and the first 8 pilot stores will meet for a first workshop in mid-November.

Finally, we would like to report on a project that is close to our hearts. We bring people in our industry together! Under the title "Fireside Evening" we offer our members the opportunity to meet and chat in the evening. Both were neglected during the shutdown period and so our members are happy to receive such an offer from the VDG. We have developed both an online format and an on-site meeting in a garden center. At the physical meetings, we switch between West, North and South Germany, bringing people in their regions together.

We would like to draw your attention to the following trade fairs, for which we receive free tickets:

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- 15.-17.1.2022 Nordstil Hamburg <https://nordstil.messefrankfurt.com/hamburg/de.html>
- 20.-24.1.2022 Maison & Objet Paris <https://www.maison-objet.com/en/paris>
- 25.-28.1.2022 IPM Essen <https://www.ipm-essen.de/weltleitmesse/>
- 28.1. - 1.2.2022 Christmasworld Frankfurt <https://christmasworld.messefrankfurt.com/frankfurt/de.html>

Please contact Ms. Hermann at [herman@garten-center.de](mailto:herman@garten-center.de) for free ticket orders!

The VDG wishes all IGCA colleagues a good Christmas season and an excellent start to the new season.

We look forward to seeing you again at the international congress next year in our friendly neighboring country, the Netherlands!

Our best regards to you, dear Frank van der Heide and your team!

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## Update from Japan

by Akihiro Ozaki



I wonder how many waves the corona will end. The current situation in Japan is that the number of infected people has been increasing and decreasing many times, and now the number is less than 100 every day. Still, almost 100% of people do not remove their masks, and industry meetings are still remote-centric activities.

Still, the seasons have changed, and now pansies and violas are in full swing. New varieties of various colors and shapes appear every year, and many people are enthusiastic about this pansy and viola as if they are waiting for it.

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Those who buy while examining each flower shape and color, those who buy in large quantities, those who collect varieties, I think that Japanese people like pansy viola so much that I am enthusiastic about this flower at this time. Is this phenomenon only in Japan?

Akihiro Ozaki, Ozaki Flower Park, [a.ozaki@ozaki-flowerpark.co.jp](mailto:a.ozaki@ozaki-flowerpark.co.jp)

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## Feedback from The Netherlands

*by Frank van der Heide*

Hi all,

In the last month of this year, a message from the Netherlands. Also in our country everybody is very busy with Christmas time and Garden centers have made beautiful presentations and Christmas shows.



Overall, Christmas selling started about 3 weeks earlier than normal. Consumers don't want to miss anything and are avoiding crowded places (however not all, but...). A pity is that since last week, all shops, including garden centers, because of Covid-19 have to be closed at 17.00. This makes that the garden centers are busier during opening than when they also could welcome people in the evening.

Big questions (and uncertainty) for 2022 are the availability of products, logistics and the final pricing, for suppliers and retailers! What will prices do next year? It is very hard to calculate on that because of increasing prices of raw materials, prices of

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On some products and product groups this will lead to (much) higher prices. And this happens not only in our sector. In 2022 inflation will be high. So what will be the effect on the consumer spendable income? And in the end, what will that do on our business? It is our goal to show consumers that gardening, decoration and green is very valuable.



A bright spot we are working on is the IGCA Congress in Amsterdam in August next year 😊. We think we have made a very interesting, exciting and inspiring program. We hope that everybody is able to travel again next summer so we can meet up in the Netherlands. We are looking forward seeing all congress delegates again!

We wish you a very good last month of 2021 and have a wonderful Christmas time with family and friends.

Best regards from the Dutch Garden center association,  
Frank van der Heide

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## News from Poland

*by Karolina Filipiak*

November was a very quiet month in the horticultural business in terms of sales. The owners of garden centers focused on making orders for the 2022 season, including numerous visits to the Netherlands, and there they ordered plants for the new year from their regular suppliers.

In November, many trade fairs took place in Poland, including: the SILESIA PLANTS nursery fair and GREEN SHOW ROOM, and the GARDENIA International Horticulture and Landscape Architecture Fair, transferred from the spring, which are also used to stock up for the next season.

The Polish Association of Garden Centers took patronage over these events.

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Generally, everyone is well prepared for the holiday season.

Despite the very high number of SARS-COV-2 infections in Poland, there are no major restrictions - there are masks in the shops, there is a limit of 15 square meters per person, respecting the distance of 1.5 meters from the other person. Covid passports are only checked in large venues at large events.

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## Hello from South Africa

by *Gerdie Olivier*



Another year has come to an end and we are still in the grips of the COVID-19 pandemic. A few weeks ago we were hit with our fourth wave of the pandemic and the Omicron variant was discovered by South African virologists.

This has caused widespread panic on local and international level. A number of countries have decided to close their borders to South African travelers which has had an impact on business and tourism.

At this stage, government is appealing to the public to get vaccinated. With the Festive Season upon us, there is no certainty if regulations will remain at level 1 or if there will be restrictions on provincial travel and group events during this period to minimize the spread.

Our economy is struggling to recover from almost two years of strained trade and ongoing regulations. Fuel prices were increased recently which always has a knock-on effect on all industries as well as consumers. Added to that, our prime interest rate was also increased with 0.25%. With increases in food, transport, bonds and financed articles, consumers are feeling the pinch and we should start seeing more conservative spending patterns in the near future.

Our industry has remained relatively shielded from our economic woes and the 2021 peak season has traded level to slightly up on the 2020 season which saw huge growth in our industry. The larger cities have seen our members maintain the growth but in the harder hit rural areas the economy has slowed down, but sales are still good.

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extended rain which has lead to lower sales figures for our post peak period. Supply and stock availability has also affected trade with some lines in short supply due to production issues as well as imports lag.

The cost of local manufacturing and growing is steadily increasing due to economic factors and will have an impact on our industry in the coming year. We remain positive that our Autumn 2022 season will follow the sales trends we have seen over the past few months with stabilized growth.

We wish everyone an amazing festive season and look forward to new adventures in 2022!

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## Update from Spain

*by Santiago Gonzales*

The AECJ has been one of the promoters, together with all the Spanish Associations of producers of flowers and live plants grouped in FEPEX.



The promotion and information campaign "Europe Blooms: a flower is better than a thousand words" has been launched.

The program, aimed at European consumers and whose objective is to inform about the benefits that plants and flowers bring to our lives and promote their consumption, has a total investment of 498,644 euros, is financed with the help of the European Union, It will last 12 months (April 2021 to April 2022) and will take place in Spain and Germany.



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14 notas de prensa y se han conseguido 189 publicaciones en distintos medios. En total se han logrado 619.473 impactos del objetivo total del programa (1.000.000).

Aquí tenéis las últimas notas publicadas en octubre:



Plantas que te ayudarán a mejorar la calidad del aire de tu hogar.

VER ONLINE



La festividad de Todos los Santos supone entre el 15 y 20% de las ventas de flor cortada de todo el año.

VER ONLINE



La exportación de flor cortada española crece un 49% en el último lusto y mantiene la evolución positiva en 2021.



## Web

Datos acumulados hasta octubre:



Visitas totales: 30.181

## Redes sociales



Datos acumulados hasta octubre.



El tráfico en la web continúa creciendo y sus contenidos generando interés en el público. ¡Y es que, las plantas y flores siguen conquistando corazones! A continuación, el número de visitas generado y los usuarios únicos.

Objetivo de campaña: 40.000



## Videos

Desde el inicio de campaña se han producido un total de 6 vídeos de campaña de los 12 previstos, que podéis encontrar en nuestras redes sociales, canal de Youtube y web. Durante el mes de octubre se ha publicado un nuevo vídeo, no os perdáis en noviembre nuevos vídeos de campaña.

¡Plantamos vida!

Canales de youtube:



## Totales de campaña

Resultados acumulados hasta octubre.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zv0PDiGaJxQ>

The campaign, which is based on a content dissemination strategy through a press office, is complemented by a digital approach that includes the creation of a web page, invigoration of profiles on social networks, digital advertising campaigns on social networks. and TV and video platforms and the production of promotional materials for distribution in nurseries and garden centers.

The chosen themes and objectives of the campaign are to associate plants with:

- Positive feelings: optimism, empathy, solidarity, gratitude, joy ...
- Physical and psychological well-being: plants and flowers are beneficial in many ways, which is why it is important to incorporate them into our home and work environment.
- Its importance for the natural environment: The plants that we grow in the garden and on the terrace contribute to re-naturalize the urban environment with all the benefits that this brings, and to promote biodiversity.

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<https://flourishingeurope.eu/press/>

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